El Sistema and Sistema-Inspired Programmes: A Literature Review of research, evaluation, and critical debates

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We wish to acknowledge the support, patience, and foresight of the Sistema Global team who commissioned this literature review. The remarkable phenomenon known as ‘El Sistema’ has far-reaching implications. Thus, a review of the existing literature is both timely and valuable in terms of the lessons we may glean and the identification of avenues for future research, evaluation and development of practice.

Secondly we wish to acknowledge all of the researchers and writers whose valuable work is represented within this document. Collectively, this body of work tells an important story and also raises many critical issues that are worthy of debate. It is noteworthy that this updated and revised version of the 2013 literature review has revealed a growing body of critically reflective thinking about what makes ‘Sistema’ distinctive, its relationship with the wider music education landscape, and importantly, how pedagogical practices can be developed and implemented in such a way as to benefit all those who take part in this approach within music education.

Thirdly, we wish to reiterate our acknowledgement of all of the individuals working within Sistema-inspired programmes who have so kindly responded to our emails, taking the time to send us information. In the spirit of the ‘Sistema community’ many have generously shared evaluation reports and other programme-related documents, making a significant contribution to the original version of this review.

Fourth, the assistance of the International Society for Music Education El Sistema Special Interest Group must be acknowledged.

Last but certainly not least, we wish to acknowledge the remarkable work being done around the globe within El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes.

Andrea Creech
Patricia González- Moreno
Lisa Lorenzino
Grace Waitman
Elaine Sandoval (2nd edition)
Stephen Fairbanks (2nd edition)
We have been truly inspired and encouraged by the generosity of spirit we’ve experienced through the people of El Sistema in Venezuela and their joyful music making. We’re delighted to see Sistema-inspired programs expanding and evolving in over sixty countries around the world, and by the rich diversity and depth of their achievements.

We are moved by the power of their many individual stories and anecdotes, yet very much aware of the need for high quality research to measure, understand and articulate the social impact of these programs on the communities they serve. In 2013 we recognized the need to provide a solid research foundation for the international field to stand and build upon. So we, through the newly founded Sistema Global, commissioned the first edition of the Literature Review of available research and publications. This 2016 second edition builds on the body of research and available literature and reaffirms this as a living document reflecting a dynamic movement.

This Review is an inclusive document and represents a wide range of perspectives; not necessarily the views of El Sistema leadership. As in common practice, it’s the intent of this paper to report what’s been written about El Sistema and comment only to the extent of helping make that information accessible and useful. Andrea Creech and her diligent and insightful team have provided an excellent Executive Summary which mirrors the outline of the full report and where complete references and original sources are listed. We encourage readers to refer to the corresponding sections of the full report if a statement in the Executive Summary is of particular interest or concern. There you will find its source and may engage those papers and authors directly.

Thank you Andrea- we sincerely appreciate you and Patricia Gonzales Moreno, Lisa Lorenzino, Grace Waitman, Elaine Sandoval & Stephen Fairbanks and your entire team of researchers for your dedication to the academic integrity and range of this document. You exceeded all expectations in the depth and breadth of your study and the goals of this Commission.

We thank all the teachers and program leaders around the world for their unswerving personal sacrifice. Underlying the findings of this paper is a wealth of committed effort by thousands of skilled practitioners. This summary cannot do justice to the value of their work; without them there would be no need for its publication.

In spite of our efforts to reach every program in the world, we know some are missing, either because we couldn’t find them, or because of the short notice they may have received by the time we did. Please refer to our Sistema Global Program Directory at http://sistemaglobal.org/el-sistema-global-program-directory for the latest updates. If your program is not listed correctly, please let us know!

We hope this report will result in a stronger international communications network so future global research efforts will be more efficient and inclusive. This is a rapidly evolving field and information is very quickly out of date. We will update and expand the data presented here, and invite your contributions on the Sistema Global web page created for this purpose: www.sistemaglobal.org/LitReview. We also hope you will give us feedback and engage in discussion and debate on issues raised in this review.
Sistema Global wants to understand and help meet the needs of the teachers and leaders of El Sistema inspired programs everywhere. Help us listen well by sharing in our online conversation. We look forward to meeting you there soon!

Sincerely,

Sistema Global Board & Advisors
Glenn Thomas- Chairman

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Eric Booth is a consultant with many U.S. arts organizations, designs conferences and training programs, is a frequent keynote speaker and considered the “father” of the teaching artist profession. He encountered El Sistema on a work sabbatical and has actively promoted its spread in the U.S. and world.

Marshall Marcus has been involved with El Sistema since teaching within it in Venezuela in the 1970s. A musician who has performed in more than 60 countries, he is founder and chair of Sistema Europe, founder of Sistema Africa, Trustee of Sistema England, a teacher within El Sistema in Venezuela and beyond, and CEO of the European Union Youth Orchestra.

Richard Hallam, a fellow Sistema England trustee with Marshall, has been involved with music education internationally for over 50 years. Richard is a passionate advocate for high quality music for all and was the consultant to the Department for Education when the initial Sistema-inspired programmes were established in England.

Glenn Thomas is an entrepreneur who ran away from home at 15 years old and was rescued by his high school music teacher, Dr. Lewis Phelps. He founded Sistema Global in 2011 with a vision of connecting, encouraging, and inspiring Sistema teachers and leaders worldwide. He majored in vocal performance at the University of Arizona and lives in San Diego.
KEY FINDINGS

THE GLOBAL EL SISTEMA COMMUNITY

OF PRACTICE PROVIDES AN

EXTRAORDINARY

EXAMPLE OF HOW, GIVEN

EXCELLENT SUPPORT,

HIGH EXPECTATIONS,

AND HIGH QUALITY RESOURCES,

INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS CAN ACHIEVE

REMARKABLE

THINGS THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN

JOYFUL MUSIC-MAKING
KEY MESSAGES EMERGING FROM CRITICAL DEBATES POINT TO THE NEED TO EXPLORE IF AND HOW SISTEMA-INSPIRED PROGRAMMES CAN DEVELOP AS PROGRESSIVE, COMMUNITY-ORIENTED, CREATIVE MUSIC EDUCATION CONTEXTS THAT FULFILL THEIR PROMISE OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

KEY MESSAGES

• A significant legacy of El Sistema, internationally, is the widespread interest and discussion it has fostered around the links between music education, community, and social, emotional, and cognitive well-being

• The evidence to date adds a valued contribution to the wider literature concerned with the power of music

• Partnership working is a key to success

• Investment in teacher development is fundamental to achieving the dual aims of social and musical development

• Dialogue and collaborative networks could greatly support a highly integrated and cohesive approach to achieving social development through music

• El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes provide a rich context for further research into (in particular) the pedagogy of learning through immersion in ensemble, barriers to participation, and the impact of programmes at a community level

• The emerging ‘communities of practice’ amongst Sistema-inspired programmes provide an opportunity to bring a level of coherence, rigour and meaningfulness to future research and evaluation
KEY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FINDINGS

SISTEMA-INSPIRED PROGRAMMES:
• Are united in the aspiration to foster well-being and personal development amongst participants
• Provide musical opportunities for children who would not otherwise have been supported formally in developing their musical potential
• Generally report a high quality of overall provision
• Have emphasized the need to be responsive and flexible to local community needs
• Are characterized by strong partnerships grounded within the local community
• Have responsive leadership
• Are committed to inclusiveness
• Are committed to high quality teaching

WIDER BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION IN SISTEMA-INSPIRED PROGRAMMES:
• Personal development
• Psychological well-being
• Social skills
• Membership of protective social networks
• Significant and cumulative gains in academic and musical achievement

PROGRAMMES DIFFER WITH REGARD TO:
• Partners, curricula, funding, resources, and their modes of delivery
• Objectives - some focus on academic success, others on youth development. Some differentiate between musical and social skills, others do not

HIGH QUALITY PROVISION INCLUDES:
• Ongoing teacher development opportunities
• High-quality group teaching and direction of ensemble work which is supportive of the children’s learning, including appropriately differentiated materials
• A reflective approach to teaching and a willingness to adapt if plans are not meeting pupils’ needs
• Frequent (daily) contact with the students
• Immersion in ensemble
• Visible musical success: frequent performance opportunities within the núcleo, the local community, and high prestige performances
• Opportunities for parental engagement
• Inclusion and commitment amongst the whole school population (where partnered with schools)
• Staff prepared to learn alongside children to promote a learning community
• Additional support for children with special educational needs
• Opportunities to attend the performances of outstanding professional performers who can act as role models
• Strong leadership with a clear vision which is communicated to the team
• A committed team who are prepared to do what is necessary regardless of time
• The recruitment of volunteers with appropriate expertise to offer support
• Management and governance which is fit for purpose
• Effective partnership working
• Accessible and safe location

FACTORS THAT SUPPORT POSITIVE SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE OUTCOMES:
• Immersion in ensemble
• Opportunities for developing new skills and performing
• Interpersonal bonds and solidarity in pursuing shared goals
• Intensity and frequency of contact
• Mutual respect
• Recognition of excellence
• Positive interpersonal teacher-student relationships
• Nurturing of children’s musical development
• High expectations of musical excellence
• High expectations of positive behaviour
• Safe learning environment
• Unified purpose and shared values
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

• Partnerships are key to the sustainability of Sistema-inspired programmes
• Partnerships can be with schools and other community organizations
• Partnerships with schools require that:
  – All pupils benefit equally from the partnership
  – The programme complements the wider music curriculum in school
  – Headteachers engage in dialogue with the musicians
  – Consistent behaviour management and pedagogy, supported by dialogue between classroom teachers and visiting musicians
  – Classroom teachers and visiting musicians engage in a reciprocal process of reflective learning and professional development

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:

• Centres for lifelong learning
• Nurture a sense of personal responsibility and ownership
• Teachers are supported with professional development
• All children are expected to learn and succeed
• Recognition amongst families of the positive outcomes derived from participation
• Frequent community concerts and intensive media campaigns that celebrate the programme
• Increased opportunities for volunteers
• Community orchestra and choir

IMPROVING RETENTION:

• Careful planning and monitoring of commitment and behaviour amongst the students, as they approach the transition to secondary education
• Well-defined progression routes
• Effective communication with secondary school music departments
• Commitment of the students themselves

• Addressing motivation issues within a framework of informed, reflective practice

ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS:

• Musicianship
• Business skills
• Curriculum development
• Deep understanding of pedagogy
• Interpersonal skills
• Creativity
Networks are crucial, supporting:

- Knowledge exchange
- Professional development
- Sharing of evaluation tools and results
- Programme development
- Sharing resources
- Demonstrating clearly how Sistema-inspired programmes differ philosophically from traditional music education programmes, and how they complement the wider music education community

Further Research

Large scale, cross-cultural and multidisciplinary studies would be invaluable, addressing the following areas:

Social Development:

- The socio-economic impact of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes
- Community engagement and impact
- The impact of participation on school attendance
- The impact of participation in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes as compared with other interventions that have social development aims

Pedagogy:

- Peer learning and teaching
- Creativity within Sistema-inspired learning and teaching
- Application of differentiation
- Intensity of rehearsal pace and structure
- Application of a spiral curriculum
- The role of social pedagogy (concerned with the holistic development of children)
- Specific facets of a symphony orchestra that support the reported benefits of participation, as compared with other types of musical groups
- The significance of musical genre as a predictor of positive wider benefits of participation

El Sistema and the Wider Performing Arts Education Community:

- The characteristics of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes that clearly differentiate them from traditional classroom and extra-curricular music education
- Benefits and risks that El Sistema programmes offer to the wider performing arts education community

Participation:

- Barriers to participation
- Personal and social benefits of participation, taking account of cultural differences
- The process of acculturation amongst participants
- Acquisition of cultural capital, outside of music

- The value and contribution of one-to-one tuition, within Sistema-inspired programmes
- The role of the highly competitive ‘high achiever’ track within El Sistema
- Quantity vs. quality: what are the implications?
EL SISTEMA AND SISTEMA-INSPIRED PROGRAMMES:
A LITERATURE REVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
INTRODUCTION

Venezuela’s El Sistema network and Sistema-inspired programmes around the world have captured the public imagination, as well as that of music educators and social policy makers, during the last few decades. Critical debates have intensified since the first edition of this literature review was released, in 2013. Increasingly, ‘stakeholders’ including scholars, educators, and a range of partners in Sistema-inspired initiatives, have engaged in discussion concerned with the fundamental principles and pedagogies within Sistema-inspired contexts. Alongside this, in many contexts there has been growing interest in evaluation methods and frameworks that can be used in investigations of the social and cultural value of investment in such programmes. There are now well-established forums for such debate and exploration of El Sistema, including the vibrant El Sistema Special Interest Group that has evolved within the International Society for Music Education, as well as several other international conferences reaching educators and scholars.

El Sistema, Venezuela’s National System of Youth and Children’s Orchestras and Choirs, sees deprivation as a cultural-economic problem that can be addressed through music education as a vehicle for social action. This is done by cultivating an ‘affluence of spirit’ that brings positive change to children, their families, and their wider communities. The programme is founded on holistic principles of collective, cooperative education characterized by trust, support for self-esteem, empathy, team-based approach, commitment, structure, and discipline. Sistema teachers function somewhat as ‘social pedagogues’ whose role encompasses responsibility for supporting the child’s overall development, including musical, cognitive, social, and creative. The positive outcomes of El Sistema, in terms of musical excellence as well as social and emotional development, raised aspirations and academic attainment, and community engagement have been documented through performances, media and anecdotal reports as well as a growing body of formal evaluation and research.

A unified vision: El Sistema's fundamental principle is that social development may be achieved through music education that is founded on inclusive ensemble-work and high aspirations. Beyond that, the broad principles and values that characterize El Sistema may be said to include:

- Ensemble and peer learning/teaching with a focus on the joy of making music together
- Inclusiveness
- Accessibility
- Frequency, intensity, and consistency of contact
- Aspirations for excellence
- Performance embedded within the pedagogy
- Family and community engagement
- Responsiveness to local community needs
- Holistic development
- Lifelong learning communities

Alongside the growing interest in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes are several debates and discourses relating to the principles that underpin this approach to music education. These debates are
BACKGROUND

PROGRAMME ORGANIZATION

A core aim of El Sistema is to effect social change through the provision of musical and intellectual opportunities for young people from poor and vulnerable communities who would not otherwise access such experiences. Currently as many as 700,000 children and young people are involved in the Venezuelan network of approximately 420 local núcleos. El Sistema orchestras are open to all, though, offering a space where children from diverse socio-economic backgrounds mix. Estimates vary with regard to the number of children enrolled in El Sistema who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. All of the participants in El Sistema have the opportunity to progress to a ‘high achiever track’, with access to advanced study at the Conservatory in Caracas. Further research is needed in order to clarify the proportion of children from disadvantaged backgrounds who make that journey.

Typically, children begin in the programme with several months of participation in choir and musicianship classes before progressing on to orchestral instruments. Children participate in group musical activities hosted at the núcleos for up to four hours per day and up to six days per week. Time is divided between instrumental sectionals, orchestral rehearsal, and theory/music history classes. Some individual instruction takes place, dependent upon teacher availability.

Western classical music, with the addition of some Venezuelan folk music, forms the core repertoire. From the beginning, children are introduced to a sequence of specific standard works drawn from the Western classical music canon. These works are revisited time and time again in something that resembles a spiral curriculum, with increasing depth of understanding, technical complexity, and musical nuance.

There is considerable variation in the scope and breadth of the núcleos, with some hosting just one orchestra. However, all are connected within the El Sistema network, where a tradition of sharing resources and expertise is firmly established. Núcleos are funded by a combination of corporate, local, state, and national funding, with the majority of funding coming from the national Ministry for Health and Social Development.

HISTORY

El Sistema’s founder was Dr. José Antonio Abreu, a distinguished economist and musician who had held the positions of Venezuela’s Minister of Culture and President of its National Council for Culture. Abreu has remained as a key motivational and inspirational leader behind El Sistema.

The motivation to form a Venezuelan Youth Orchestra arose within a context where access to Western art
music remained limited. The country’s professional orchestras were populated with foreign musicians, a situation that was perpetuated by a lack of opportunities for young aspiring Venezuelan musicians to develop their orchestral skills. At the time of El Sistema’s beginnings, the state music school system in Venezuela required young people to undergo extensive theoretical training prior to learning instruments, meaning that the new orchestra functioned as a primary context where the young people could acquire instrumental skills.

The initial El Sistema orchestra comprised a group of young professional musicians just embarking on their careers, who had been playing together since 1971 as part of ‘Festival Bach’, conducted by Abreu. In 1975 this group, supplemented with younger music students from the two state music schools in Caracas, became the first ‘Orquesta Juvenil’ in El Sistema.

Abreu’s values and ideology were in large part shared by his contemporary, Juan Martínez, who, in the same year that El Sistema was born (1975), founded the Orquesta Sinfónica Infantil de Carora; comprising 103 children aged 8-16. Martínez worked in collaboration with three Chilean exiles who had, in turn, worked closely with the Chilean music educator and visionary, Jorge Peña Hen, whose ideals may be interpreted as antecedents of the El Sistema movement.

During the early years of El Sistema, Abreu and Martínez collaborated closely. For example, many of the children from the Orquesta Sinfónica Infantil de Carora joined the Orquesta Juvenil de Venezuela in their much-acclaimed appearance at the International Youth Orchestra Festival held in Aberdeen, 1976. In 1977 the Carora orchestra became officially part of the El Sistema network, although retaining a considerable degree of autonomy.

El Sistema, since those early beginnings, has grown exponentially and achieved international acclaim, including (amongst many accolades) being awarded the UNESCO International Music Prize in 1993, the United Nations International Arts Prize in 2004, and recognition as UNICEF National Ambassador in 2004. Abreu himself was named UNESCO Ambassador for Peace (1998), amongst many other distinguished achievements. The success of El Sistema has repeatedly been attributed in large part to the transformational and responsive leadership offered by Abreu.

A major contribution to the wider understanding of how El Sistema principles and practices may be translated to contexts outside of Venezuela has been the Sistema Fellows Programme hosted by the New England Conservatory, Boston, USA. Originally known as the Abreu Fellows, this programme was developed by Abreu when he was awarded a $100,000.00 TED prize in 2009. Upon completion in 2014, the project trained 50 musician leaders. As mandated, the fellows are starting to make significant contributions to the development of El Sistema USA as well as to the global El Sistema community.

**METHODS**

The first edition of this literature review, undertaken in 2013, encompassed a wide range of published, peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed, and ‘grey’ (self-documented reports) literature. The aim of this revised second edition was to update the original review, adding published peer-reviewed articles as well as reports in the public domain. The sources included in the second edition were limited to those in English. Thus, a limited additional body of literature has been incorporated into this revised version of the 2013 edition of our literature review.
For both editions, we searched electronic databases including the British Education Index, the Australian Education Index, ERIC, the Web of Science, the Arts and Humanities Citation Index, JSTOR and Dissertations Direct.

For the first edition only we also appealed for research and evaluation information via notices posted to the International Society for Music Education El Sistema Special Interest Group, the International Music Council, the European Music Council, Sistema Global, In Harmony Sistema England and El Sistema USA. The Global Review of Youth Orchestras (Harvey and McNeilly, 2012), commissioned by the British Council, provided basic information about El Sistema initiatives in 38 countries. Several sources were accessed via the Sistema Evaluation and Research Archive. We searched the websites of all of the El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes that had been identified through our networks and searches (see Appendix 1) and contacted these programmes directly, many of which kindly shared their evaluation reports.

A range of research and evaluation reports based on programmes that self-identified as ‘El Sistema’ or ‘Sistema-inspired’ were included in the first edition of the review. In addition, for the first edition, we included papers that theorized El Sistema and a number of documents relating to critical debates around El Sistema. Literature was collected via direct contact with programmes, programme website searches, academic database searches and personal appeals sent via El Sistema networks. In 2013 (first edition) we were able to include documents that were written in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French and a limited number in German. The update, 2016, was limited to papers in English.

First Edition:
In total, we reviewed 277 programmes representing 58 countries. Of those, we found 85 research and evaluation papers, representing 44 Sistema or Sistema-inspired programmes in 19 countries.

Second (updated) edition:
We located an additional 33 journal articles, one book chapter, six reports and position papers, one unpublished thesis and two books.

Amongst the research designs there were:
- Cross-sectional surveys
- Longitudinal designs with pre and post measures
- Quasi-experimental designs
- Case study designs
- Ethnographies

Research methods included:
- In-depth interviews with children, parents, teachers, leaders, stakeholders
- Non-participant and participant observations
- Document analysis
- Children’s drawings
- Sentence completion tasks
• Rating scales
• Value-for-money calculations
• Qualitative and quantitative surveys

Overall, many of the studies have been relatively small-scale and many have relied on qualitative methods, focusing on a small number of case study sites. Sample sizes ranged from just two to nearly 2000, with most studies comprising samples of between 50 and 300. This is understandable, as there has been little funded research concerned with Sistema-inspired programmes and many studies cited here represent self-funded student dissertations or theses. Research questions have addressed a range of issues, including questions relating to best practice, organizational principles, leadership, community engagement as well as outcomes relating to individuals, families and communities. A wide range of measures have been used in addressing these questions, including qualitative interview schedules as well as validated and non-validated quantitative measures.

The papers were divided amongst the research team. Each document was read by one team member who extracted key information. For the research and evaluation papers details were recorded with regard to the context, including the programme aims and objectives as well as the research or evaluation aims, research question, methods, sample and key findings.

LIMITATIONS

Many of the studies were student dissertations undertaken by sole researchers with limited resources. Access to the research sites was limited in many such cases. It is clear that large scale, cross-cultural and multidisciplinary studies, involving skilled research teams would be invaluable. These studies could encompass a range of methodological approaches, including experimental, quasi-experimental, historical, philosophical, and ethnographical research.

For the most part, research was undertaken in programmes that could be considered as being in the ‘pilot’ or ‘initiation’ stage. Indeed, this was to be expected as nearly half of the programmes represented in the review of evaluation and research evidence had been established as recently as 2010.

As found within the field of music education in general, there is a need for longitudinal research, investigating the trajectories of Sistema and Sistema-inspired participants after they leave the núcleo of the orchestra. In addition, there is a need for longitudinal research relating to the impact of programmes at the community level. Although some such studies had been implemented and early findings published in time for inclusion in this second updated version of the literature review, longitudinal research within Sistema-inspired contexts is in its infancy.

Although several programmes allowed access to their financial records, to date, there is a paucity of research related to cost-benefit analyses of Sistema and Sistema-inspired programs. Such research would require a multidisciplinary approach and expertise.

There also were limitations in terms of the review methods of the literature review team. Any global review of literature requires extensive language skills. For this review, the team was limited to working in six languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French, and limited German). There is no doubt that this restricted our capacity to present a true global understanding of the topic. In particular, there are programmes in Scandinavia and The Netherlands where a review of evaluation reports may have revealed further understandings.
RESULTS

SPECIFIC FINDINGS

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE WELL-BEING

There was strong support amongst the papers reviewed that participation in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes supported social, emotional, and cognitive well-being.

The positive implications for well-being have been modelled by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health in their initial findings from an evaluation of Big Noise, Scotland. According to the 'logic model' proposed by the researchers, positive outcomes, evidenced mainly with qualitative data, were underpinned by: boosting engagement with learning and education; developing and building life skills; securing emotional well-being; building social skills and networks, offering respite and protection, developing musicianship, and encouraging healthy behaviours.

Nearly all of the studies reviewed, representing programmes in diverse cultural contexts, reported some aspect of positive personal development amongst children who participated in Sistema-inspired programmes. Personal development was conceptualized in broad terms, with at least 32 different constructs mentioned:

1. Attention
2. Autonomy
3. Commitment
4. Concentration
5. Confidence/self-efficacy
6. Coping
7. Determination
8. Discipline
9. Effort
10. Emotional well-being
11. Engagement with learning
12. Expression
13. Focus
14. Happiness
15. Health
16. Life satisfaction
17. Listening skills
18. Motivation
19. Obedience
20. Optimism
21. Perseverance
22. Personhood
23. Positive attitudes towards school
24. Pride
25. Raised aspirations
26. Resilience
27. Responsibility
28. Self-concept
29. Self-esteem
30. Self-regulation
31. Time-management
32. Well-being
Amongst these, discipline, positive attitudes towards school, concentration, and raised aspirations were the most frequently cited positive outcomes. The only area of personal development where any problematic issues were noted was with regard to motivation, with just a few studies noting some drop-off after the initial novelty value of participation wore off and the challenges of remaining engaged with the programme became more salient. Where this has been reported, at least one programme addressed the motivational issues through engaging in critical reflective dialogue with teachers and schools, exploring ways in which a culture of persistence could be supported with, for example, role models and additional out-of-school activities.

Several evaluation reports indicated that participation in the núcleos or Sistema-inspired programmes offered children safe and structured environments which kept them occupied and therefore at a decreased risk of participating in less desirable activities. In this vein, the positive outcomes reported as being associated with Sistema-inspired programmes have been said to be related to ‘spaces of care’ where strong family-like relationships flourish.

There were also reports that participation strengthened children’s sense of positive individual and group identity, and contributed to raised aspirations. This was a prominent theme reported in the evaluation of Big Noise, Scotland. The researchers reported qualitative evidence demonstrating enhanced motivation, determination, willingness to be challenged, and ability to imagine and achieve goals, particularly amongst the secondary school participants. Similarly, other reports have noted that individual children had grown in confidence, developed better social listening skills, and had become generally more settled at school, attributing these positive changes to participation in the programme.

Many studies included indicators of social skills. As with personal development, the overarching notion of ‘social skills’ was represented with several constructs:

1. Co-operation
2. Belongingness
3. Collaborative learning
4. Communication
5. Community spirit
6. Group integration
7. Help others
8. Group identity
9. Pro-social behaviour
10. Relationship
11. Social advancement
12. Social networking
13. Solidarity
14. Teamwork
15. Interaction
16. Take turns

Very often, the findings relating to social skills were based upon parent and teacher perceptions of change, captured via rating scales or qualitative data. One of the most often-cited outcomes was ‘teamwork.’ However, El Sistema núcleos have also been characterized as hierarchical and competitive, where achievement comes in the form of individual promotion and participants vie for rank, salary, and opportunities.

Some researchers have investigated a potential link between participation in El Sistema programmes and
enhanced academic performance amongst the students. With few exceptions, the studies demonstrate significant and steady improvement in academic attainment, achieving targets and in some cases outperforming comparison groups in maths, reading, and writing. There is some evidence that these effects may be cumulative, related to prolonged engagement in the programmes. In this vein, some recent research has revealed that children classified as ‘more engaged’ in a Sistema-inspired program (based on attendance and teacher-described classroom participation) were more likely to show an improvement in reading fluency, while those who participated less were more likely to show a decrease in reading fluency.

Enhanced positive attitudes towards school have been noted amongst participants in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes. Recent findings reported from Sistema Scotland suggest that the programme may be associated with improved school attendance. However, there is a need for further research that investigates the link between participation in the programmes and school attendance.

A specific cognitive function that has been investigated is verbal and visual memory. Researchers have corroborated earlier evidence concerned with instrumental learning, demonstrating improvements in verbal memory amongst participants in a Sistema-inspired programme.

Finally, there was some limited evidence that children in El Sistema-inspired programmes may develop increased ‘cultural consumption’ beyond their engagement with music. However, again, this is an underresearched area that would require further research to support the validity and reliability of such claims.

The characteristics of the El Sistema programmes that were perceived as being important in supporting positive social, emotional, and cognitive outcomes included:

- Opportunities for developing new skills and performing
- Acquiring cultural capital
- Interpersonal bonds and solidarity in pursuing shared goals
- Intensity and frequency of contact
- Mutual respect
- Recognition and rewards for excellence

Overall, the research corroborates a body of research in music education that demonstrates the wider social, emotional and cognitive benefits of participation in music-making. Further research is needed that makes more specific links with the facets of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes that can be said to differentiate these programmes from others.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Evaluation reports highlighted the important and valued role that parents play within El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes. Parents play a key role in supporting their own children as well as supporting the programmes in a number of different ways. Crucially, parents and caregivers represent a most important link with the community. Many studies have reported raised aspirations for their children, amongst the parents. Parents themselves have been found to benefit, reporting a sense of empowerment and self-efficacy in relation to being able to support their children, as well as forging a stronger sense of community amongst parent networks. Enhanced intra- and inter-family relationships and increased family activities have been described, with families beginning to see their children as emerging creative and talented musicians.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

Several evaluations have noted a sense of community pride in being home to the programme, particularly amongst the families of participating children. Community engagement was also strengthened when families recognized the positive outcomes derived from participation in the programme, amongst their children. Frequent community concerts and intensive media campaigns that celebrated the programme also contributed to engaging local communities. Increased opportunities for volunteers and a community orchestra and choir have been suggested as additional strategies for widening community engagement beyond children and schools. Through volunteer work within the programme adult community members gained work experience and training, as well as an enhanced sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Some encouraging trends have been noted with regard to the socio-economic impact of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes. Cost-free after-school and holiday provision has been found to impact positively on families in terms of financial savings and childcare which has both eased financial stress and increased employability options for parents.

There are also positive indications that some programmes may be contributing to reductions in anti-social behaviour, domestic burglary, drug offences, youth violence and victimization, along with increasing school retention rates. There are also some well-publicized notable cases of individuals who have attributed an ‘escape’ from crime, violence, or poverty to their involvement in El Sistema, including individuals who have established international careers in music and others who have developed as leaders within El Sistema itself.

Where programmes have worked effectively in partnership with schools this has been found to enhance home-school relationships. Overall, it has been acknowledged that community engagement is a long-term process, requiring, above all, effective partnership working and a responsive, reflective framework for working with local communities.

Some important ethical issues have been raised with regard to media discourses and rhetoric that highlights the condition of ‘poverty’ or ‘vulnerability’ amongst orchestra members, rather than their work and effort. Programmes with strong community engagement have addressed these issues, celebrating the strengths and diversity amongst the communities they serve. Many argue that El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes do not stigmatize, focusing instead on the view that they do provide opportunities for all participants to experience the joy of music-making.

PEDAGOGY

Some make claims that a ‘Sistema pedagogy’ is premised on discipline, extensive repetition, and a directive teacher style while others claim that the pedagogy is, by necessity, innovative and flexible. Critiques focus on the concept of a ‘banking’ or transmission approach to learning that has been found in some Sistema contexts, seemingly taking little account of the alternative progressive pedagogical approaches to music education that have emerged since the 1970s. A ‘teach as you were taught’ mentality has been noted, whereby inexperienced ‘peer’ teachers are charged with responsibilities for guiding young musicians. Others report a pedagogy that is innovative, flexible, and highly reflective. In summary, there are many critical debates around approaches to pedagogy, and the reports indicate that diverse practices may be found.

In any case, excellent pedagogy within El Sistema and Sistema-inspired contexts has been characterized by:

- Positive interpersonal teacher-student relationships
• Nurturing of children’s musical development
• High expectations of musical excellence
• High expectations of positive behaviour
• Safe learning environment
• Unified purpose and shared values

Specific practices that have been noted include:

• Constant repetition
• Attention to detail
• Leading questions
• Direct challenges
• Problem solving activities
• Constructive criticism
• Ensemble from the beginning
• Encouraging students to make connections with their own life situations
• Use of culturally relevant materials
• Self-evaluation

There was some evidence that teachers continued to value one-to-one tuition, notwithstanding the strong focus on ensemble. One Sistema leader noted that it cannot always be taken for granted that all individual children are ‘OK’ because the group is functioning well. Some programmes have implemented one-to-one tuition as part of the standard ‘curriculum’.

Many researchers noted the development of social skills and attributed this to learning through ensemble, although the pedagogy that underpins those reported positive benefits has not been explored fully.

**LEADERSHIP, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND NETWORKING**

The remarkable achievements of El Sistema have been attributed in large part to the transformational leadership style modelled by Abreu. This style of leader acts as a role model, communicates high expectations with regard to short and long term goals, encourages innovation and creative approaches, and challenges prevailing beliefs and value systems. A further distinctive characteristic of Abreu’s leadership style has been the quality of ‘servant leader’, whereby the organization evolves through constant active listening to the needs of those who are to be served, whilst also capitalizing on the strengths of individuals within the system.

Sistema leaders fulfill several roles, including artist, citizen, scholar, community member, leader, and empowered individual. Essential qualities include musicianship, personal strengths, interests, and creativity. Entrepreneurship has been used as a framework for understanding the skill-set needed to fulfill these roles. The Sistema Fellowship programme has been significant in equipping emerging leaders with a broad skill-set. The experiential and community-oriented focus of the Sistema Fellows Programme could serve as a
model for the wider community of post-secondary music teacher educators.

Networks have been found to be crucial in supporting effective Sistema-inspired programmes. Networks may fulfill a number of roles, including:

- Knowledge exchange
- Professional development
- Sharing evaluation tools and results
- Assisting programme development
- Sharing resources

An important function of Sistema networks is in delineating how Sistema-inspired programmes differ philosophically from traditional music education programmes, as well as being clear about how they contribute to the wider music education community.

QUALITY OF PROVISION

Overall quality of provision has been found to be dependent upon a wide range of factors that include:

- Inclusion and commitment amongst the whole school population promoting a shared ethos in relation to the programme (where partnered with schools)
- Staff prepared to learn alongside children to promote a learning community
- Immersion of the children in music
- A focus on ensemble work
- Additional support for children with special educational needs
- High-quality group teaching and direction of ensemble work which is supportive of the children’s learning
- Opportunities for participating in high prestige performances
- The visible musical success of the children
- Opportunities to attend the performances of outstanding professional performers who can act as role models
- Strong leadership with a clear vision which is communicated to the team
- A committed team who are prepared to do what is necessary regardless of time
- The provision of appropriate training of the team
- The development of appropriately differentiated materials
- A reflective approach to teaching and a willingness to adapt if plans are not meeting pupils’ needs
- The recruitment of volunteers with appropriate expertise to offer support (e.g. Local universities, music groups, parents)
- Management and governance which is fit for purpose
- Effective partnership working
- Accessible and safe locations
Generally, the large majority of evaluations reported a high quality of overall provision. Further support and development needs for some programmes related to:

- Lack of access to counseling services
- The need for strategies for disruptive behaviour
- Lack of resources
- Transportation issues
- Poor communication with parents and amongst stakeholders
- Lack of community engagement
- Instability in teacher contracts
- Uncertain futures
- Poor management structures
- Marketing issues
- Attendance monitoring issues
- Unclear short and intermediate term goals

MUSICAL PROGRESSION

Although El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes have social development as a fundamental objective, there has been considerable interest and commitment to the musical progression of young people involved in these programmes. It may be said, of course, that the frequent performances offered by El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes speak for themselves. Some researchers have evaluated musical progression with measures of musicianship, musical knowledge, singing, and instrumental proficiency.

Significant progression has been evidenced with regard to measures of basic musicianship skills and knowledge amongst early years and primary-aged participants in Sistema-inspired programmes. Children have been found to advance rapidly in the acquisition of instrumental skills, achieving levels comparable with national examination boards. Children in Sistema-inspired programmes have demonstrated particularly strong performance in timbre recognition, ensemble empathy, and accent and pulse internalization.

A small number of programmes have reported increasing differentiation in levels of musical attainment; this may possibly be attributed to the drop-off in motivation that has been noted in some programmes.

Crucially, many reports highlight the fact that Sistema-inspired programmes provide musical opportunities for children who would not otherwise have been supported formally in developing their musical potential.

INCLUSIVITY

Generally, programmes have been found to be inclusive, providing access to learning orchestral instruments for children who would not otherwise have had that experience. However, some equity issues have been noted with regard to:

- Segregation or exclusion amongst the population who are not in risk conditions and therefore not eligible to participate in the programme
• Barriers that exclude some children from participation in after-school provision offered as an extension to in-school programmes

Many programmes have implemented specific strategies to overcome barriers to participation. For example, the Big Noise inclusion programme offers one-to-one sessions for children with challenging behaviour as well as putting considerable investment in to engaging hard-to-reach families. Others have emphasized that repertoire choices must be appropriate and meaningful for their representative participant populations.

CULTURALLY AND CONTEXTUALLY-SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE PROGRAMMES

There has been much interest in how El Sistema may be interpreted, transposed, and adapted within diverse cultural contexts. Successful programmes have emphasized the need to be responsive and flexible. Programmes differ considerably with regard to their partners, curricula, funding, resources, and their modes of delivery. Programmes have been found to have differing nuanced emphases, with some focusing specifically on academic success while others refer to youth development and ‘opening doors.’ Finally, while some differentiate between musical and social skills, others do not. Nevertheless, El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes may be said to be unified by the use of the orchestra as a metaphor for community.

CHALLENGES

KEEPING CHILDREN ENGAGED IN THE PROGRAMME

A small number of programme evaluations have noted issues relating to sustaining engagement and motivation amongst their participants. Where this has been noted, it has become an issue after approximately one year, when the demands of learning an instrument became greater and the novelty of the experience has waned. Motivation is a complex issue. There may be a range of barriers to participation that impact upon motivation; successful programmes have developed solutions to these barriers within a framework of reflective practice and in ways that are appropriate within each specific context.

TRANSITION

Concerns have been raised over how to support long-term engagement, particularly through the transition from primary to secondary school. Good practice involves careful planning and monitoring of commitment and behaviour amongst the students, as they approach transition. This may require investment in teacher development. High retention rates have attributed to well-defined progression routes, effective communication with secondary school music departments, as well as the commitment of the students themselves.

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Teacher development, including initial teacher training programmes as well as continuing professional development, is a high priority area. Teachers require a wide skill-set including critical skills, adaptability, versatility, creativity, and understanding of diversity, amongst other qualities. Teachers need to have a deep understanding and knowledge of the aims and ethos of their programmes. Partnerships with school classroom teachers need to be strong, with shared understandings and practices with regard to behaviour management strategies and wider pedagogical approaches such as differentiation. The perspective of social pedagogy may also have much to offer in terms of continuing professional development for Sistema
teachers, who play a significant role in the holistic development of their students.

Although learning through the ensemble is a core principle of El Sistema, the pedagogy that underpins the effective and positive peer learning and teaching noted in El Sistema Venezuela has not yet been thoroughly investigated within Sistema-inspired contexts. Peer interdependence, learning and teaching may be most effective when students are supported with guidance on strategies and approaches to listening, encouraging and explaining, as well as building trust and respecting boundaries. This is an area of teacher development that deserves attention, and where El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes may have much to offer the wider music education community.

Within the rapidly expanding context of El Sistema in Venezuela and elsewhere, teacher shortage is a potential problem. A risk associated with a system which produces its own teachers is a perpetuation of practices that may become outdated or irrelevant – this risk makes the issue of continuing professional development for teachers even more salient.

**PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

Partnership working has been identified as a key factor in bringing about community engagement and sustainability of Sistema-inspired programmes. Strong partnerships have been found to foster the necessary unified advocacy and financial support systems that underpin a programme’s sustainability.

Where programmes operate in partnership with schools, it is important that all pupils benefit equally from the partnership and that the programme complements the wider music curriculum in school. Head teachers need to engage in dialogue with the musicians, while both classroom teachers and visiting musicians need to engage in a reciprocal process of reflective learning and professional development.

Successful partnerships underpin programmes that are centres for lifelong learning, nurture a sense of personal responsibility and ownership amongst individual students, require that teachers model lifelong learning and continue to be supported with professional development, and finally, expect all children to learn and succeed.

A range of partnership models have been identified, including, for example, professional symphony orchestras, community music schools, community centres, churches, charitable family foundations, higher education institutions, school districts, and individual schools.

Partnership working, while adding significant strengths to the programmes, may also pose challenges with regard to their aims, management, and day-to-day collaborative practices. A critical success factor is funding; when working effectively, collaborative partnerships can address this issue in creative ways.

Partnerships with local community businesses may be mutually beneficial. Importantly, investment in the local núcleo (for example, in the form of scholarships that reward commitment and pro-social activity, or support in kind) needs to be understood as a positive investment in the community.

There are many challenges as well as potential reciprocal benefits associated with partnerships with professional orchestras. Symphony orchestras have much to gain from forging strong partnerships with Sistema programmes, in terms of revitalizing their own support base and making themselves relevant within a changing economic and social context. However, such partnerships require orchestras to refocus their
missions around community needs and social goals, addressing fundamental questions relating to their raison d’être.

SUSTAINING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a long-term process that requires a strong commitment to partnerships with local organizations that are grounded within communities. Community engagement may be promoted through taking children into the community frequently, performing in accessible spaces, and reaching out to diverse audiences. As noted above, parents represent a key link with communities; thus community engagement may begin with well-articulated strategies for developing parental engagement.

CRITICAL DEBATES

MUSICAL STANDARDS AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

A characteristic of El Sistema is an ongoing interplay between the ‘high achievers’ and other young people at all levels. This reciprocal exchange is a crucial factor in mediating the ‘inclusion versus expertise’ discourse, developing expertise yet keeping alive the goals relating to social inclusion.

However, there is a need for further research into the processes by which El Sistema pursues the dual aims of social action and musical excellence. Questions remain relating to the role of the highly competitive ‘high achiever’ track within El Sistema. Some argue that this does not differ significantly from traditional conservatoire pathways, but others counter that one major difference is that the ‘high achiever’ musicians always return to the núcleo, sharing their expertise, acting as role models, and helping to raise aspirations amongst all of the young musicians.

There are also debates about the high profile accorded to international musical expertise within El Sistema, with some proposing that expertise in social justice or social pedagogy is equally important. Individual cases of extraordinary musical accomplishments are held up as flagship examples of success. There has also been some limited research demonstrating a number of academic and career pathways amongst El Sistema alumni. For example, one study noted that amongst the students from one núcleo, 100% of the students were enrolled in high school, university or conservatoire, with 40% of these studying music and the others pursuing careers in engineering, medicine, and other subjects. Alongside these notable achievements, there needs to be more rigorous longitudinal research that tracks the socio-economic trajectories of participants.

The issue of striking a balance between ‘quantity and quality’ has been raised. While it is acknowledged that uniformly high levels of achievement may be unrealistic, some argue that high standards should remain as a priority, thereby privileging musical standards alongside inclusiveness. There may be further potential tensions between artistic or indeed educational quality and the imperative to present impressive performances with popular appeal.

Nevertheless, many argue that music can and does function as a tool for social transformation. With well-defined goals and objectives, effective programmes serve local needs. While creating and maintaining Sistema-inspired programmes can be highly complex, many argue that the goals are worthy, particularly with regard to the potential for such programmes to diminish disenfranchisement amongst youth.
The question of whether the Venezuelan model can be transplanted to other cultural contexts has been discussed extensively. According to Abreu himself, ‘a translation to the specificities of each context’ is required. Challenges relating to transferability have been identified, including funding structures, organizational structures, repertoire, and embracing local cultural traditions.

A major challenge is funding. Within the Venezuelan context dependence upon state support has been an operational condition from the start. Without significant government support, Sistema-inspired programmes around the globe have had to develop models that involve partnership working, for example with symphony orchestras, community arts organizations, higher education institutions, conservatoires, social service agencies, and charitable foundations.

Further challenges as well as opportunities relate to organizational structures. While in Venezuela the branched network ensures some degree of standardization and central leadership, in other contexts (for example, the USA) there exists only a very loose connectivity amongst programmes that are independently funded and operated. Thus, while some Sistema-inspired programmes have the scope to be driven truly from the grassroots, responsive to local community needs, they perhaps do not demonstrate the cohesion that characterizes El Sistema, Venezuela.

The imperative for a programme of social action through music is perhaps particularly clear within the Venezuelan context where, for example, poverty levels are double those of the United States. As Shieh (2015, p. 577) argues, the ‘way that El Sistema works’ may be attributed to its structures that are premised upon the idea of ‘rescue’, offering ‘spaces of care’ where participants develop close family-like relationships and cross social borders. Within these spaces, according to Shieh, elite musical traditions are reinterpreted and a sense of cultural ‘ownership’ develops. Within some programmes, intensive commitment on the part of the young people may represent a very clear and well-understood pathway out of disadvantaged or dangerous environments - a pathway that may not be so clear or so salient in all contexts.

The term ‘glocalization’ has been used as a framework for interpreting the application of global ideas within local contexts. For example, within the multicultural and pluralistic Canadian context, adaptations of El Sistema ideology may require glocalization at national and provincial levels as well as at a more ‘micro’ level within communities.

A further challenge relates to repertoire choices and ensuring that these are representative of local culture as well comprising a rich diversity of musical genres. Many argue that the emphasis on Western classical music needs to be balanced with a recognition and responsiveness to the very rich cultural contexts of local communities.

The Venezuelan system has been critiqued on the grounds that its repertoire is limited and choices are not always underpinned by an obvious pedagogical rationale. However, others reject the idea that Western culture is imposed upon participants in El Sistema, emphasizing that in Venezuela ‘music is music.’ Furthermore, a distinctive feature of El Sistema is its ‘spiral curriculum’, whereby children are introduced to a core repertoire early on, in simple versions. This is returned to again and again, in ever increasing depth, providing the opportunity for the participants to gain a deep understanding of the music.

Although initially El Sistema relied heavily on nineteenth-century masterworks by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Mahler (for example), this emphasis may have been at least in part attributable to limited musical...
resources as well as an aim of allowing for sharing of resources and connecting the núcleo network. Increasingly, genres other than Western classical music, and in particular Venezuelan folk music as well as newly composed Venezuelan works, have been integrated into El Sistema repertoire.

One rationale for the emphasis on Western classical music is a belief that Western classical music functions as a medium through which lower class children may acquire the cultural capital that will help to gain entry into middle class worlds. This idea has been critiqued, with others arguing that such an approach recasts and reinforces elitist values. To date, there has been little research within Sistema contexts concerned with the process of acculturation, a consequence of immersing children in the Western classical music tradition. Such research would contribute to our understanding of these debates that centre around the rationale for Western classical music within El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes.

PROGRAMME NEEDS AND COMMUNITY NEEDS

Any attempt to use music to effect social development or change must be in response to local community needs. There have been some concerns relating to the ethics around portraying a local community within a deficit model. Complex issues have been noted, relating to the distinction between community desires for itself and the programme’s view of what might be best for the community. Effective programmes serve the needs of their local communities, with strong local partnerships and high levels of engagement from families and within the wider community.

GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PEDAGOGY

While there are undoubtedly significant benefits – both intended and unintended – that may be attributed to the central role of the ensemble in El Sistema, a risk is that there may not be sufficient scope for individual creative practice to flourish. Furthermore, it has been acknowledged that despite the very important function of the group, in terms of teaching and learning, participants in El Sistema do value highly the individual support that is available.

Some advocate a system where the group remains at the centre but is complemented with one-to-one instruction. While the group offers a social space for peer learning, nurturing positive sense of citizenship, and experiencing the joy of the collective sound, one cannot assume that all individuals within the group are ‘okay’ just because the group is functioning well.

There may be cultural differences with regard to the view that privileging the ensemble in music education is a novel idea. For example, a number of string programmes founded on the principle of group teaching have been highlighted.

Questions have been raised regarding the pedagogy that is advocated within El Sistema programmes. In particular, the disciplined, rote learning approach has been critiqued on the grounds that it takes little account of progressive movements in music education that have taken place over recent decades. Again, there may be cultural differences that have implications for this issue.

Although the orchestra is positioned within El Sistema as a vehicle for collaboration, some argue that there is little opportunity within a hierarchical orchestral structure for true collaboration or dialogue. Some have highlighted that an ideology of harmony, when articulated as a form of control, is in danger of stifling the discord and struggle that are fundamental to human development. While individuals work together towards
a pre-determined goal, there are questions relating to the extent to which this can be said to promote collaborative creative practice. Others counter that within Sistema programmes the orchestra functions as a collaborative community, rich in sharing of ideas, knowledge, and skills. Once again, further research is needed that explores the facets of an ensemble that make true collaboration possible. It may be that the issue is not whether it is an orchestra as opposed to any other kind of musical group, but rather that there are other factors that are key in promoting collaborative practice.

THE IMPACT OF SISTEMA-INSPIRED PROGRAMMES UPON THE WIDER MUSIC CURRICULUM AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY OF MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

A tension has been noted with regard to the relationship between Sistema-inspired programmes and the wider music education community, including school music curricula, formal music education pathways, and music education initiatives within the community. Some warn of potential risks with regard to investment in Sistema projects undermining other well-established music education programmes.

Questions have been raised in some school-based programmes, relating to the dependence on highly expert musicians brought in from outside of school, and a possible under-use and under-development of classroom teachers’ own expertise and ideas in music. Effective programmes ensure that the time taken by the programme does not mean no other music is taught in school.

There are issues relating to ‘ownership’ of the ideology claimed by El Sistema. Some argue that this ideology is not in fact new and that the symphony orchestra is not the only musical medium for bringing about social transformation. For example, the ideology enshrined in Sistema Europe’s core values (human rights, duties, responsibilities, lifelong learning, trust) and some of its principles (access, inclusivity, excellence) are shared by the wider music education community (for example, UNESCO’s Seoul Agenda for music education where the three core values are identified as access, excellence and social development).

Whilst acknowledging these concerns, others point out that El Sistema plays a valuable role in highlighting and reinforcing the wider view that society should not tolerate economic barriers to high quality music education. Furthermore, Sistema-inspired programmes have played a vitally important role in serving a range of historically under-serviced populations.

Implementation of El Sistema programmes should not lessen the responsibility of governments at all levels to provide quality music education within school systems. Neither should such programmes serve as a replacement or substitute to state-supported music education. Dialogue and collaborative networks could greatly support a highly integrated and cohesive approach to achieving social development through music.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Evaluation is increasingly being recognized as being crucial in ensuring the sustained development and effective delivery of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes. There are several challenges associated with this imperative.

Musical literacy, personal agency, and sense of community have been identified as overarching areas of aspiration for several programmes and it has been proposed that rigorous tools for evaluation and assessment of these areas should be developed. Some caution against evaluation approaches that seek to provide evidence of transformation or empowerment, warning against unintended consequences and
advocating an imaginative approach to accessing knowledge about how engagement with the arts occurs and how it is experience.

Some have advocated that teacher evaluation should be built in as an integral part of teacher professional development, providing teachers with tools for developing reflective practice and approaches to assessment that support deep engagement with learning.

**HOW THE FINDINGS RELATE TO EL SISTEMA FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES**

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MUSIC**

There is considerable evidence of the transformative impact of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes at an individual level, with many reports of enhanced self-esteem, raised aspirations, personal development, and improved psychological well-being. There are also hopeful indicators that support the view that El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes are having a positive and transformative impact upon communities. However, community engagement remains an area where further longitudinal research is needed.

Families represent one crucial link between the programmes and wider communities. There is some evidence that El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes have a significant effect on parents, in particular, with reports of a greater sense of empowerment, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and raised aspirations for their children. There is also evidence that the benefits of parental engagement are reciprocal, with the programmes benefiting greatly from parental support. However, there is scope for research that focuses on the influence of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes in the lives of parents as well as grandparents.

A powerful route to achieving social development goals may be through engagement with intergenerational groups within the community. It is well-known that one of the significant social challenges of the 21st century is an ageing population, with associated risks of high rates of depression and isolation amongst older people. It is also well-known that social networks play an important role in alleviating these risks. Musical social networks may be particularly important. Thus, El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes, in seeking to address salient social development goals, could broaden their scope and focus, to include intergenerational groups in music-making. This could be a distinctive and powerful feature of programmes that have at their heart the aim of social development.

There is a need for teacher training and continuing professional development that focuses on the social development aims of Sistema-inspired programmes, possibly drawing upon expertise within the field of social pedagogy. Very importantly, more research is needed that looks at the impact of participation in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes as compared with other interventions that have social development aims.

**LEARNING THROUGH ENSEMBLE**

Learning through immersion in an ensemble offered a rich context within which participants formed protective social networks characterized by strong interpersonal bonds. Within ensembles, young people developed sophisticated skills in working as a team, demonstrated enhanced pro-social behaviours, and
formed a positive group identity.

For the most part, the ‘ensemble’ in the programmes we reviewed was an orchestra, although some other group formats were included, such as chamber groups, sectionals, percussion groups, and choir. There are critical debates with regard to the focus on the symphony orchestra as the privileged ensemble. There is scope for research that explores whether there are specific facets of a symphony orchestra that support the reported benefits of participation in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes, as compared with other types of musical groups.

There are also critical debates with regard to privileging Western classical orchestral music. There has been little research that has focused on the question of whether particular musical genres are associated with specific outcomes, or whether, the wider benefits are more strongly related to contextual and pedagogical features of the programmes, other than musical genre.

Learning through ensemble, within El Sistema, is organized around a model that resembles a spiral curriculum. Although this approach has been reported within many Sistema-inspired programmes, it is an area of pedagogy that remains under-researched within those contexts. It may be that there are unexplored risks as well as benefits associated with this way of learning. Where it works well, this approach to learning, where students revisit the same concepts and material in ever-increasing depth, may be highly effective.

Whilst heralded as a significant positive aspect of many programmes, the pedagogy of peer learning and teaching within El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes requires further attention. Within the wider field of educational research there is considerable evidence that children need to be supported in developing the interpersonal skills and strategies for effective peer learning. El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes provide a rich context for research concerned with peer learning and teaching. Research with this focus, carried out within Sistema-inspired programmes, would have much to contribute to the wider literature relating to peer learning and teaching.

There were some indications that in many of the programmes there were opportunities for one-to-one tuition as well, although the scope of this approach was vague and none of the evaluations or research papers focused on the contribution that one-to-one tuition might have made within the overall experience, or indeed whether the availability of one-to-one tuition may have influenced the social or musical trajectory of the students.

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY

There was no mention of the concept of ‘differentiation’ in any of the research papers or evaluation reports, although there was some evidence that this was in fact a core aspect of some excellent practice. Differentiation is a key concept relating to constructivist pedagogy, whereby teachers and facilitators of groups organize the group activities in such a way as to include all participants. The wider literature on effective pedagogy would strongly support the view that differentiation is key in helping children to become engaged with learning and sustaining their motivation.

Although some programmes reported strategies for addressing visible barriers to participation, little research has focused on potential ‘invisible’ barriers to participation and how these could be addressed. A related issue is motivation. While some studies noted dips in motivation, it was not always clear how motivation was being conceptualized and measured. There is scope for further research in this regard.
FREQUENCY AND INTENSITY OF CONTACT

Amongst the programmes reviewed there was considerable variation in the frequency of contact. It appears that many programmes share the ideology with El Sistema, but are structured rather differently in this regard. There may be cultural differences as well as structural barriers (e.g. funding) that impact upon this feature of the programmes. There is scope for further research that focuses specifically on this issue. For example, is frequency of contact within the group a key indicator of wider benefits such as personal development, well-being, and academic attainment? Can individual practice compensate for daily contact within the group? These questions remain under-researched.

The idea of ‘intensity’ was not clearly defined and was not the specific focus of research or evaluation. Several researchers have, within the wider field of music education, researched related concepts such as pace and organizational structure of group rehearsals. Sistema-inspired programmes provide a salient context where research that addresses this specific issue of intensity could take place. Such research would make a significant contribution to knowledge in this area of rehearsal practices.

CONNECTIVITY

The evidence reported here highlighted three important strands of ‘connectivity’. The first is concerned with connection between programmes and their local communities. Social development goals must be grounded within the local context, with programmes remaining responsive to community needs and conversely, community stakeholders having a sense of ownership within the programmes. In order to achieve this, effective partnership working, as well as a responsive leadership style, are essential.

The second strand associated with the idea of ‘connectivity’ relates to connections within and between programmes. The network of Sistema-inspired programmes represented within this review may be seen as a community of practice comprising a rich resource for collaboration, sharing of resources and problem-solving. Formal networks have begun to take shape and it is the responsibility of all stakeholders to ensure that these networks function in a positive and collaborative way.

The third strand of ‘connectivity’ is concerned with the place of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes within the wider music education community. The fundamental principles that characterize El Sistema resonate strongly with the key aims of access, excellence and social development that are enshrined in the UNESCO Seoul Agenda for music education. Sistema-inspired programmes have much to contribute to this wider agenda.

FINAL WORD

El Sistema has fostered a remarkable renewal of interest in the transformative potential of music and the power of music education. Importantly, this movement has highlighted the principle that access to participatory music is a universal right.

We have, in this review, attempted to synthesize the debates, discourses, and evidence relating to the phenomenon that is known as El Sistema. We have highlighted methodological flaws in some of the research and evaluation approaches. Notwithstanding these critiques, we acknowledge fully the complexity in any attempts to capture ‘hard’ evidence of the transformative power of participation in music, and congratulate...
all of the research teams in their efforts in this regard. We also welcome the critical perspectives that have emerged, in relation to El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes. Such debates have prompted some deep thinking about the purposes and aspirations of music education, more broadly, as well as focusing attention on how practices within Sistema-inspired contexts can be continually developed in progressive, creative and inclusive ways.

This review resonates with a well-established and growing body of literature concerned with the wider benefits of music education. In this sense, the body of research reviewed here comprises a valuable contribution to the wider literature concerned with the ‘power of music’ and the value of music education.

However, the specific benefits of El Sistema, as compared with other high quality music education experiences, remain an under-researched area. More research is needed focusing specifically on the characteristics of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes that clearly differentiate them from traditional classroom and extra-curricular music education.

**OUR OVERARCHING MESSAGES, AS WITH THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS LITERATURE REVIEW, ARE:**

1. A significant legacy of El Sistema, internationally, is the widespread interest and discussion it has fostered around the links between music education, community, and social, emotional, and cognitive well-being;
2. The evidence to date adds a valued contribution to the wider literature concerned with the power of music;
3. Partnership working is a key to success;
4. Investment in teacher development is fundamental to achieving the dual aims of social and musical development;
5. Dialogue and collaborative networks could greatly support a highly integrated and cohesive approach to achieving social development through music;
6. El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes provide a rich context for further research into (in particular) the pedagogy of learning through immersion in ensemble, barriers to participation, and the impact of programmes at a community level;
7. The emerging ‘communities of practice’ amongst Sistema-inspired programmes provides an opportunity to bring a level of coherence, rigour and meaningfulness to future research and evaluation.

The global El Sistema community of practice provides an extraordinary example of how, given excellent support, high expectations, and high quality resources, individuals and groups can achieve remarkable things through participation in joyful music-making. The emergent body of critical debate challenges programmes within the ‘Sistema-inspired’ movement to develop further as progressive, community-oriented, creative music education contexts, fulfilling their promise of social development.
1. INTRODUCTION

Venezuela’s El Sistema network and Sistema-inspired programmes around the world have captured the public imagination and sparked much debate amongst music educators and social policy makers, particularly during the last decade. Critical debates have intensified since the first edition of this literature review was released, in 2013. Increasingly ‘stakeholders’ including scholars, educators, and a range of partners in Sistema-inspired initiatives, have engaged in discussion concerned with the fundamental principles and pedagogies within Sistema-inspired contexts. Alongside this, in many contexts there has been growing interest in evaluation methods and frameworks that can be used in investigations of the social and cultural value of investment in such programmes. There are now well-established forums for such debate and exploration of El Sistema, including the vibrant Sistema Special Interest Group that has evolved within the International Society for Music Education, as well as several other international conferences reaching educators and scholars.

El Sistema, Venezuela’s National System of Youth Orchestras and Choirs, sees deprivation as a cultural-economic problem that can be addressed through music education as a vehicle for social action (FESNOJIV, 2012). This is, according to advocates of El Sistema, done by cultivating an ‘affluence of spirit’ that brings positive change to children, their families, and their wider communities. The Venezuelan programme and its derivatives around the world advocate holistic principles of collective, cooperative education characterized by trust, support for self-esteem, empathy, team-based approach, commitment, structure and discipline. Sistema teachers function somewhat as ‘social pedagogues’ with a role that includes responsibility for supporting the child’s overall development, including musical, cognitive, social and creative (Kyriacou, Tollisen-Ellingsen, Stephens and Sundaram, 2009). Many positive outcomes of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes, in terms of musical excellence as well as social and emotional development, raised aspirations and academic attainment, and community engagement have been documented through performances, media and anecdotal reports as well as a growing body of formal evaluation and research. Broadly, the core principles underpinning these positive outcomes include immersion, inclusivity, learning together rather than individually, and quality teaching (Govias, 2011).

Alongside the growing interest in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes are several debates and discourses relating to the principles that underpin this approach to music education. These debates are concerned with the challenges, strengths and risks associated with translating the Venezuelan model to other cultural contexts, critical analyses of the purposes, pedagogies, practices, and philosophy associated with El Sistema. Critiques include those relating to the conflation of material with spiritual struggles as well as the idea that music education focused primarily on the Western classical youth symphony orchestra has the capacity to effect true social reform. Within this context a review of the existing literature was called for. Our review assesses and synthesizes the existing evidence relating to the extent to which Sistema-inspired music education can help in raising achievement, improving aspiration and well-being, and fostering positive social change. We identify ways in which El Sistema has been implemented in various cultural contexts, outlining challenges as well as examples of effective practice. Finally, we highlight the competing discourses in the debates around El Sistema approaches; provide some practical guidance for Sistema-inspired programmes and identify further areas for research.
2. BACKGROUND

This chapter sets out a brief background to El Sistema, summarizing key information relating to its context, origin, and programme organization. Following this contextual section, we synthesize some key literature relating to the principles, values, and ethos that underpin El Sistema. We have drawn upon papers that theorize El Sistema as well as documents and books that provide in-depth accounts of the ideology that El Sistema promotes.

2.1 CONTEXT

El Sistema is formally known as the Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar (FMSB), the national system of children’s and youth Orchestras of Venezuela founded by Maestro José Abreu in 1975. Formerly, El Sistema was identified by the acronym ‘FESNOJIV’, standing for Fundación del Estado para el Sistema Nacional de las Orquestas Juveniles e Infantiles de Venezuela.

A core aim of El Sistema is to effect social change through the provision of musical and intellectual opportunities for young people, including those from poor and vulnerable communities who would not otherwise access such experiences. El Sistema has been built around the idea that music could function as a vehicle for social reform. As Fink (2016, p 38) states, ‘the System justifies itself as a classical music social program that provides material benefits to poor children and adolescents; but it defines those benefits in ideal terms, as beneficial changes of mental state induced by the encounter with classical music itself.’

It has been argued that the original orchestras were underpinned by the belief that Western classical music could be used as a symbol of social capital; this was within the Venezuelan context where this art form had been considered accessible only for elite (Hollinger, 2006). In more recent years the emphasis on Western classical music has shifted to some extent, with current ensembles embracing a range of musical genres and in particular Venezuelan folk music.

2.2 PROGRAMME ORGANIZATION

It is claimed that as many as 700,000 children and young people are involved in the Venezuelan network of approximately 420 local núcleos (Baker, 2016; Shieh, 2015). In each of the Venezuelan states there is at least one núcleo, an after-school music school where children and young adults attend for several hours per day, reported as totaling, on average, 17 hours per week, 40 weeks per year (Cuesta et al., 2007; Cuesta, 2008). Children are recruited through public (state-funded) schools, and offered incentives that include free instruments, free tuition, and in some cases additional financial support in the form of scholarships that assist with transportation and other associated costs. Scholarships, which can range from 200 to 1000 BsF (Uy, 2012), are awarded taking account of daily commitment, participation in concerts and, for some, additional duties as student mentors with teaching roles.

Although El Sistema does aspire to reach children from disadvantaged groups, the programme núcleos are open to all, offering a space where children from diverse socio-economic backgrounds mix. Hollinger (2006), for example, reports finding it difficult to distinguish differing social classes amongst the participating children. According to Mora-Brito (2011, p. 28) this is a fundamental characteristic of El Sistema: ‘these ensembles not only allow beneficiaries to play music together, but they also integrate individuals with different socioeconomic backgrounds, creating a space for collaboration and mutual understanding.’

Estimates vary with regard to the number of children enrolled in El Sistema who come from disadvantaged
backgrounds. Some (Cuesta, 2008; Uy, 2012) estimate between 67% and 81%, while Esqueda Torres (2001) reports that all but 4% of children come from the lowest socio-economic groups. However, Baker (2014, p. 96) highlights that a major funder of EL Sistema, the IDB, the Inter-American Development Bank, did not judge the programme as meeting the criteria for ‘poverty-targeted’. Baker points out that while some núcleos such as those in Caracas are located in poor parts of the city and thus are accessible to disadvantaged groups, others, in the provinces, are often located ‘far away from the poorest barrios’ (p. 97), requiring considerable parental support and resources simply to get to and fro. In this vein, Fink (2016, p. 37) claims that ‘a question that is almost impossible to answer is just how many of Venezuela’s poorest children the System reaches, and what material benefit it actually provides.’ Furthermore, there is some lack of clarity about the proportion of those disadvantaged children who progress to the ‘high achiever track’, with access to advanced study at the Conservatory in Caracas.

The most established núcleos typically comprise one professional orchestra (with the players acting as teachers, mentors and coaches for the younger students), one youth orchestra, and one children’s orchestra, as well as choirs, solfège, and music theory classes. In addition, some núcleos host early-years music kindergartens (supported by a teacher training initiative) while others have programmes specifically designed to meet the needs of children with special educational needs. Some ‘satellite’ orchestras have been started in residential children’s homes.

Typically, children begin in the programme with several months of participation in choir and musicianship classes before progressing on to orchestral instruments. Uy (2012) reports that children participate in group musical activities hosted at the núcleos for up to four hours per day and up to six days per week. Time is divided between instrumental sectionals (approximately 45% of time), orchestral rehearsal (approximately 45%), and theory/music history classes (approximately 10%). Some individual instruction does take place, dependent upon teacher availability. Tunstall (2012, p. 236) states: ‘In many instances, private lessons begin soon after children are introduced to their instruments, and tend to increase in frequency and intensity as players become more advanced.’ However, Uy (2012, p. 11) reiterates that ‘El Sistema philosophy … dictates that younger students all begin in group/orchestral lessons to foster a sense of community rather than in individual lessons.’

Western classical music, with the addition of some Venezuelan folk music, forms the core repertoire. From the beginning, children are introduced to a sequence of specific standard works drawn from the Western classical music canon. These works are revisited time and time again in something that could be interpreted as resembling a spiral curriculum (Bruner, 1960). Thus, over the course of participation in the programme, the young musicians will have developed a deep familiarity with a specific repertoire. Critiquing this approach, Baker (2014) cautions against a focus on repetition at the expense of exploration, highlighting that ‘the risk of EL Sistema’s approach is that children’s skills serve only for the specific task for which they have been trained’ (p. 140).

There is considerable variation in the scope and breadth of the núcleos, with some hosting just one orchestra. However, all are connected within the El Sistema network, with a tradition of sharing resources and expertise firmly established. Núcleos are funded by a combination of corporate, local, state and national funding, with the majority of funding coming from the national Ministry for Health and Social Development (Hollinger, 2006; Uy, 2012).

2.3 HISTORY

El Sistema’s founder was Dr. José Antonio Abreu, a distinguished economist and musician who had held
the positions of Venezuela’s Minister of Culture and President of its National Council for Culture. Abreu has remained as a key motivational and inspirational leader behind El Sistema (Sánchez, 2007). According to Mauskapf (2012, p. 202), his vision was to ‘solve Venezuela’s long-standing poverty issues by blending his expertise in music and social reform.’ However, Hollinger (2006, p. 95) suggests that the social reform goals grew as El Sistema grew, ‘as they sought both direction and funding’. Rodas (2006) attributes the shift, with an increasing emphasis on social development goals, to a leadership style characterized by openness to organizational change. Carlson (2008; 2013; 2014) provides a more nuanced analysis of the wider context within which El Sistema was founded, in particular focusing on the influence of Chilean precursors.

The motivation to form a Venezuelan Youth Orchestra arose within a context where, despite investment from the 1920s onwards in cultural institutions that included a ‘conservatory and music school in Caracas, professional orchestras throughout the country, national ballet companies and choirs’ (Carlson, 2013, p. 7), access to ‘Western art music’ remained limited. The country’s professional orchestras were populated with foreign musicians, a situation that was perpetuated by a lack of opportunities for young aspiring Venezuelan musicians to develop their orchestral skills.

Moreover, at the time of El Sistema’s beginnings, the state music school system in Venezuela required young people to undergo extensive theoretical training prior to learning instruments, meaning that the new orchestra functioned as a primary context where the young people could acquire practical, as opposed to theoretical, instrumental skills (Hollinger, 2006). This is clearly a key issue that differentiates El Sistema from some other cultural contexts where there are existing well-established youth orchestra structures founded on different models whereby, for example, young instrumentalists learn instrumental skills prior to or alongside theoretical knowledge and learn their instruments in one-to-one or small group contexts alongside or prior to ensemble participation (for example, see Hallam and Creech, 2010). In some cases, those existing instrumental and vocal ensemble programmes may share some of the El Sistema ideology relating to social reform, thus blurring the distinction between ‘El Sistema’ and more conventional music education structures. As Booth (2012) has noted, questions then arise relating to the specific principles and pedagogy that distinguish El Sistema from other music education initiatives.

The initial El Sistema orchestra comprised a group of young professional musicians just embarking on their careers, who had been playing together since 1971 as part of ‘Festival Bach’, conducted by Abreu. In 1975 this group, supplemented with younger music students from the two state music schools in Caracas, became the first ‘Orquesta Juvenil’ in El Sistema. The more advanced players acted as teachers and mentors for the younger students, a principle that has stayed as a core feature of El Sistema (Hollinger, 2006). Furthermore, much learning was achieved through modelling, repetition, and rote - core elements of El Sistema pedagogy that have been noted by many who have observed the orchestras (Hollinger, 2006; Booth, 2012; Baker, 2012, 2014; Tunstall, 2012).

Abreu’s values and ideology were in large part shared by his contemporary, Juan Martínez, who, in the same year that El Sistema was born (1975), founded the Orquesta Sinfónica Infantil de Carora, comprising 103 children aged 8-16 (Carlson, 2013). Martínez worked in collaboration with three Chilean exiles who had, in turn, worked closely with the Chilean music educator and visionary, Jorge Peña Hen, whose ideals may be interpreted as antecedents of the El Sistema movement (Carlson, 2008; 2014). Peña Hen had pursued music education reforms that embraced the concept of equal access to music and education, emphasized the powerful potential of learning through ensemble for developing teamwork and responsibility, and highlighted the role of music in helping children to overcome disadvantage (see Carlson, 2008; 2014 for a detailed and insightful analysis of the life and work of Jorge Peña Hen). These ideals, translated into a pedagogy that included daily contact, learning collectively from the start, and teaching with love,
underpinned the organization of the Orquesta Sinfónica Infantil de Carora.

During the early years of El Sistema, Abreu and Martínez collaborated closely. For example, many of the children from the Orquesta Sinfónica Infantil de Carora joined the Orquesta Juvenil de Venezuela in their much-acclaimed appearance at the International Youth Orchestra Festival held in Aberdeen, 1976 (Carlson, 2013). In 1977 the Carora orchestra became officially part of the El Sistema network, although retaining a considerable degree of autonomy, for example placing a strong emphasis on learning Venezuelan folk music (Carlson, 2013).

Pedroza (2015), a Venezuelan musician trained in a Venezuelan public, cost-free conservatoire with no ties to El Sistema, has analyzed what she terms as the ‘myths’ and ‘epic histories’ that characterize the discourse around the origins of El Sistema. Pedroza focuses on ‘the pre-1975 musical panorama of the country and in particular on the role of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Venezuela’ (OSV) and its associated youth orchestra - the Orquesta Experimental de la Orquesta Sinfónica de Venezuela (founded in 1970) - as a forerunner of El Sistema (p. 68). According to Pedroza, OSV had been charged, prior to 1970, with creating a generation of Venezuelan orchestral musicians and conductors and had functioned as a training ground for several young Venezuelans, including Abreu himself. In this vein, ‘the youth-oriented impulse that made El Sistema’s mother orchestra come to life was long brewing, pre 1975, in the schools of Caracas and those of the interior’ (p. 84). Pedroza’s analysis suggests that El Sistema built on the themes of cultivation, education, nationalism and social protection, which had characterized the Orquesta Experimental. Thus, while the ‘miracle’ narrative (p. 85) characterizes the El Sistema story as a ‘radical sociocultural revolution’, Pedroza suggests that an alternative reading of the story is as ‘a continued mission with a revitalized outlook, an outlook established by Abreu’s particular socioeducational philosophy in relation to the symphony orchestra’ (p. 84).

El Sistema, since those early beginnings, has grown exponentially and achieved international acclaim, including being awarded the UNESCO International Music Prize in 1993, the United Nations International Arts Prize in 2004, and recognition as UNICEF National Ambassador in 2004 (Billauz, 2011). Abreu himself was named UNESCO Ambassador for Peace (1998), amongst many other distinguished achievements. The success of El Sistema has repeatedly been attributed in large part to the transformational and responsive leadership offered by Abreu (Rodas, 2006).

A major contribution to the wider understanding of how El Sistema principles and practices may be translated to contexts outside of Venezuela has been the Sistema Fellows Programme hosted by the New England Conservatory of Music. Originally known as the Abreu Fellows, this programme was developed by Jose Antonio Abreu when he was awarded a $100,000.00 TED prize in 2009. Participants on the programme, who came from music education and music performance backgrounds, benefitted from field placements in American programmes as well as extended study visits to Venezuela. Upon completion, the project had trained 50 musicians to develop new El Sistema núcleos throughout the United States. As mandated, the Fellows have made significant contributions to the development of El Sistema USA. Their actions are now expanding to encompass the rapidly expanding global El Sistema community, which as of 2015 encompasses Sistema-inspired programmes in over 60 countries (Baker, 2014). El Sistema, it seems, is ‘becoming a global franchise for music education … one of the fastest-expanding and most-discussed initiatives in the world’ (Baker, 2014, p. 5).

2.4 LITERATURE RELATING TO EL SISTEMA PRINCIPLES

Several sources provide close analyses of the ideology and principles that underpin the El Sistema movement (for example, Billauz, 2011; Booth, 2009; 2012; Govias, 2010; 2011; Hernández-Estrada, 2012;

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

The Venezuelan El Sistema is founded on the premise that social transformation can be brought about through intensive music education (Bernstein and Tunstall, 2013; Booth, 2009; Govias, 2010; Tunstall, 2012). Silberman (2013, p. 71), who carried out 10 in-depth interviews with key informants within the international Sistema community, reported general agreement that ‘an El Sistema-inspired programme is one that uses the collective practice of music to effect the social development goals of the community being served by the programme.’ In this vein, Dave (2015) uses El Sistema as an example of music’s potential for functioning as a vehicle for enhancing human rights, offering material opportunities and life skills for disenfranchised individuals.

This emphasis on music for social development or change is the first and fundamental principle identified by Govias (2011) who proposed a framework comprising five fundamental principles of El Sistema: social change, ensemble, accessibility, frequency, and connectivity. The framework was grounded in Govias’ personal immersion in El Sistema, involving ‘first-hand observation and practical hands-on experience … within multiple núcleos across a broad geographic distribution’ (Govias, 2011, p. 21).

CORE VALUES

The framework proposed for Sistema Europe (Marcus, 2012a) places a strong emphasis on six values that relate to rights, duties, responsibilities, lifelong learning, holistic development, and trust. The core principles set out for Sistema Europe members reflect those set out by Govias (2011), although there is a subtle difference, with emphasis placed on holistic development as well as lifelong learning and the important role of networks in pursuing shared ideals.

Some further insight with regard to the principles and practices that may set El Sistema apart from other approaches in music education has been offered (Booth, 2009; 2011; 2012; 2013a). Booth bases his analysis of El Sistema on three visits of one week each where he observed twelve El Sistema núcleos within the Caracas region. Deeper insight was garnered from extensive in-depth conversations with ‘insiders’ from El Sistema as well as from reflective discussions with four cohorts of Sistema Fellows at the New England Conservatory and as a leader of professional development workshops for Sistema teachers in several countries (Booth, 2013b). According to Booth, the ‘ensemble’ is central; the focus on learning in groups allows for the maximising of the personal benefits and development of social skills that can be derived from peer learning, peer role models, peer interdependence, and sharing in the joy of making music.Govias (2010) adds that the daily, lengthy ensemble rehearsals provide a ‘window’ where effective practice strategies as well as a disciplined work ethic may be modelled.

Frequent opportunities for performance form part of the ensemble immersion experience, functioning as a means by which children gradually accumulate authentic experiences of participating in the creation of beauty and sharing this with others. It is claimed that this in turn raises aspirations amongst El Sistema pupils, facilitating the development of aesthetic sensibility and generating the impulse to create beauty (Billaux, 2011). Frequent performances create safe opportunities for risk-taking (Uy, 2012), thus allowing children to acquire many cumulative experiences of success and thereby build their sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem.
The ethos of social inclusion sits alongside high aspirations and striving for musical quality and excellence (Majno, 2012). Bernstein and Tunstall (2013) emphasize that the goals of social rescue and musical excellence are not mutually exclusive. Shieh (2015, p. 577) proposes that El Sistema offers participants ‘spaces of care’ alongside ‘greater horizons and new worlds’ and ‘participation in a global music tradition’. It is through a deep, positive engagement with music within those spaces of care and a shared pursuit of musical excellence that El Sistema participants develop qualities as responsible, productive citizens (Booth, 2011).

Through what Booth (2013, p. 3) describes as the ‘porous membrane’ of the núcleo, the ethos and solidarity that characterize the learning community is thought to spread to the wider community. In a similar vein, Billaux (2011) argues that the strong sense of citizenship and community fostered within El Sistema in turn generates a wider sense of pride, inclusiveness, and equity amongst families and communities. This is a key point, as the engagement of family and community is seen as crucial in achieving social change.

Booth (2009; 2013) reports that El Sistema is characterized by a unified vision, an observation that chimes with the fifth fundamental principle of ‘connectivity’ proposed by Govias, whereby ‘every núcleo is linked at the urban, regional and national levels, forming a cohesive network of services and opportunities for students across the county’ (Govias, 2011, p. 21). The network, according to Govias, provides a unified structure within which individual students may forge personal progression pathways. The network also facilitates the sharing of resources as well as a myriad of musical opportunities, at regional and national levels.

Yet, alongside the unified vision, Booth highlights the process by which the shared sense of purpose is continually translated and contextualized, with each núcleo using their own context to demonstrate the underlying principles. An underpinning facet of El Sistema, according to Booth, is openness to ‘improvisation’ with regards to the day to day interpretation of the overarching curriculum. Govias (2011, p. 23) suggests that this quality may be a sixth fundamental of El Sistema, claiming that the ‘genius’ of the organization lies in its unfailing commitment to ‘identifying and assimilating new best practices.’

Silberman (2013) developed a further framework for understanding El Sistema, identifying six fundamental principles and four core values that can be said to be characteristic of Sistema-inspired programmes. Silberman’s principles (dual mission of social development and musical excellence; ensemble; high frequency and intensity; peer learning; frequent performance within communities; accessibility) and values (joy; open to all ages; sound management; community-driven) chime with those proposed by others cited above, with perhaps a slightly greater emphasis on the role that local communities have in shaping specific programmes.

STRUCTURE

The orchestra and choir are seen, in El Sistema, as the structures through which social change can be fostered at the level of the individual child, family, and community. Cabedo (2008/2009) describes El Sistema as an empowering programme that has facilitated the construction of a culture of peace.

In order to achieve social change through nurturing musical and ‘intellectual potential’ (Sánchez, 2007, the key tenets are that the programme should be inclusive and accessible to all and should offer ‘immersion’ in music, with daily participation in ensembles. Intensity and regularity of contact are prerequisites for programmes that aim to provide a constructive activity that keeps young people out of danger (Majno, 2012). Intensive ensemble activities are seen as a rich opportunity for nurturing positive citizenship skills, including
'respect, equality, sharing, cohesion, team work, and, above all, the enhancement of listening as a major constituent of understanding and cooperation' (Majno, 2012, p. 58). Alongside frequency and intensity of contact, consistency is another key feature of El Sistema (Uy, 2012). The programme offers a constant and dependable social and musical experience, regardless of what may be happening outside of the núcleo and irrespective of grade-level at school.

According to Silberman (2013, p. 47-48) ‘Abreu chose the orchestra, or large musical ensemble, as the vehicle for community development’ because he conceptualizes it as a community with the fundamental objective of agreeing with itself. Hence, a core principle of the programme ‘is the belief that the skills needed to be a good orchestra member are the same skills needed to be a good community member.’

The notion that the orchestra can be conceptualized as an idealized community where citizenship is fostered permeates much El Sistema discourse. This idea is critiqued by Borchert (2012a) who offers an analysis of the symphony orchestra as ‘symbolically representative of the ideals of discipline and productivity according to the social rationality of industrial capitalism’ (p. 59), questioning whether this structure can be truly a vehicle for inclusion. Borchert argues that to reduce ‘the complex causes of social exclusion to lack of discipline and low productivity ... the programme re-enforces a subjectivity in which the disadvantages of certain groups are comprehended as a consequence of their own failure, for personal or cultural causes, to increase their human capital by adjusting to a specific social dynamic’ (pp 76-77). Summarizing this argument, Borchert (2012b) suggests that ‘discipline’ does not necessarily align with ‘social inclusion.’

It has been acknowledged that pedagogy within the Sistema ensemble context is structured, focused, and disciplined, the theory being that discipline and organization underpin a belief in the value of effort (Billaux, 2011). In contrast to Borchert’s perspective, however, it is thought that ‘social change comes through the pursuit of musical excellence, with the discipline it demands and the emotional bonds it creates through mutual struggle and celebration’ (Govias, 2011, p. 22). Yet Govias cautions that the discipline of the El Sistema programme is tempered with patience, humour, and fun.

Like Borchert, Rosabal-Coto (2014, 2016) adopts a postcolonial lens to interrogate how institutionalized music education may reinforce a certain oppressive social order, focusing on the context of Costa Rica. The author suggests that El Sistema and El Sistema inspired programs may be interpreted as instances of re-colonization, where ‘music education becomes a massive platform to train future workers into social skills that are much needed for the success of the politics of the global market, itself a new form of colonization’ (p. 175). The article does not claim to be a study on El Sistema in Costa Rica. Rather, El Sistema is positioned as an example of the unrecognized colonial influences upon music education and music teacher training in that country.

Others have critiqued the idea that a symphony orchestra is ‘an obvious place to look for progressive social action’ (Baker, 2014, p. 128), citing evidence that suggests many professional orchestras continue to be characterized by top-down structures offering few ‘growth opportunities’. Some researchers, though, suggested that a truly Sistema-inspired ideology may have significant implications for the professional orchestral world. For example, Mauskapf (2012, p. 196), who carried out a detailed analysis of challenges faced by twenty-first century orchestras, suggests that adopting the El Sistema ideology requires a shift in understanding of ‘what it means to be in an orchestra.’ Mauskapf claims that ‘the routines and priorities embedded in American orchestral life often conflict with the philosophy embodied by El Sistema, which emphasizes social responsibility and communal experience over artistic genius and technical perfection.’

Thus, while questions remain relating to the symphony orchestra as a context for collaboration and inclusive
practice, others advocate that the principle of inclusion remains at the heart of the El Sistema ideology. It is recognized that inclusiveness and accessibility are complex issues that involve the principle of non-selective admission as well as outreach networks to overcome physical, geographical, and social barriers to participation (Majno, 2012). Furthermore, inclusiveness requires that continuation in the programme is contingent upon commitment and effort as opposed to any measure of musical mastery (Govias, 2011). Govias contends that there is no evidence that this policy of prioritising attendance and hard work over demonstrations of technical mastery has resulted in compromises with regard to musical excellence, within El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes. On the contrary, it is claimed that greater excellence has been fostered through widening access and participation, yet always demanding commitment.

PEDAGOGY

El Sistema has been described as an educational project that is founded on the notion of intellectual potential expressed through musical talent (Sánchez, 2007). However, in contrast to that individualistic perspective, Booth (2009; 2011) describes the El Sistema pedagogy as being centred on ensemble, highlighting that musical self-concept for El Sistema participants is bound up more with group identity than with individual identity. For this to function in a healthy way it is crucial that the group is founded on the idea of collaboration rather than competition. According to Billaux (2011), whose extended essay focusing on El Sistema principles draws upon a range of documentary evidence and interviews within the public domain, the concept of interdependence is key to understanding the positive outcomes that have been noted in connection with El Sistema. Interdependence, according to Billaux, fosters responsibility and self-esteem, in turn underpinning the development of social skills, sensitivity, leadership, and cooperative learning amongst the children. It may be argued too that a sense of solidarity arises from learning contexts premised on the idea of interdependence, leading to a positive group identity and motivation for striving towards shared goals. The idea of interdependence may also be linked with the principle of connectivity, identified by Govias (2011), whereby the network of orchestras is itself interdependent, with this connectivity forming the backbone of a strong and effective structural system.

Alongside the strong group ethos, Booth observes that opportunities for private instruction are highly valued. This, according to Booth, is linked to an ethos of ‘continual improvement’ and ‘spirit of exploration’, whereby the programme itself functions as a rich learning community with ‘artistic authenticity’ at its heart (Booth, 2011, pp.20-25). Opportunities for one-to-one support are facilitated through the network of orchestras, through which the highest achieving students may access individual lessons and for the most motivated and committed, conservatoire-style training (Govias, 2010).

According to Sánchez, the educational goals of El Sistema are underpinned by philosophical, psychological, and sociological perspectives. Its philosophy preserves the vision of a modern humanistic education, with a strong emphasis on the collective character of learning. The psychological component is aligned with the constructivist learning model and the motivational mechanisms behind it. The sociological basis of the programme, from this perspective, is its social commitment to the role of arts in education. However, others have debated whether El Sistema can be conceptualized as ‘education’ or, alternatively, as ‘training’, claiming that ‘students emerge as skilled orchestral players, but their practical skills often have little foundation in knowledge’ (Baker, 2014, p. 145). Baker cautions that the strong focus on skills run the risk of compromising breadth, flexibility, and critical thinking in the El Sistema curriculum.

Notwithstanding Baker’s critique, Jaime and López Reus (2013) use El Sistema as a case study to demonstrate a pedagogy characterized by reflexive practice and collaborative learning. This theoretical paper focuses on the process by which knowledge is built from practice. The authors argue that the success of El Sistema can be attributed to a reflexive pedagogical approach from the start. This is conceptualized as
the ‘practicum’, whereby learning begins with musical experience and then proceeds to theoretical concepts, rather than the other way around. They go on to identify three requisite conditions that together promote high standards: individual disposition, group dynamics, and effective leadership. Related to these three conditions are three levels of support for learning. The first is support at the individual level in the form of resources and effort, the second is support at the group level in the form of peer collaboration and learning, while the third is support at the leadership level, comprising scaffolding and direction from expert teachers.

Jaime and López Reus (2013) base their analysis on the assertion that El Sistema differs from ‘traditional’ music education because of its emphasis on peer learning and because practical learning comes first, before notation. However, much of what Jaime and López Reus propose could be recognized by music educators around the world and it is clear that their pedagogical principles are not ‘owned’ by El Sistema. As Service (2010, para 2) points out, ‘group-based music-making, both vocal and instrumental, is a staple of (good) musical education in schools across Britain … there are also any number of international precedents … which have used communal playing and singing as a way of achieving musical competence – and social harmony – for years.’

While it is undoubtedly characterized by discipline, ‘intensity’ and ‘passion’, the programme at its most successful involves optimal challenge and collaborative learning. This view is reinforced by Bernstein and Tunstall (2013) who include ‘joy’, ‘peer learning’ and ‘ridiculous ambition’ in their own framework of El Sistema principles. Marcus (2009) adds that it is the joyful nature of music-making that has underpinned El Sistema’s success, stating ‘at least part of the reason is the unique ‘high’ that upwards of 100 players on a stage get from playing great music together.’ The focus on joyful music-making is enshrined in the core values and principles proposed for Sistema Europe (Marcus, 2012a), whereby music is ‘to be used as an agent of joyful expression – passion first, refinement second – and joy to be one of the core energies of the process.’

Any attempt to capture and document the El Sistema pedagogy, according to Booth (2009), must recognize the extensive influence of the values, attitudes, and personal approaches that individual teachers bring to their own contexts. Booth proposes that formal curriculum and pedagogical approaches account for just 20% of what might be achieved in any programme; the remaining 80% is attributable to the personal qualities and values of individual teachers. From this perspective, the success of Sistema-inspired programmes relies to a very significant extent on the programme embracing the ethos of an expansive learning community, with opportunities for personal and professional development for teachers at the core. Whether such opportunities exist within El Sistema in Venezuela has been questioned (Scripp, 2015).

Booth (2013) articulates the idea of the CATS model for teacher professional development, first suggested by a cohort of Sistema Fellows at the New England Conservatory. The model comprises the notion of teacher as citizen, artist, teacher, and scholar. According to this model, Sistema-inspired teachers act as role models who demonstrate to students the possibility for developing holistically as musicians, educators, learners, and responsible citizens.

**SUMMARY OF THE BACKGROUND LITERATURE**

Several authors have proposed frameworks for understanding the core principles and values that form a unified vision underpinning El Sistema. A fundamental principle is that social development may be achieved through music education that is founded on inclusive ensemble-work and high aspirations. Beyond that, the broad principles and values that characterize El Sistema may be said to include:
3. METHODS
This chapter sets out our approach to the Literature Review, including the criteria for inclusion of studies, the methods employed in identifying appropriate literature, and our search terms.

3.1 CRITERIA FOR INCLUDING STUDIES
The review of evidence (chapter 4) includes published and unpublished research and evaluation reports relating to programmes that identify themselves as 'Sistema' or 'Sistema-inspired.' Majno (2012, p. 59) categorizes such programmes into: 1) pilot projects with close kinship to El Sistema, (2) national initiatives inspired by similar ideas, and (3) attempts at more concerted efforts to replicate the model on a systematic basis. We have not attempted to categorize the programmes in this way, although the overview of programme characteristics (Appendix 1) demonstrates that there is indeed diversity in the ways in which El Sistema has been reinterpreted in varying contexts and suggests that such a typology may be a useful way of conceptualizing these differences.

Collectively, our team had proficiency in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and French. With the assistance of colleagues, we have also been able to include two documents in German.

3.2 IDENTIFICATION OF STUDIES
The first edition of this literature review, undertaken in 2013, encompassed a wide range of published, peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed, and 'grey' (self-documented reports) literature. The aim of this revised second edition was to update the original review, adding published peer-reviewed articles as well as reports and position papers in the public domain. The sources included in the second edition were limited to those in English. Thus, a limited additional body of literature has been incorporated in to this revised version of the 2013 edition of our literature review.

For both editions (2013; 2016), in order to locate documents, we searched electronic databases including the British Education Index, the Australian Education Index, ERIC, the Web of Science, the Arts and Humanities Citation Index, JSTOR and Dissertations Direct. Our search terms were as follows:

- Ensemble and peer learning/teaching with a focus on the joy of making music together
- Inclusiveness
- Accessibility
- Frequency, intensity and consistency of contact
- Aspirations for excellence
- Performance embedded within the pedagogy
- Family and community engagement
- Responsiveness to local community needs
- Holistic development
- Lifelong learning communities
El Sistema OR Sistema AND ‘music education’

AND

- social OR emotional OR cognitive AND well-being OR wellbeing OR well being
- family OR parent OR mother OR father AND involvement OR participation OR support
- community AND engagement
- pedagogy OR teaching OR approach
- quality
- music(al) OR musician(ship) AND progression OR skills
- inclusiv(ity) OR divers(ity)
- Abreu
- Venezuela
- ‘affluence of spirit’
- social AND action OR justice

For the first, 2013, edition only, we also appealed for research and evaluation information via notices posted to the International Society for Music Education El Sistema Special Interest Group, the International Music Council, the European Music Council, Sistema Global, In Harmony Sistema England and Sistema USA. The Global Review of Youth Orchestras (Harvey and McNeilly, 2012), commissioned by the British Council, provided basic information about El Sistema initiatives in 38 countries. Several sources were accessed via the Sistema Evaluation and Research Archive (Marcus, 2013). We searched the websites of all of the El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes that had been identified through our networks and searches (see Appendix 1) and contacted these programmes directly, many of which kindly shared their evaluation reports.

Studies that report some element of research or evaluation are set out in Appendix 1, with the findings of those studies reviewed in Chapters 4 (Key findings) and 5 (Challenges of the programmes and how they have been addressed).

A number of documents that theorize and critique El Sistema have been included in this Review. Such material was included where the content addressed some critical debates relating to El Sistema and where the authors were leaders within the international music education community or could be described as ‘key informants’, for example having spent significant time visiting El Sistema or Sistema-inspired programmes. Theoretical papers and some documents (including blogs and unpublished essays) containing critical discussion points are reviewed in chapters 2 (Background) and 6 (Critical debates).

3.3 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

First edition (2013):
We located 130 documents. All of the documents were categorized as student essays, dissertations and theses, published peer-reviewed research papers, unpublished papers, book chapters, book reviews, programme evaluations, theoretical and critical papers, and blogs (Table 1).
The 130 papers were divided amongst the research team. Each document was read by one team member who extracted key information. Amongst these 130 papers, 85 were identified as ‘research and evaluation.’ For these 85 research and evaluation papers, details were recorded with regard to the context including the programme aims and objectives as well as the research or evaluation aims, research question, methods, sample and key findings (see Appendix 1).

We located an additional 33 published peer-reviewed journal articles; one peer reviewed book chapter; six published reports and position papers; one unpublished thesis and two books.

SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY
Research and evaluation reports based on programmes that self-identified as ‘El Sistema’ or ‘Sistema-inspired’ were included in the review. In addition, we included papers that theorized El Sistema and a number of documents relating to critical debates around El Sistema. Literature was collected via direct contact with programmes, programme website searches, academic database searches and personal appeals sent via El Sistema networks. The review includes documents that were written in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French and a limited number in German. In total, in 2013 130 documents were reviewed. Amongst those, 85 were research or evaluation papers (see Appendix 1 for details). A further 35 sources were added in 2016, including 33 journal articles, one book chapter, six reports and position papers, one unpublished thesis and two books.

4. KEY FINDINGS
In this chapter we summarize and synthesize the key findings emerging from the research and evaluation studies that are outlined in Appendix 1. The findings are divided into:

### TABLE 1: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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• Social, emotional and cognitive well-being
• Family involvement
• Community
• Pedagogy
• Leadership, entrepreneurship, and networking
• Quality of provision
• Musical progression
• Inclusivity
• Culturally and contextually-specific features of the programmes

4.1 SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE WELL-BEING

All Sistema-inspired programmes reviewed in this document aspired to foster some form of well-being and personal development amongst participants. In some cases, the aims relating to these overarching constructs were very specific whilst in others they were more general (see Appendix 1).

Prior to commencing as active participants in El Sistema, Venezuela, students and their parents are provided with clear guidelines regarding rules and their expected role within the programme. Adherence to these roles and expected behaviours is fundamental to participation (Baker, 2014; Scripp, 2015). Compliance with behavioural standards and role expectations has been interpreted as a key structural factor that promotes, from the outset, pro-social values, a strong locus of control, focus, and discipline (Uy, 2012). Several researchers, in the context of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes have explored these and other facets of personal well-being.

4.1.1 WELLBEING

Numerous USA programmes have prioritized the psychological and physical well-being of their student participants, and their evaluations reflect the importance placed upon achieving this objective (Austin Soundwaves, 2011-2012; Brennan, 2013; Kalamazoo Kids, 2013; KidZNotes, 2012; Composing Better Lives, Miami Music Project, 2012; Orchestrating Diversity, 2013; Potter, 2013; Renaissance Arts Academy, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Schurgin, 2012; The People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago, 2013). Many programmes provide children with nutritious meals and snacks as a way of further serving their physical needs. A number of evaluation instruments utilized by these programmes produced results which indicated that participating in the núcleo or programme offered children a safe and structured environment which kept them occupied and therefore at a decreased risk of participating in less desirable activities. There were also reports that participation strengthened children’s sense of positive individual and group identity.

The Austin Soundwaves programme, for example, reported that after participating for a year students felt more secure and took pride in their accomplishments, with this sense of pride contributing to their psychological well-being. Similar results were recorded in El Sistema Colorado, where 100% of parents reported that their children demonstrated increased capacity to take pride in what they achieved through the programme. Qualitative data collected by staff, volunteers, and parents involved with Kalamazoo Kids in Tune indicated a widely held perception that students’ sense of well-being and self-awareness had increased, with these increases attributed to participation in the programme. KidZNotes parents and teachers also reported that the students demonstrated determination and persistence. In addition, students’ overall well-being
at the Miami Music Project was increased, as they could cope with their anger and express their emotions more effectively. OrchKids reported that kids in the programme had improved eating habits, which nurtured their physical well-being. The Renaissance Arts Academy reported that students flourished and developed a stronger sense of self-identity of themselves as musicians. The People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago evaluation results included increased executive function capacities on the part of students.

In England, In Harmony Liverpool case study pupils completed a measure of well-being on seven occasions between 2009 and 2012. The online well-being measure was a bespoke tool developed by the evaluation team, synthesizing questions from existing validated well-being measures (Burns and Bewick, 2011). Overall, well-being was found to improve, particularly with regard to wanting to try hard and do well. The results of the fifth survey in 2011 showed a leveling out, with some indicators decreasing and some reaching a plateau. The researchers suggested that this could have indicated a ‘waning of enthusiasm’ (Burns and Bewick, 2012, p. 41) for the programme, as it became firmly embedded within the school curriculum and lost its novelty value. The quantitative findings were borne out by observational data, where there was some evidence of declining enthusiasm and even boredom. These findings led to a review of classroom practice, in turn leading to some recovery of the earlier well-being levels. The researchers highlighted some potential underlying issues, such as increasingly diverse skill levels, the challenge of developing a culture of persistence, as well as deeply rooted values and attitudes. One of their suggested strategies was to exploit the power of professional role models; another was the development of additional out-of-school opportunities for the young people that were motivating and encouraged progression.

Notwithstanding these emergent issues, in 2013 (p. 45) Burns and Bewick reported that well-being ‘scores have not only now recovered to their earlier levels, but in many areas have improved and continue at a higher level’. When the team compared the In Harmony Liverpool pupil scores for well-being with scores for the same measures from pupils in comparison schools (comparison school data were gathered via a parallel UK national evaluation carried out by Lord et al., 2013: see below), it was revealed that:

- ‘90% of Faith Primary School (In Harmony Liverpool) pupils stated that they tried hard at school in comparison to 66% average across the other schools surveyed;
- 100% of Faith Primary School pupils want to get a job (against 69% average);
- 92% think they will have a happy life (against 85%);
- 72% always do well at school (against 49%);
- 69% are a happy person (against 54%); and
- 92% carry on learning (against 85%).’

(Burns and Bewick, 2013, p. 48)

Lord et al.’s (2013) aforementioned UK national evaluation of six In Harmony projects (comprising 12 schools) added further weight to the view that participation in these programmes may impact positively on pupil well-being. Drawing on evidence collected through pupil surveys (including a matched comparison sample drawn from schools not participating in In Harmony) as well as case study interviews, Lord et al. (2013) reported improvements in pupils’ attitudes to learning, self-confidence, self-esteem, well-being and aspirations to improve. This was borne out by the national schools inspection agency, Ofsted, whose reports highlighted pupils’ social, emotional and spiritual well-being, attributing this at least in part to participation in In Harmony. These positive well-being outcomes were thought to be influenced by the group work ethic of In Harmony, involving discipline, focus and teamwork.
A comparison of the established In Harmony programmes (i.e. Liverpool and Lambeth) with the newer programmes revealed statistically significant differences with regard to measures of social factors conceptualized as children's 'application of self to learning' and 'view of future prospects'. Children from the more established In Harmony schools (i.e. who had participated for longer in the In Harmony programme) had more positive scores in these areas, suggesting that the In Harmony programme may have been having positive impact with regards dispositions towards learning and future aspirations. Furthermore, when the established (Liverpool and Lambeth) In Harmony schools were compared with the matched comparison schools (not accessing In Harmony), statistically significant differences were found in three out of five social factors, including the two aforementioned: ‘application of self to learning’ and ‘view of future prospects’; as well as ‘self-assurance, security and happiness’. The researchers suggest that 'In Harmony may be having some of its desired impacts, and particularly around children's well-being as young, confident learners with clearer future aspirations’ (p. 25). The impact on personal well-being amongst participants in an inclusive summer residential orchestral programme was assessed (NPC, 2012; Hay, 2013). Thirty-five young people aged 9-18 (40% male, 60% female), including young people with Special Educational Needs, completed a survey of well-being before and after the summer residential. While caution must be exercised in interpretation of the data due to the small sample size, some indicative findings emerged. Overall, statistically significant increases were found for the underlying constructs of self-esteem, emotional well-being, resilience, and life satisfaction. A large effect size (indicating consistency and size of the impact) was reported for each one of those measures. Girls seemed to benefit more than boys, with no change reported amongst boys for emotional well-being. Compared with national baseline scores for these measures, boys’ post-course scores for self-esteem and resilience were in the top quartile of what could be expected in a national sample. Girls’ scores were in the top quartile for self-esteem, emotional well-being and resilience, when compared with the national baseline. There was no change overall for satisfaction with friends and with the community, and no measure revealed any negative trends.

Perceptions of a link between health, well-being, and participation in two Argentinean Sistema-inspired orchestras were explored by Wald (2011b). Health dimensions that students, parents, coordinators, and directors perceived as being associated with participation in the orchestras included self-esteem, self-worth, self-confidence, pride from achievements, motivation, commitment, social responsibility, and socialization.

In both orchestras (located in Buenos Aires), students reported that they valued their participation as a social activity (group consciousness), a way to enjoy music with others, strengthen friendship with peers, work in team, and achieve musical competencies. Students reported that playing in the orchestra (symphonic or popular music) connected with their emotional feelings, such as happiness and pleasure. According to the researcher, changes in individual and collective dimensions could not be interpreted separately. In this sense, the psychological health dimension was characterized as a spiral in which musical achievements fostered students’ perceptions of competence and pride, and resulted in new efforts and desire to continue learning. The author suggests that processes of social integration are slow, complex, multidimensional and ambiguous.

The positive implications for well-being have been modelled by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH, 2015), in their initial findings relating to an evaluation of Big Noise, Scotland. Multiple qualitative methods were employed in this evaluation, including extensive semi-structured interviews, observations totally 1500 hours, participant drawings and participant film-making. A quantitative health and well-being survey was also undertaken, involving a sample size of 533. Life course tracking of outcomes data has been implemented, although these were limited at the time of the 2016 report. According to the ‘logic model’ (see Logan, 2015a, for a critique) proposed by the researchers, positive outcomes, evidenced mainly with qualitative data, were underpinned by: boosting engagement with learning and education; developing and
building life skills; securing emotional wellbeing; building social skills and networks, offering respite and protection, developing musicianship, and encouraging healthy behaviours.

4.1.2 Health

In Harmony Liverpool (England) has tracked the health of their pupils, collecting data from 26 General Practice Surgeries, walk-in clinics and local Accident and Emergency departments. Burns and Bewick (2012) noted that there had been an increase in the number of appointments between 2008 and 2010 (although not a corresponding increase in numbers of prescriptions), which was attributed by the In Harmony Liverpool school to the programme’s influence in terms of parents becoming more empowered and caring of their children. However, the researchers caution that it is too early to draw firm conclusions with regard to health impacts of the programme.

MacDonald (2013) includes Scotland’s Sistema-inspired programme in his exploration of innovative, non-invasive, and economically viable arts interventions that embrace contemporary definitions of health. The programme is conceptualised as a large-scale community music group rather than as ‘music education’, per se. Although his overarching discussion is not specific to El Sistema, MacDonald provides a synthesis of empirical studies demonstrating music’s benefits on health; suggesting that many of the ideas from fields such as music medicine, music therapy, and community music, such as improvisation and therapeutic song-writing could be applied to Sistema-inspired practices.

4.1.3 Early Years Personal, Social and Cognitive Development

One of the major foci of many USA programmes is the influential impact that participation in El Sistema núcleos can have on young children. Many programs cater to elementary (primary) school aged-children or even younger students in the hopes of intervening in their lives at an earlier stage ‘in the game’. Research has demonstrated how music instruction for students as young as 2 or 3 years of age can prove to be highly beneficial for their personal and cognitive development (Lonie, 2010).

Such research has served as the foundational underpinnings for the objectives established by a number of U.S. programmes (Harmony Stockton, 2013; Kalamazoo Kids in Tune, 2013; Composing Better Lives, Miami Music Project, 2012; Bergerson and Motto, 2013; Iversen, 2012a; Orchestrating Diversity, 2013; Potter, 2013, Rossi, 2011; Smith, 2013; The People’s Music School Youth Orchestras – El Sistema Chicago, 2013). Subsequently, this focus on personal, social, and cognitive development has been reflected in the evaluation instruments and processes that programmes have implemented. Several programmes commented on the ways their students had developed strong qualities of discipline and self-control, and subsequently, they gained greater abilities in interacting, not only with teachers and other adults, but also with their peers. Their experiences in performing in public, and learning the protocols and behavioral expectations which accompany this type of process, proved highly beneficial in terms of their social interaction and personal development.

For example, Harmony Stockton reports from teacher observations that students were more energized in the classroom. Kalamazoo Kids in Tune reported increases in children’s problem solving abilities as well as their self-management capacities. The Miami Music Project included evidence that students had enhanced their attentional capacities, as well as their ability to complete tasks and engage in follow-through. The Minnesota ACME programme described the increased possibilities for creativity that students could develop by participating in the programme. OrchKids demonstrated improved self-efficacy strategies. Teacher reports from the San Diego Community Opus Project showed that students had engaged in improve behavioral
patterns in the classroom. Rossi also uncovered evidence that students in general acquire benefits to their social development as a result of their participation in Sistema programmes.

The In Harmony Lambeth schools (Lewis et al., 2011) demonstrated significant improvements in personal and social education (PSE) and communication, language and literacy (CLL). In the UK, a key indicator of a ‘good level of development’ with regard to PSE and CLL is 78 points, representing a score of 6 points or more on each of the assessment scales. At the time of implementation of the In Harmony Lambeth pilot project in 2009, the percentage of Foundation Stage children in the two core schools achieving 78 points was 29% and 27%, compared with 52% nationally. In 2010 this had increased to 43% and 62%, compared with 56% nationally. These improvements were consistent within the cohorts, with improvements noted amongst children from the most disadvantaged homes as well as others who were better off. While the improvement may have been in part attributable to cohort effects or to generally rising standards of teaching, headteachers noted that In Harmony played a contributory role in raising levels of concentration, attention, cooperation skills, pride and self-esteem amongst Foundation Stage children.

4.1.4 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

As noted above, many of the studies explored the overarching construct of ‘personal development’, referring to a wider range of underlying concepts such as confidence, self-esteem, pride, happiness, emotional awareness, and optimism. For example, the evaluation of In Harmony Lambeth (Lewis et al., 2011) in England provided strong evidence of personal development in a range of areas. Qualitative data from the focus group interviews with 40 ‘case study’ children indicated that, over the period of the evaluation of In Harmony Lambeth (2009-2011), individual children grew in confidence, developed better social listening skills, and became generally more settled at school. The researchers noted that these wider benefits could in part be attributed to a sense of belonging to the wider ‘In Harmony’ community, which included opportunities to visit the prestigious Southbank Centre in London as well as visits outside of London to Devon and Suffolk.

Parents also noted that the children grew in confidence and demonstrated generally more positive attitudes and behaviour, attributing this to the considerable pride that the children derived from their musical achievements and to the opportunities within the programme for developing social skills and discipline. When interviewed, teachers attributed a greater sense of purpose and self-confidence amongst pupils to their participation the programme (Lewis et al., 2011).

Similarly, qualitative data drawn from 100 interviews with parents of In Harmony Norwich children (Smithurst, 2011) suggested that parents attributed increased confidence, social skills and general happiness amongst their children to the programme. Children involved in the In Harmony Norwich pilot programme were reported to have developed a sense of optimism about the future, with qualitative data from children and tutors suggesting that participation in the programme had contributed significantly to raised aspirations. This view was corroborated by qualitative data gathered from In Harmony Liverpool participants (children, classroom teachers, and In Harmony teachers), which suggested that the programme had fostered a strong sense of achievement, excitement, commitment, belongingness, and pride amongst the children (Burns and Bewick, 2012).

Qualitative interviews with 35 parents of children involved in Big Noise, Scotland (GEN, 2011a) provided strong evidence that the parents considered the programme to have enriched their children’s lives. Twenty-nine parents also took part in a quantitative survey measuring their perceptions of their children’s confidence, happiness, team working skills, aspirations, discipline, concentration, focus and engagement with learning, and behaviour. Particularly positive impact attributed to Big Noise was with regard to confidence,
friendships, hope for the future, happiness, concentration, and behaviour.

Qualitative data from headteachers of the three Irish ‘Sing Out With Strings’ primary schools indicated general agreement that the children had benefited in terms of enhanced confidence and motivation. Furthermore, 25 of the 34 school staff survey respondents (76%) agreed that there had been positive changes in participating children in respect of concentration, motivation, self-discipline, communication skills, group cooperation, self-esteem, positive attitudes to learning, and changes in behaviour. It is important to note that these findings are based on teacher perceptions of change, rather than on a specific measure of change with regard to the various constructs (Kenny and Moore, 2011).

As in the UK, one of the major objectives of numerous USA programmes has been to promote general personal development, bringing to their student participants the realization of their own value as human beings and as unique and talented individuals (for example, Case, 2013; Duckworth, 2013; Harmony Stockton, 2013; Orchestrating Diversity, 2013; Renaissance Arts Academy, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Silk et al., 2008; Smith, 2013). Accomplishment on a musical instrument takes dedication, focus, and drive, and the USA evaluations have demonstrated that success in this domain can simultaneously foster in students an increased awareness of what they can accomplish if only they put in the time and practice. Through this kind of experience, students cultivate increased characteristics of discipline and self-esteem, and as this revitalized sense of themselves emerges, it also transfers to other areas of their lives.

Analysis of qualitative data collected from teachers, parents, and staff involved in five of the six case study American Sistema-inspired programmes studied by Cline (2012) revealed a strong focus on the importance of the quality of ‘student achievement’, rather than the quantity of young people who accessed the programme. It is not clear whether Cline’s participants were using the term ‘achievement’ in a broad sense to encompass personal development more widely, or whether they were very focused on academic achievement. However, the mission statements of the six programmes demonstrated that personal development, including musical, social and academic growth, was a core, shared aim.

In the context of Canada’s Sistema New Brunswick, Savoie (2012) reported strong agreement amongst parents that the children had developed in a number of significant ways. Sixty-eight parent participants completed the baseline survey with 132 completing the post-test measure approximately 10 months later (Savoie, 2012). All parents of children involved in the programme believed that their children had developed musical skills as a result of their participation in Sistema NB. In addition, 52% noted in improvement in their child’s overall behaviour including showing more respect, being happier, and showing willingness to concentrate.

Savoie’s (2012) Employee and Volunteer survey included 17 baseline participants and 21 second round participants from Sistema NB locations. Results supported the parents’ survey data indicating a decrease in the number of children who adopted oppositional behaviour (47.1% to 4.8%) or were difficult to motivate (47.1% to 19.1%).

The School Teachers and Principal survey (n = 17) that formed part of the Sistema New Brunswick evaluation (Savoie, 2012) further supported an environment of mental health wellness. Results included 44% indicating improvement in participants’ demonstration of respect; 47% indicating an increase in their willingness to concentrate; 65% a development of participants’ social skills; 69% an increase in their happiness and confidence, 79% an increase in their sense of belonging, and 91% noting a positive difference in their relationships with the participants.
Likewise, the 2012 evaluation of Sistema Aotearoa demonstrated a ‘Strong Performance (4/5) in its valued outcomes for children. Excellent performance ratings (5/5) were given overall for children experiencing a sense of accomplishment, learning values (respect, care, etc.), and expanding their sense of opportunity with Strong Performance (4/5) ratings for children’s increase in self-confidence, self-esteem and motivation, and school curriculum related competencies.

In Venezuela, Esqueda Torres (2004) reported comparisons between the 1999 and 2003 cohorts from El Sistema, showing that the longer students participated in El Sistema, the greater were the psychological gains in self-esteem, confidence, and emotional control. No changes were observed in relation to achievement motivation and sense of affiliation. It was concluded that the motivational and psychological profile of participants constituted one of the most important contributions of El Sistema (however, this conclusion was based on a comparison between the two groups from El Sistema, and not comparing measurements with non-El Sistema students).

The author reports positive and significant relationships between motivational constructs and personality traits. However, the correlation coefficients were considerably low (positive relationships range .15 to .41; negative, -16 to -.34). Achievement motivation was found to be positively and significantly related to academic achievement, and musical performance. It is reported that academic achievement was higher for 40% of El Sistema participants than Non-El Sistema students (no additional statistics are provided for this conclusion).

It is worth noticing that in phase 3 the reported comparisons were based on two groups of El-Sistema students, rather than with a control group of students outside El Sistema. The most experienced group (cohort 1999) showed significantly better results during the first phase of the study, when they were compared with non-El Sistema students, including at the time of enrolment. Additionally, it is recognized that the families of the 1999 cohort declared a higher income than the cohort 2003, which might have also influenced the results. Another methodological weakness is the fact that the cohort 2003 also included students who had enrolled in the previous and in the following years (2002 and 2004). Finally, most of the conclusions are made based on descriptive statistics rather than inferential statistics (Esqueda Torres, 2004).

Uy (2010) carried out a cross-cultural comparison of El Sistema in Venezuela and the USA, reporting consistency with regard to positive outcomes relating to personal development. Overall, parents and students from both contexts reported improvements in the focus and discipline, time management, relaxation and coping, communication and ability to work with others, academic performance and aspirations, creative thinking, and self-esteem.

In the context of the OAS orchestra programme for youth at risk in the Caribbean (Galarce et al., 2012), qualitative data suggested that students benefited in terms of self-confidence and motivation, etiquette, respect for authority, school skills, ability to focus, grade improvement, and time management. Qualitative data were collected via focus groups and student narratives. As previously indicated, few if any detail as to the number of participants, time, and frequency of the focus groups was reported.

In addition to improvements in musical skills, participants in the orchestra La Esperanza, Costa Rica (Brenes Villalobos et al., 2012) demonstrated enhanced values such as responsibility, independence, obedience, discipline, teamwork, respect for diversity, solidarity, self-regulation, and harmonious coexistence. After participating in the orchestra for one year, participants fostered personal qualities such as resilience and time management, and developed a desire for personal growth and positive perceptions of self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-image.
Discussing the impact of the Batuta (Colombia) music education programmes, which offer strategies for social, educational and cultural development, and supports the national system of youth orchestras in Colombia, Cuéllar (2010) draws on the key findings from the Crece Report (Matijasevic et al., 2008). The author reports qualitative data demonstrating examples of personal development that resonate with much of the research and evaluation reported from elsewhere around the world (see examples above). Students’ perceptions of overall personal impact of Batuta included positive changes in the participants’ living values (respect, tolerance, honesty, solidarity, team work), sense of responsibility, emotional regulation (to control aggressiveness, intolerance and impatience), self-esteem (self-efficacy, sense of competence), self-care, resilience, happiness, aspirations, increase of social networks, and quality in family interaction.

4.1.5 SELF-ESTEEM

Based on her observations and interviews gathered during two two-week visits to six case study El Sistema sites in Venezuela, Hollinger (2006) suggests that one of the most successful ways that El Sistema has tackled poverty has been through raising the self-esteem of participating children. According to Hollinger (2006, p. 147), the music education offered by El Sistema does demonstrably target and help marginalized children and ‘changes lives because it first changes hearts’, equipping participants with the psychological tools and cultural capital to be able to effect material change in their own lives.

Teacher perceptions of student personal development, including self-esteem, were explored by Israel (2012). Teacher respondents from six American El Sistema programmes indicated consistently that they believed students had, since participating in the programme, achieved higher levels of self-esteem. Other reported benefits included musical discipline, focus, behavioural discipline, self-worth, creativity and pride in their instrument.

The pre and post quantitative measures completed by 34 In Harmony Lambeth children revealed no statistically significant change over time with regard to self-esteem. Nor were there statistically significant changes with regard to motivation, emotional awareness, or attitudes to school and to music. However, the researchers, who compared two case study schools, noted that statistically significant differences between the two schools that were evident at the beginning of the project had disappeared by the time the second survey was carried out, suggesting that the pupils who initially had scored lower on those measures had benefited the most (Lewis et al., 2011).

Esqueda Torres (2001) reported that children involved in FMSB scored more highly than others who were not involved, with regard to self-esteem. In addition, the FMSB children reportedly scored more highly than their peers for motivation, personal responsibility, self-concept, optimism, expectations of success, and generally positive attitudes towards academic activities. The findings were based on a sample of 265 children, parents and staff involved in the programme. It is not clear how many children were in the comparison group or whether the comparison group was matched for demographic characteristics. In a follow-up study involving a sample of 177 participants who had been in the original 2001 sample (Esqueda Torres, 2002, cited in Hollinger, 2006) it is reported that children from FMSB show continuing improvements and, in addition, progress with regard to discipline, respect for social norms, sociability, and personal responsibility.

4.1.6 RAISED ASPIRATIONS

Teachers and parents of In Harmony Lambeth children reported raised aspirations amongst the children, attributed in part to contact with role models in the form of In Harmony teachers and visiting artists (Lewis et al., 2011). Raised aspirations were also noted by Uy (2010), who reported that participation in El Sistema
had fostered a major positive impact with regard to enhanced academic aspirations amongst the students, corroborating the evidence put forth by Cuesta (2008, p.12), where it is reported that 63% of participants in El Sistema ‘have good or excellent achievement in school (compared to 50% among their classmates who do not participate in the System)’. Uy illustrates this point with the example of the núcleo of Chacao in El Sistema, where 100% of the students were enrolled in high school, university or conservatoire, with 40% of these studying music and the others pursuing careers in engineering, medicine, and other subjects. Within the context of underprivileged communities, this, according to Uy (p. 28) ‘is astounding.’

Many USA programmes identify elevated aspirations and goals as one area in which they want to enrich their students’ lives through participation in their programmes. Numerous USA programmes have included measures in their evaluations which demonstrate the successes they have achieved in realizing these types of goals (for example, Case, 2013; Conservatory Lab Charter School, 2012; Duckworth, 2013; Harmony Stockton, 2013; Orchestrating Diversity, 2013; Renaissance Arts Academy, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Silk et al., 2008; Smith, 2013; Smith, 2013; The People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago, 2013).

Programmes like the Renaissance Arts Academy in Los Angeles, California have demonstrated the elevated academic and professional aspirations that their students develop as the result of participating in an academically and musically rigorous and intense programme. Their high graduation rate of 100%, coupled with the percentage of students who continue their educations at universities (95%) exemplify the huge transformations that can occur in students, in terms of not only what they believe they can accomplish, but in turn, the goals and expectations they set for themselves as a result of this realization. Accomplishments in music and the arts transfer to their beliefs about their academic capabilities, and their elevated goals and achievements in both these areas attest to the shifts that take place in their sense of possibilities as a result. Other programmes that have measured and reported raised aspirations (and greater self-esteem) amongst students include Austin Soundwaves, the Boston Conservatory Lab Charter School, El Sistema Colorado, Harmony Stockton, Kalamazoo Kids in Tune, KidZNotes, OrchKids, the San Diego Community Opus Project, YOLA, and the People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago.

A prominent theme reported in the evaluation of Big Noise, Scotland (GCPH, 2015) was related to raised aspirations. The researchers reported qualitative evidence demonstrating enhanced motivation, determination, willingness to be challenged, and ability to imagine and achieve goals, particularly amongst the secondary school participants. As noted: ‘What is clear is that, among the very few young people in S5 (aged 15 to 16) in the Big Noise programme, there is some evidence that the programme is helping to raise aspirations and support staying at school after S4’ (GCPH, 2015, p. 46).

4.1.7 SELF-CONCEPT

Findings from a mixed-method study carried out within the context of 10 El Sistema núcleos (López and Berrío, 2007) suggested that the orchestras were perceived as a positive space for orchestra members’ overall development in self-concept, including:

- Self-affirmation and identity formation
- Social skills linked to communication and expressivity
- Solidarity
- Sense of responsibility and commitment
- Discipline and time management
• Autonomy
• Lower stress and tension

Parents tended to attribute academic achievement, responsibility, commitment and concentration to their children’s permanence in the orchestra. These findings corroborate those reported by Cuesta (2008, p.12) who states that parents of young people participating in El Sistema have noted ‘substantial improvements in their children’s punctuality, responsibility, and discipline after going through the System (95%, 96%, and 86%, respectively).’ Amongst other abilities developed in the orchestra, López and Berrios, (2007) added that orchestra participants showed openness to new realities, value and tolerance to diversity, personal identity, and self-affirmation.

Results from the test of self-concept showed that members of the orchestras had an adequate self-concept, and that these results were consistent across ages, orchestras, and gender. Members of the orchestra reported positive perceptions of their own academic and intellectual abilities, as well as the image they projected to their peers. In the anxiety dimension, the test suggested that members perceived a generally stressful climate within the orchestras that diminished over time. The popularity dimension suggested that members of the orchestra valued their participation in an ensemble and that they believed participation carried social prestige. The happiness dimension did not show high levels, possibly suggesting the lack of students’ general satisfaction with themselves. The authors concluded that self-concept scores were not substantially different from those found in the general population (López and Berrios, 2007).

In relation to children’s psychosocial development, Matijasevic et al. (2008) noted an increased sense of responsibility, better use of free time, strengthening of living values and coexistence, communication skills and social networks, and happiness amongst participants in Batuta. Enhanced self-esteem was attributed to two basic factors: 1) the possibility to recognize their own abilities, and 2) being acknowledged by their families and friends. Children and young participants showed positive perceptions of self-efficacy in learning music. Participating in the programme fostered the acquisition of healthy habits, as a result of students’ willingness to be ‘good’ with themselves and their peers.

Results of the self-concept test carried out amongst students in the Batuta Pre-Orchestra Programme (Unión Temporal SEI S. A.- Economía Urbana, 2010) showed that future expectations (i.e., listen to music, play a musical instrument, feel safe when performing, enjoy music, and sing) were similar between participants in the programme and a comparison group comprising non-participants. Both groups also self-reported as being less competent in song-writing, improvisation, teaching music to other kids, and understanding music notation.

Findings related to personal competencies amongst the Batuta participants showed a positive effect in perceptions of self-confidence, independence, determination, perseverance, and control. Significant differences between the participants and non-participants showed that participation in the pre-orchestra had a positive impact on students’ volition, academic achievement, resilience, and leadership. Other aspects that were favoured included students’ self-determination and decision-making, emotional stability, self-efficacy, independence, perseverance. The relationship between music participation in Batuta and self-esteem was not statistically significant (Unión Temporal SEI S. A.- Economía Urbana, 2010).

Another study undertaken within the Colombian context explored personal development and positive self-concept amongst young people in a youth detention centre. Some positive outcomes, including musical and citizenship skills were attributed to participation in intensive guitar workshops, offered as part of a rehabilitation programme (Castañeda-Castañeda, 2009). Generally, the participants expressed interest for
continuing with this type of learning in and out of the institution. Participants who remained in the workshop expressed the sense of well-being, peace, and change that the musical activity fostered. However, there were some pedagogical difficulties due to participants’ permanency in the centre, suggesting that content needed to be flexible and modifiable.

The idea of music participation as a key facet in the development of positive ‘personhood’, characterized by psychological well-being and a strong self-concept, was explored by Rincón Prat (2013). She reported that through participation in Batuta, the Colombian Sistema-inspired programme, young people developed a strong sense of ‘personhood’, supported by its fostering of confidence, effort, expression, and social interaction. Batuta offered a learning environment where, through musical opportunity, young people developed self-efficacy and aspirations. The programme opened up opportunities for friendships to develop and for the sharing of common experience.

In a similar vein the B-Sharp Fort Worth programme (USA) reported that results from the parent/guardian survey indicated general agreement that the students had developed in terms of positive self-concept, experiencing a greater sense of themselves and their relationship to their communities. They reported positive changes in their children in terms of their perspectives about their lives and their connection to their schools and the programme in particular (Schurgin, 2012). Many responses from parents, teachers, and students themselves representing several other USA programmes have reflected a stronger sense of identity amongst students, attributed to participation in the programme (Austin Soundwaves, 2011-2012; Brennan, 2013; Kalamazoo Kids, 2013; KidZnotes, 2012; Composing Better Lives, Miami Music Project, 2012; Orchestrating Diversity, 2013; Potter, 2013; Renaissance Arts Academy, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; The People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago, 2013). Parents have observed that this enhanced self-concept extended to their perception of their own roles in school and within their families.

4.1.8 FACTORS UNDERPINNING SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND COGNITIVE WELL-BEING

Four key factors that underpinned the Venezuelan programme’s success in raising children’s self-esteem have been identified (Chang, 2007). First, the FMSB núcleos offered a safe environment. Secondly the programme was characterized by a network of close interpersonal bonds amongst the pupils and teachers. Third, it offered the children a medium through which to acquire cultural capital, and finally, the activities themselves were structured in such a way as to nurture self-esteem, taking place within a supportive sphere of activity in which the students could develop skills and take pride in their achievements.

Stupar (2012), who explored teacher perceptions of the influence that Superar, Austria, had on children’s personal development, reported perceptions of positive changes in self-confidence, communication skills, and social behaviour. This was attributed to positive feedback from performances (particularly performances in high status cultural venues such as the Wiener Konzerthaus) and to the highly interactive, intensive, and joyful musical activities that children engaged with on a daily basis. Singing together in school and at concerts was seen as a means by which the children developed a community spirit and personal resources for meeting various life challenges. The teachers acknowledged that there was, amongst their classes, a minority of children with significant personal challenges that required more intensive personal support and for whom the programme did not seem to foster these positive outcomes. However, for the majority, the programme was perceived by teachers as having a significant positive impact upon personal development.

Cristanell (2012) reported that teacher perceptions within the Superar Austria context reinforced the views that, in addition to outstanding musical progress, significant progress in the children’s attentive behaviour, cognitive development, and personality maturation could be attributed to participation in group singing.
One child in particular, who came to Superar having been branded a ‘troublemaker’, demonstrated significant progress in this regard.

Using the perspective of ‘ontogenesis’ (the process of development from a simple to a more complex level), Majno (2013) highlights several aspects of El Sistema, both in Italy and Venezuela, which contribute to the development of the individual. These range from intensity and frequency of instruction to the cascade or pyramid effect and the subsequent immediate transferability of skills. Additional factors include solidarity in pursuing goals, mutual respect of capacity, and cultivation, recognition, and rewarding of excellence. The concept of personal dignity is also exemplified when a student seeks improvements for him or herself and for the family (Majno, 2013). The author emphasizes that in El Sistema programmes, the musical and social aspects are never separate. Playing together is seen as being connected with being a better citizen, and with caring for one another.

4.1.9 SOCIAL SKILLS AND RELATIONSHIPS

The potential for social skills to be enhanced through musical engagement within an ensemble setting has been investigated. Slevin and Slevin (2013) adopt a psychoanalytic perspective to explain the process by which intensive and prolonged engagement in an orchestral community may facilitate psychological and spiritual development. From their perspective, the ‘ensemble reaches into its audience of family and community’, offering a safe and nurturing space where children experience what it means to persevere ‘in service of an ideal.’ The authors argue that this experience of initiation into a community, where the collective goal is dependent upon individual effort ‘enables ego and relationship development’ (p. 133). Immersion in the ensemble, they propose, gives ‘shape, structure and intensity’ to the ‘challenges of childhood and adolescence’ (p. 137).

Several evaluation reports have noted improvements in social relationships and the development of positive group identity amongst participants in Sistema-inspired programmes. For example, in England the In Harmony Lambeth evaluation (Lewis et al., 2011) revealed improvements in social skills amongst the participating children. Quantitative data collected via pupil surveys administered in 2009 and again in 2011 indicated that there had been a statistically significant positive change with regard to social skills and relationships. This was measured by indicators that included children’s self-reports of how much they tried to help others and take turns, as well as perceptions relating to relationships with other children. The findings are treated with caution as they are based on a small sample: of the initial sample of 50 questionnaire respondents, only 34 completed the follow-up questionnaire. Nevertheless, interviews with parents and teachers reinforced the view that pupils benefited from the programme with respect to developing better social skills.

A whole-school immersion approach was adopted in Ireland by ‘Sing Out With Strings’, delivered by members of the Irish Chamber Orchestra. The project, after three years, was found to foster a strong, positive group identity that focused on music, across the three participating schools (Kenny and Moore, 2011). For example, when asked to design a new school crest, every child produced a design that included a musical symbol.

Fernández-Calvo (n.d.) comments on some individual cases of Buenos Aires youth orchestra students who were in risk conditions or showed improvements in social behaviour, resilience, and social skills, including:

- active participation in group integration
• close affective relationship among the conductor and teachers with students stimulating a common project
• deep playful relationship implicit in the process
• quick identification of achievements backed by the mass culture (position of the artist)
• social advancement

Similarly, informal conversations with programme administrators of two youth orchestra projects in Argentina (Villalba, 2010) indicated that the orchestras provided a safe space for participants who faced multiple challenges and difficulties in daily life. Personal stories from students confirmed that the goals of socialization and solidarity were in large part achieved. Most student reflections about their experiences in the orchestras were positive. Students reported high aspirations and expectations, and the evidence suggested that the orchestra fosters socialization, solidarity, and friendship among participants. However, Villalba also stated that social problems could not be solved solely through music. Drawing on participant observations and informal conversations within the context of the two youth orchestras, the author cites examples of some students who did not feel completely integrated. Other students, it is reported, had become bored with participating in the orchestra, and one former student, after participating in the orchestra, was imprisoned three times.

A number of USA programmes enquired about any types of changes that parents, teachers, and programme staff members had observed in the student participants (for example, Austin Soundwaves, 2011–2012; Bergerson and Motto, 2013; Brennan, 2013; Case, 2013; Composing better lives, Miami Music Project, 2012; Kalamazoo Kids in Tune, 2013; KidZnotes, 2012; Renaissance Arts Academy, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Schurgin, 2012; Silk et al., 2008; Smith, 2013; The People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago, 2013). In many open-ended responses to surveys and other evaluation instruments, many respondents commented on the increased successes that their children and students had had in terms of getting along with others – both adults and their peers. The children themselves had undergone noticeable transformations in terms of their understanding and enactment of qualities like demonstrating respect and having consideration for others. Because of their experiences in the orchestras and ensembles, they understood the importance of working cooperatively.

This realization transferred to their personal and individual interactions. Other evaluation instruments which were directed towards the students themselves revealed the sense of bonding and community that the students experienced from their participation in the music programmes. Parents also noted that many of their students preferred attending music classes above other extracurricular activities, and that their friends in the programmes were a source of this investment.

An evaluation team with ACME (Bergerson and Motto, 2013) investigated whether students experienced greater empathy for students who seemed more similar to them in terms of their perceived identity, or whether shared interests could serve as a bridge upon which students might build connections. The results of the small sample size survey revealed that, when students had shared interests with their peers, this raised the level of empathy they had for their peers. Other programmes that have reported evidence of this benefit of Sistema participation include the Austin Soundwaves, B Sharp Fort Worth, El Sistema Colorado, KidZNotes, the Miami Music Project, OrchKids, the Renaissance Arts Academy, the San Diego Community Opus Project, YOLA, and YOURS programme.

4.1.10 PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Improvements in pro-social behaviour have been noted in evaluations of Sistema-inspired programmes
After a six-month period of participation in the OAS orchestra programme for youth at risk in the Caribbean (Galarce et al., 2012), Jamaican OASIS students were significantly less (p<0.0001) likely to get easily angered and display aggressive behaviours (p<0.05) including teasing, shoving, hitting, kicking or fighting. Students were also significantly less likely to be involved with delinquent peers (p<0.057) and had higher educational aspirations (p<0.087). At the end of 18 months, results in Jamaica indicated a ‘distinctly positive overall pattern for the OASIS group’ (Galarce et al., 2012, p. 13). In terms of academic aspirations, 62% of the OASIS group, as compared with 41% of the control group, expressed hopes to obtain a doctoral degree. Increases in self-regulation were also seen with 7% of the OASIS group, as compared to 21% of the non-OASIS students, reporting speaking inappropriately to others. So too were OASIS students less likely to report that pleasurable activities prevented them from achieving their work goals (26% versus 42%). OASIS students were also less likely to procrastinate in their schoolwork, be involved in fights, and use alcohol or marijuana.

At the six-month stage, Haitian results were similar to those of Jamaica with OASIS students being significantly less likely to be angered easily (p < 0.0001), less likely to be involved in aggressive behaviours and to have delinquent peer relationships (p < 0.057). Within 18 months, results for Haitian OASIS students mirrored those of Jamaica in terms of academic aspirations with 80% as opposed to 61% hoping to attain a doctoral degree. OASIS students from Haiti were also less likely to have disagreements with parents or caregivers, and were more likely to be involved in sports.

4.1.11 COLLABORATIVE LEARNING AND TEAMWORK

Teamwork has been heralded as a hallmark of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes. Participation in Sistema-inspired programmes has been found to foster collaborative learning skills and strategies for working effectively as a team. Students from the Conservatory Lab Charter School in the USA were reported to benefit from participation in the El Sistema programme, particularly with regard to social skills. Parents, teachers, and administrators indicated that they believed playing in the orchestra had supported students in their social development, providing an important scaffold for developing collaborative learning skills (Campe and Kaufman, 2013).

Similarly, GCPH (2015) drew on qualitative evidence to support the claim that ‘learning to play within the orchestra also enables children and young people to develop their team-working, collaboration and co-operation skills in the medium term’ (p. 49).

In a similar vein, Savoie (2012) reported that following approximately 10 months of participation in Sistema New Brunswick 69% of parents felt that their children had developed social skills and the ability to work in a team. This finding was based on a pre (n = 68) and post participation (n = 132) survey. Sistema New Brunswick parents, employees, school principals, and teachers all agreed that participants developed musical, social, and teamwork skills as a result of their involvement in the programme. These skills were not limited only to the musical setting but also were observed in home and school settings.

However, Baker (2014) cautions that the hierarchical and competitive nature of the El Sistema núcleos, as
observed and described in his ethnographic research carried out in Venezuela and involving approximately 100 interviews with El Sistema stakeholders, were not always conducive to collaborative teamwork. As Baker states: ‘since young musicians are competing against one another for rank, salary, and opportunities, success often depends on another’s failure. Achievement comes in the form of individual promotion, which neither depends on nor benefits the collective’ (pp 217-218). While Baker acknowledges that orchestral performances are symbolic of teamwork and attests to the ‘magic’ when individuals surpass themselves ‘through collective endeavor’ (p. 140), he argues that ‘the principal dynamics of a youth orchestra rehearsal have little to do with teamwork’ (p. 218), being dominated by authoritarian and unilateral conductor-led ‘correction sequences.

4.1.12 ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT

Some researchers have investigated a potential link between participation in El Sistema programmes and enhanced academic performance amongst the students. For example, an analysis of music literacy tests, which included assessments of critical thinking and problem solving, administered to students at the Conservatory Lab Charter School (Campe and Kaufman, 2013) suggested that high levels of musical literacy acquired through participation in the El Sistema programme impacted positively upon classroom learning. Scripp et al. (2013) use examples and illustrative statistics from the Conservatory Lab Charter School (CLCS), a Sistema-inspired programme linked with Boston’s New England Conservatory, to advocate the value of music education for all students. The authors argue that there is evidence of a marked increase in student school success amongst those participating in CLCS, as compared with their peers who do not participate in such programmes. Linking a philosophy for music education predicated upon the belief in ‘acquired expertise’ with reported neurological, cognitive, and social-emotional rationales, the authors make recommendations for expanding school music education offerings in a way which dramatically increases access to, and quantity of, music education (for children in grades K-12).

Kraus, Hornickel et al. (2014) investigated whether music training within a Sistema-inspired programme would enhance academic outcomes by providing auditory enrichment to children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The researchers hypothesised that music training could counteract the increased risk for academic failure and dropout that other studies have attributed to impoverished auditory environments (i.e. greater exposure to ambient noise and fewer opportunities to participate in complex language interactions during development). A within-groups, longitudinal (two years) design was adopted. The research involved 26 participants aged 7-9 involved in the Harmony Project, a Sistema-inspired program that provides free community music instruction to disadvantaged students in gang reduction zones of Los Angeles. The research revealed that children classified as ‘more engaged’ in the program (based on attendance and teacher-described classroom participation) developed stronger brain encoding of speech after two years than their less engaged peers. Although overall a statistically- significant decline in reading fluency over the 2 years was found, the researchers highlighted that change in reading fluency scores was strongly correlated with engagement in instrumental classes. Children who participated more in the Harmony Project classes were more likely to show an improvement in reading fluency, while those who participated less were more likely to show a decrease in reading fluency.

Similar results, linking academic attainment with greater participation and engagement in the programme, were reported by El Sistema Lehigh Valley, in the USA (ESLV, 2013). Overall, the percentage of participating students who achieved Maths and Reading scores at proficient or advanced levels rose from 50% to 86% (Maths) and from 50% to 83% (Reading), between the beginning and the end of their first academic year of participation in the programme. However, a comparison of those who had started in September and therefore engaged with 60% or more of the programme activities with those who had joined later (November) and
therefore engaged with less than 60% of activities revealed even greater differences. Amongst those who had engaged with the programme the most, the percentage of children achieving proficient or advanced scores for Maths rose from 56% to 91%, while for Reading it rose from 59% to 91%. In contrast, amongst those who engaged with less than 60% of the programme, the percentage of children who achieved proficient or advanced scores for Maths rose from 17% to 67%, while for Reading it rose from 0% to 17%.

Kraus, Slater et al. (2014) also carried out a longitudinal randomised control trial, investigating whether participation in the Harmony Project caused changes in auditory neurophysiology. The researchers hypothesized that participation in the musical training would improve the neurophysiological processing of speech sound contrast, thereby impacting positively on language and cognitive skills. Forty-four children aged between six and nine years took part in the study. All were students in public schools in Los Angeles gang reduction zones. The children were assigned to one of two groups; group one began participation in the Harmony Project immediately, while group two deferred for one year. Children were tested annually using a neuropsychological test battery. The study revealed that children who had completed two years of music training had a stronger neurophysiological distinction of stop consonants, a neural mechanism linked to reading and language skills. (i.e. the children showed improvement in the neural differentiation of the syllables “ba” and “ga”), as compared with children who had had just one year of participation. One year of training was insufficient to elicit changes in nervous system function. Beyond one year, greater amounts of instrumental music training were associated with larger gains in neural processing.

Kraus and her team (2015) discussed the implications of their extensive research programme which has demonstrated the habilitative power of music training, and cause-effect relationships with regards the development of biological indices of speech processing. Discussing their findings, the researchers suggested that ‘A musician’s strengthened automatic interaction with sound may reflect a stronger auditory cognitive system, strengthened through consistent cognitive interactions with sound.’

Smithurst (2011) reported that after one year of participation in the In Harmony Norwich programme (UK), children from Years 1-4 in one school were achieving better scores in maths, reading, and writing compared with their peers who were not involved in the programme. To illustrate, the proportion of children reaching target grades in maths was 90%, compared with 68% amongst the children not attending In Harmony. No child involved in the In Harmony programme was rated as ‘well below target’, while 11% of the children not in the programme fell in to that category. A similar trend was evident in reading, where 85% of In Harmony children reached target grades, compared with 62% who were not in the programme. Five percent of In Harmony children were rated as ‘well below target’ in reading, compared with 20% of those not in the programme. In writing the same pattern emerged; 65% of In Harmony children reached target grades compared with 45% of those not in the programme and while 15% of In Harmony children were graded as ‘well below target’, this contrasted with 33% of the children who were not in the programme.

Similar trends were reported from the other In Harmony Norwich schools. Amongst Year 1 pupils in a second school, for example, 39% of children accessing In Harmony reached a ‘Level 5’ in reading, compared with 0.6% of those not accessing In Harmony. Twelve percent of In Harmony Year 1 participants reached Level 5 in writing and 18% reached this level in maths, compared with 0% in writing and 0.3% in maths amongst their non-In Harmony peers. These figures should be treated with caution however, as Smithurst (2011) does not report to what extent the non-In Harmony group could be treated as a ‘comparison’ group, with no information about the characteristics of the In Harmony children as compared with those who did not access the programme. It could be that there were a range of variables that could have explained the differences and there is no evidence that the differences could reliably be attributed to participation in the In Harmony programme. Nevertheless, qualitative data from interviews with children, parents, and teachers did support
the view that the children involved in the programme did develop a deeper engagement with their learning, generally, with heightened concentration and commitment noted in particular.

In 2011, Burns and Bewick reported that attainment in maths, reading, and writing amongst In Harmony Liverpool children had been impressive. Measuring progression in terms of national curriculum sublevels, whereby nationally an average child is expected to progress by three sub-levels, the researchers reported that after two years of the In Harmony programme 42.5% of children had progressed 4+ levels in Maths, 53% in reading, and 42% in writing. In their 2013 report, Burns and Berwick reported that this positive trend had continued: ‘the significant recorded improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving national expectations on attainment remains very impressive in the context of 4.5 hours being taken out of curriculum delivery time across the school and dedicated to music through In Harmony Liverpool’ (p. 30). In 2013, the researchers reported that after four years of In Harmony whole-school approach (2009-2013) the whole-school averages indicated that the percentage of children achieving national expectations for attainment had risen from 40% to 58% for Maths; 47% to 54% for Reading; and 37% to 44% for Writing.

These figures included a high proportion of children identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN); the school population included 36.5% of SEN children, compared with a sector average of 25.5%. Burns and Bewick (2011; 2012) suggested that the In Harmony pedagogy may have been having a particularly positive impact for the SEN children and recommended that this be an area for future research.

When compared with neighbouring schools, the In Harmony Liverpool school has seen a significant and steady improvement in the percentage of children who achieve their academic targets. Although the rate of improvement has slowed, this could be to a number of factors, not least of which could be rising teacher expectations and aspirations for the children. Burns and Bewick (2012) highlight that the phenomenon of increasing proportions of children achieving their academic targets is impressive, particularly within a context where 4.5 hours per week of curriculum time is devoted to In Harmony.

There was no quantitative evidence, at the time of the 2011 evaluation, that Big Noise, Scotland had fostered a positive impact on school attainment (GEN, 2011a). However, the researchers noted that partnerships between Big Noise staff and school staff were still in the early stages and suggested that as the two groups develop shared goals it would be possible to demonstrate how they were working together to achieve demonstrable improvements in attainment. The 2015 report (GCPH, 2015), based on qualitative evidence, suggested some significant impact of participation in the programme on academic outcomes, including improved literacy skills amongst children with English as a second language, as well as enhanced concentration amongst young people from nursery school through to secondary school. In accordance with Education Scotland’s assessment of educational and learning quality, it was reported that ‘a significant number of participants are achieving exceptionally well (GCPH, 2015, p. 71). These positive educational outcomes were linked with ‘the acquisition of a wide range of skills for life and work such as self-discipline, time management and organisation’ (ibid).

The Sistema Aotearoa evaluation (Wilson, McKegg et al., 2012) used a self-determined rubric, with five performance levels ranging from Excellent (5) to Poor (1), to evaluate a range of outcomes within the school setting. Wilson, McKegg et al. reported that there was a Reasonable Performance rating (3/5) in terms of children’s improvement in their overall achievement, engagement, and social skills in the school setting. The researchers concluded that there was ‘promising early evidence that the programme may well be contributing to a range of social, developmental, musical and educational outcomes for the children participating in the programme.’
In Australia, a small-scale study (N=92) was carried out over a 12-month period, focusing on non-musical benefits of Sistema-inspired programmes (Osborne et al., 2015). The study involved two primary schools, both with student cohorts characterized by generational poverty, current or first-generation immigrant or refugee status. Improved non-verbal reasoning, verbal and mathematical skills and psychosocial wellbeing were found for students in one school, although these results were not replicated in the second school. The researchers suggested that this apparent discrepancy could be attributed to differences between the programmes. In the first school, the programme had been running for three times longer than in the second school, and was better established in the community. At the time of the second data collection (after 12 months) the majority of children in the programme at the first school had been playing their instruments for between 30 and 42 months, as compared to 25 months in the second school.

We sought to understand the potential for positive non-musical outcomes for economically and socially disadvantaged primary school students who are involved in instrumental music learning programs. Two schools with students experiencing generational poverty, current or first-generation immigrant or refugee status who were running El-Sistema inspired music programs participated in the study. Ninety-two students in Years 3–6 completed audiovisual assessments of non-verbal reasoning, verbal and mathematical ability, and psychosocial well-being. Comparisons by school and program participation over a period of 12 months, indicate improved non-verbal (visuo-spatial) reasoning, verbal and mathematical skills, and psychosocial well-being for students at School 1. Findings indicate some evidence of positive outcomes for low socioeconomic status and socially disadvantaged children who participate in El Sistema-inspired extracurricular music programs.

Results of the Chilean study carried out by Egaña de Sol (2008) show a positive effect in academic achievement in verbal and math skills (.53 and .30 SD respectively). The effect is stronger in language than math. Results from the qualitative analysis suggest that orchestra students are generally more effective in meeting their personal goals (cohort 2003). Parents of the orchestra participants held higher expectations of their academic achievements than parents of non-participants that could be attributed to the time in which the orchestra was well constituted and had presentations around the country. It is argued that the active musical performance of the orchestra during those years could have had multiple positive effects in non-cognitive abilities such as self-esteem, social skills, and teamwork, amongst others. In relation to student permanence at the university level, it was shown that three of the seven participants experienced improvement as compared to their control matches. However, only one orchestra was considered in the study, with a reduced number of participants. Thus it is recognized that the results cannot be generalizable to other orchestras in Chile.

An evaluation of academic achievement amongst student participants in the national programme of youth orchestras in Chile (Evaluación de impacto programa prquestas juveniles e infantiles, 2010) revealed that participating in the programme had positive results in academic achievement, measured in standard deviation points. However, the effect was not found in all cohorts. Music participants showed higher academic achievement in about 0.2 points of standard deviation of scores (if the standard deviation of a course is 1 point (10 decimals), the impact of the programme represents 2.0 decimal in the mean score. In an educational intervention, 0.2 points of standard deviation is said to be of considerable magnitude. Although not consistent among cohorts, the authors suggest a possible cumulative effect over time. However, a longer period of evaluation would be required. The authors acknowledge that a larger number of indicators would be required to evaluate other areas of development (e.g. social, emotional). Also acknowledged in the report from the Observatorio Social Universidad Alberto (Evaluación de impacto programa orquestas juveniles e infantiles, 2010), this orchestra is exemplary in quality and management as compared to other orchestras, which does not allow for a generalization of the results.
According to Matijasevic et al. (2008), participation in Batuta impacted positively on students’ academic achievement and the development of other cognitive abilities such as creativity, ability of abstraction, and capacity to solve emotional problems. This was notwithstanding some difficulties reported by teachers with regard to discipline and study time. The programme also contributed to raising aspirations among participants: to become a professional musician, a music teacher, a singer, and to continue their music involvement as a complementary activity.

According to the evaluation of the Batuta pre-orchestral programme (Unión Temporal SEI S. A.- Economia Urbana, 2010), orchestral students participated in the programme and maintained regular attendance at school. A positive impact of orchestral participation was observed in all aspects of academic achievement. Participation promoted higher mental concentration and reduced indiscipline, commonly associated with aggressiveness towards teachers. It was observed that children participating in the programme were more likely to balance and manage the requirements in both the orchestra and regular school, as compared to the control group comprising non-participants; orchestra students even dedicated more time to school activities than their peers in the control group. It is reported that orchestra students improved their ability to maintain concentration for longer periods of time in both orchestral and academic activities. The test (ENI)1 test showed significant differences in which the group comprising participants in Batuta, in comparison with non-participants, had higher scores in verbal encoding memory, auditory perception, expressive language, metalinguistic skills, spatial abilities, visual attention, conceptual skills, executive functions and math skills.

Esqueda Torres (2004) investigated academic achievement amongst El Sistema students in Venezuela. Teachers (it is not clear whether these were classroom school teachers or teachers from the núcleos) reported that academic achievement from students in the 1999 cohort was better than amongst the 2003 cohort; however, both groups were better than their non-El Sistema peers in the respective class groups. It is concluded that being part of El Sistema had a direct effect on academic achievement of students (however, this was based on teachers’ characterization of student performance – poor/regular/good/excellent; no standardized measurements were used).

Based on the results of the pilot study carried out by Sanjuán (2007), the intervention group showed better academic achievement than the control group; this was observed in gross and net rates (5% and 4% respectively). Students in the intervention group were more likely to participate in extra-curricular activities. In addition, both students and parents in the intervention group reported a higher level of participation in community activities.

A majority of U.S. programmes focus on increased academic attainment as one of the critical objectives they wish to cultivate in students (for example, Austin Soundwaves, 2011-2012; Brennan, 2013; Case, 2013; Composing better lives, Miami, 2012; Conservatory Lab Charter School, 2012; Harmony Stockton, 2013; Potter, 2013; Renaissance Arts Academy, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Schurgin, 2012; Smith, 2013; The People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago, 2013). Many programmes keep records of students’ grades and note increases, especially in critical areas like reading and mathematics. Miami Music Project reported that 60% of parents believed the programme helped their children do better in school. Similarly, in El Sistema Colorado, over half of teachers and 100% of parents believed their children were better students overall, after being involved in the programme. This was corroborated by evidence that demonstrated reading proficiency levels amongst El Sistema Colorado students after one year of participation as being between 2.6% and 11.2% above the levels for non-El Sistema students. KidZNotes

In addition, the number of students who achieve honour roll status frequently rises as a student acquires more long-term participation in programmes. In the Miami Music Project, 85% of students are on the honour
roll, and other programmes have reported from teacher surveys that a majority of their student participants are considered ‘A and B students’ overall. For example, KidZNotes teachers reported that 72% of their 2012-2013 students were classified as ‘A’ or ‘B’ students, as compared with their peers who were not participants in the programme, amongst whom 59% were classified in the same way.

In addition to these findings, a few programmes have administered tests to their students which record increased academic achievement after the child has participated in the programme for an extended period of time. The Boston Conservatory Lab Charter School partners with an external evaluator to administer five data-driven assessments of students in English language achievement and mathematics skills. Their findings demonstrate that, compared with data from the Boston Public Schools and from the State, the Conservatory Lab Charter School made greater increases in the percentage of students gaining proficiency (scoring in the proficient or advanced category) in each of the common school performance criteria (ELA, maths, science). The data also reveal how the school achieves its benchmarks of a majority of students reaching a certain performance level at the conclusion of the academic year.

Programme participation not only impacts actual academic achievement, but it also affects how much student participants enjoy being in school and self-identify as being successful. In a survey utilized by Austin Soundwaves, over 10% of programme participants did not view themselves as doing well in school prior to their participation in the programme. However, after they had been in the programme for one year, there was an increase of 10.9% in self-reports of success at school. Student self-reports also indicated that their enjoyment of school had increased by 8.8% and 18.5% more students reported feeling motivated at school. Other programmes that have reported evidence suggesting that increased academic attainment could be attributed to participation include B Sharp Fort Worth, El Sistema Colorado, Harmony Stockton, OrchKids, the Renaissance Arts Academy, the San Diego Community Opus Project, and the People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago.

The potential for participation in Sistema-inspired programmes continues to be of interest to researchers and there are some studies in progress that have not yet been reported. For example, in the UK, Music First (Strowger and Leaver, 2013) has made this a focus of their evaluation plan. Using a quasi-experimental, longitudinal design the programme team will track the academic attainment of primary school-aged children over several years of participation. In the USA, YOLA at HOLA is collecting rich longitudinal data relating to the possible impact of intensive, high quality music training on cognitive abilities (HOLA: Heart of Los Angeles, 2012; Spangler, 2012; University of Southern California, 2012). The five-year study will track children from ages 6 and 7 until they reach ages 11 and 12. The researchers will use standard psychological assessments and advanced brain imaging techniques to track the children’s cognitive, emotional, social, and brain development.

4.1.13 MEMORY

Roden et al. (2013) carried out an investigation of the influence of group instrumental training on working memory amongst primary-aged children learning instruments through the German Sistema-inspired JeKl programme. A quasi-experimental design was used, with a group of 25 children involved in instrumental training compared with a second group of 25 children who received natural science training. The children were tested at three points over the course of 18 months and the results demonstrated that the music group outperformed the natural science group in specific aspects of working memory concerned with auditory processing. This study adds to a growing body of literature concerned with the relationship between musical training and cognitive abilities. However, while a valuable piece of research, it is limited in terms of what it can tell us about El Sistema, as the JeKl programme, while Sistema-inspired, does not feature the intensity
and frequency of contact that are amongst the fundamental principles of El Sistema. It is also unclear whether the fact that the children were learning in a group of up to five was a significant factor, as compared with the control group who were learning in larger classes.

The authors (Rodent, Kreutz, and Bongard, 2012) published an earlier study relating to the same research question, using a different sample of children. Here, the research included a third control group who received no additional training. The musically trained children outperformed the control groups on measures relating to verbal memory but not on measures of visual memory skills. The findings reinforce the view that music education for primary children may have beneficial cognitive outcomes, but again, are limited in the extent to which they may provide an evidence base for El Sistema pedagogy.

Stupar (2012) reported that, in the context of Superar Austria, intensive work with musical lyrics was perceived by teachers to enhance language skills and to facilitate improved memory amongst participating children.

4.1.14 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

A major area of focus for many USA programmes is the possible impact that participation in a Sistema-inspired programme can have on students’ rates of attendance and tardiness. Programmes which have documented some evidence concerning school attendance include the Austin Soundwaves (2011-2012), the Boston Conservatory Lab Charter School (2012), Harmony Stockton (2013), Kalamazoo Kids in Tune (2013), KidZNotes (2012), OrchKids (Potter, 2013, the Renaissance Arts Academy (2012a, 2012b, 2013, the San Diego Community Opus Project (Smith, 2013), and YOURS programme (2013).

School attendance records have been acquired by many programmes as a way of tracking these data. Programmes also keep a clear record of how many times students attend music instruction classes, how many performances they participate in, and even how many events are attended by parents and guardians. Many programmes include in their evaluation reports a description of how student attendance has increased from previous levels. For example, the B Sharp Programme in the USA (Schurgin, 2012) reported a decrease in absenteeism between 2012 and 2013, from an average of 6.5 days to 4.5 days per child.

Other programmes conduct comparisons between the school attendance rates of their students, and that of the overall average at the students’ schools. Many students attend schools where a majority of students qualify for free or reduced school lunch; often, attendance rates at these schools are also higher than a state or local average. Evaluation results (USA) have shown that Sistema student participants generally show an increase in attendance, and also a higher rate of school attendance than the average for their schools.

In the UK, the primary school where In Harmony Liverpool has been delivered has seen a drop in absence from 7.94% in 2009 to 5.91% in 2012 (Burns and Bewick, 2012). This compares with a sector average of 5%. Although absenteeism did rise again in 2010, an analysis of attendance rates between 2009 and 2013 showed an overall significant continuing improvement with the school average rate of absence of 6.5% in 2013 (Burns and Bewick, 2013).

Early reports from Sistema Scotland suggested that there was no quantitative evidence of a relationship between Big Noise and school attendance (GEN, 2011a), although some qualitative data did suggest that the programme was making a difference in this regard. Similarly, Morin (2014), who explored the impact of a Sistema-inspired Canadian programme on family, community, and partnering institutions, found, no
improvements in school attendance. However, the Big Noise report highlighted that the programme is not a ‘quick fix’ and that demonstrable quantitative evidence of this sort will take time and will require long-term partnership working amongst Big Noise, school staff, and social support agencies. This view was supported by findings from knowledge exchange activities embedded within the Big Noise programme and led by Allan (2010), who cautioned against evaluation approaches that seek to provide quick evidence of long-term and wide-ranging goals such as transformation or empowerment. More recently, the 2015 report from Big Noise Scotland (GCPH, 2015) suggests that the programme may be associated with improved school attendance. ‘In Raploch, school attendance was 93.2% among Big Noise participants – exactly 4 percentage points higher than the eligible population. Govanhill data show attendance among Big Noise participants to be 92.9% – 1.7 percentage points higher than the eligible population’ (GCPH, 2015, p. 44).

In the context of Sistema Aotearoa, Wilson, McKegg et al. (2012) reported that there was a Reasonable Performance rating (3/5) for children’s improvement in their overall achievement, engagement, and social skills in the school setting. However, there were insufficient data to indicate whether or not participation in the programme led to better school attendance.

4.1.15. CULTURAL CONSUMPTION

One of the major advantages that students who participate in a Sistema programme can undergo is greater access and exposure to cultural products and events that they and their families might not otherwise have knowledge of or attend. The USA programmes which have focused on cultivating this dimension of their operations include the Austin Soundwaves (2011-2012), KidZNotes (2012), OrchKids (Potter, 2013), the Renaissance Arts Academy (2012a, 2012b, 2013), and YOURS programme (2012). In parent and student surveys, many of these programmes have included questions about the prior behaviour of families in terms of their attendance at such cultural events. In the responses they’ve received to these types of questions, as well as others, many parents and children have commented on the way they have increased their attendance at these kinds of events. In addition, many families have reported spending more time engaged with the arts, especially music, just when they spend their time at home. Corroborating the evaluation evidence, American teacher respondents in the survey carried out by Israel (2012) indicated that their students were introduced to wider cultural experiences than the music they were studying, referring to exposure to new ideas, places and perspectives.

Research undertaken within Venezuela has also addressed the concept of cultural consumption. Data collected from parents of children involved in El Sistema, Venezuela (López and Berrios, 2007), suggested that the families frequently attended live performances (this could be explained by their children’s involvement in the orchestra). Reading habits amongst the children were reported as being considerably higher than the national mean score, irrespective of the low rates of the parents’ university education. However, other indicators of cultural consumption were aligned with national means.

4.1.16. LONG-TERM BENEFITS OF EARLY MUSICAL TRAINING

The long-term potential benefits of early engagement with music are being explored in a longitudinal study carried out by a team of researchers in Los Angeles (Hibibi et al., 2014). The team were particularly interested in investigating whether functional and anatomical differences that have been noted between adults with musical training and those without any musical training could be attributed to the training itself or alternatively to pre-existing traits for musicality. The researchers have established a longitudinal study, involving children engaged in the YOLA Sistema-inspired orchestral programme see (1.6.2.17), a control group with no extra-curricular activity, and a third comparison group involved in after-school soccer.
The objective of the first phase of the study was to establish whether there were differences between the groups prior to musical training commencing. No differences were found with regard to cognitive, motor, musical, emotional, or social behaviours. Nor were there differences found in structural and functional brain measures. This study represents an important landmark, providing a strong rationale for the view that the reported benefits experienced by those with musical training may indeed be attributable to engagement with music, as well as providing a strong rationale for ongoing longitudinal research tracking the development of the young people involved in the musical programmes.

**SUMMARY OF 4.1: SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE WELL-BEING**

Nearly all of the studies reviewed reported some aspect of positive personal development amongst children who participated in Sistema-inspired programmes. **Well-being** and **Personal development** were conceptualized in broad terms, with at least 32 different constructs mentioned:

1. Attention
2. Autonomy
3. Commitment
4. Concentration
5. Confidence
6. Coping
7. Determination
8. Discipline
9. Effort
10. Emotional well-being
11. Engagement with learning
12. Expression
13. Focus
14. Happiness
15. Health
16. Life satisfaction
17. Listening skills
18. Motivation
19. Obedience
20. Optimism
21. Perseverance
22. Personhood
23. Positive attitudes towards school
24. Pride
25. Raised aspirations
26. Resilience
27. Responsibility
28. Self-concept
29. Self-esteem
30. Self-regulation
31. Time-management
32. Well-being

Amongst these, discipline, positive attitudes towards school, concentration, and raised aspirations were the most frequently cited positive outcomes. The only area of personal development where problematic issues were reported was with regard to motivation. A small number of programmes reported some drop-off in motivation after the initial novelty value of participation wore off and the challenges of remaining engaged became more salient.

Many studies included indicators of social skills. As with personal development, the overarching notion of 'social skills' was represented with several constructs:

1. Co-operation; Pro-social behaviour
2. Belongingness; Relationship;
3. Collaborative learning; Social advancement;
4. Communication, language, and literacy; Social networking;
5. Community spirit;
6. Group identity; Solidarity;
7. Take turns;
8. Group integration; Teamwork;
9. Help others;
10. Interaction; Pro-social behaviour (less violence, less victimization)

Very often, the findings relating to social skills were based on parent and teacher perceptions of change, captured via rating scales or qualitative data. One of the most cited outcomes was 'teamwork.'

Some researchers have investigated a potential link between participation in El Sistema programmes and enhanced academic performance amongst the students. With few exceptions, the studies demonstrate significant and steady improvement in academic attainment, achieving targets and in some cases outperforming comparison groups in maths, reading, and writing. There is some evidence that these effects may be cumulative, related to prolonged engagement in the programmes.

Thus far, there has been insufficient evidence to demonstrate a strong link between El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes and school attendance, although enhanced positive attitudes towards school have been noted.

A specific cognitive function that has been investigated is visual and verbal memory. Researchers have corroborated earlier evidence concerned with instrumental learning, demonstrating improvements in verbal (but not visual) memory amongst participants in a Sistema-inspired programme. These findings reinforce the view that music education for primary children may have beneficial cognitive outcomes, but are limited in
the extent to which they may provide an evidence base for El Sistema pedagogy specifically.

Finally, there was some limited evidence that children in El Sistema-inspired programmes may develop increased ‘cultural consumption’ beyond their engagement with music. However, again, this is an under-researched area that would require further research to support the validity and reliability of such claims.

The characteristics of the El Sistema programmes that were perceived as being important in supporting positive social, emotional and cognitive outcomes included:

- Opportunities for developing new skills and performing;
- Acquiring cultural capital;
- Interpersonal bonds and solidarity in pursuing shared goals;
- Intensity and frequency of contact;
- Mutual respect;
- Recognition and rewards for excellence.

Overall, the research corroborates a body of research in music education that demonstrates the wider social, emotional and cognitive benefits of participation in music-making. Further research is needed that makes more specific links with the facets of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes that can be said to differentiate these programmes from others.

4.2 Family involvement

The role of parents in supporting El Sistema has, according to Uy (2012), been under-reported. Uy (2012) stresses the vital role that parents play, both in terms of supporting their own individual children but also with regard to supporting the programme as a whole. Uy (p. 16) reports that ‘most núcleos also have Sociedades de Padres o Representantes’, voluntary self-run parent organizations that engage in fundraising and offer a range of organizational support. The parent organizations represent a key link between the programme and the community and importantly, according to Uy, they function as a structure through which parents themselves may be empowered to make significant positive contributions that impact upon the lives of their children. This in turn may foster a sense of self-efficacy amongst the parents – a phenomenon that has been noted in the wider literature concerned with parent-teacher-pupil relationships in music (Creech and Hallam, 2003). As Uy (p. 16) notes, ‘the realization of self-empowerment and self-efficacy has reinforced the community aspect of each núcleo, because parents and students realize that they are equal partners in this relationship.’

Interviews carried out by López and Berríos (2007) in the context of 10 El Sistema núcleos revealed that students and orchestra conductors described the relationship that characterised the orchestras as a ‘family’. For parents, the orchestra represented an ‘opportunity’ and a ‘privilege’. The significance attributed to the orchestra has effects in the self-affirmation of its participants. Participating in the orchestra seemed to enhance students’ sense of pride.

The positive benefits for parents themselves have been found to be persistent within diverse cultural contexts. Parents and students from the USA and Venezuela who participated in a cross-cultural study that explored the social impact of participation in El Sistema (Uy, 2010) reported significant improvements in
family communication and sense of community with other participants in the programme; the sense of community was fostered amongst parents as well as amongst the young people themselves. Furthermore, the evaluation of Sistema New Brunswick (2012) supported the view that Sistema-inspired programmes may foster positive outcomes for parents and families. Survey results (survey 1 Sept 2011: n = 68; survey 2 May 2012: n = 132) revealed that parents themselves felt an increase in their sense of belonging to the community (53%), confidence as a parent (35%), and were more positive about their child’s future (84%).

Similarly, amongst the key findings reported by Bozetto (2012) within the context of a Brazilian Sistema-inspired programme, parents and caregivers, the majority of whom belonged to low-income families, reinvented daily routines so that the children could remain in the orchestra. The adults reportedly developed strategies for organizing the children’s studies, time, and educational programmes. The data show a strong involvement of families who were active in supporting their children’s aspirations and motivation in music.

GEN (2011a) reported that Big Noise, Scotland had impacted positively on families across a number of outcomes. Based on survey responses from 29 parents, the researchers reported that parental aspirations for their children had improved (90% agreed), parents had formed new friendships (70% agreed), and families were doing more activities together (66% agreed). In addition, qualitative evidence indicated that the parents who became most engaged benefited in terms of developing confidence, a sense of escape from daily stresses, and in some cases (e.g. through volunteering), new skills. Case study examples added depth to these findings, demonstrating compelling instances of enhanced family relationships that were attributed to involvement in Big Noise.

An overview of the three In Harmony Sistema England pilot projects (Hallam, Rogers, and Creech, 2010) revealed that the projects were consistent in reporting great commitment from parents and caregivers. The pilot programmes were valued opportunities for their children and across the three programmes parents were reported to have been interested and engaged. Performances outside of their local communities provided parents and caregivers with new experiences enabling them to mix on an equal footing with parents of children from other schools and the other In Harmony projects.

Family involvement was found to be a particular strength of ‘Sing Out With Strings’, in Limerick. Designated school-based leaders involved in the Irish Sistema-inspired programme (Kenny and Moore, 2011) had all formerly held the role of home-school liaison officer, meaning that strong links with parents had been established before the project began. Partly due to this, the project attracted considerable interest and support from parents, from the outset.

Analysis of qualitative interview data with key members of the FMSB administrative and education staff (Chang, 2007) suggested that there was a strong sense of ‘family’ within the programme and that this in turn had a perceived positive impact on the communities where the núcleos were located, with children transferring their ‘music-inspired enthusiasm to their homes’ and fostering ‘hope for a better socio-economic future’ (p. 65). As well as raising aspirations generally, FMSB provided concrete financial opportunities for participants; in this vein, teachers served as role models for the children. In a reciprocal way, the growth of the FMSB network was attributed in part to family and community support and grassroots involvement.

The evaluation of Sistema Aotearoa (Wilson, McKegg et al., 2012) revealed Strong Performance (4/5, using a five-point scale ranging from Excellent = 5 to Poor = 1) in its valued outcomes for children and families. Overall, families were exceptionally proud of their children’s achievements (5/5). However, there was insufficient evidence to indicate whether or not children were modelling the programme values outside of the setting in their schools or homes.
Morin (2014) explored the impact of a Sistema-inspired Canadian programme on family relationships. The research involved 70 participants in total, including 31 children ages 6-9 years from low socio-economic neighbourhoods (representing 29 families. The children received three hours of string orchestra training per day, five days a week, during school term times. Data collection methods included interviews, focus groups, assessments of students’ sense of belonging at school and their academic self-concept, (year-end evaluation survey for parents, observations, and analysis of institutional records such as attendance records. Morin reported that participation in the programme contributed to an overall sense of belonging and self-concept amongst the children. Parents spoke about students having more creativity and imagination. Better intra- and inter-family relationships and increased family activities were described, with families beginning to see their children as emerging, talented musicians.

Although parents have been found to be very positive and supportive of their children’s participation in the programmes, some research has suggested some scepticism amongst parents with regard to the long-term value of music. When asked about children’s future as musicians, parents of the El Sistema children interviewed by López and Berríos (2007) reproduced a predominant perception that ‘it is not possible to live from the art’. However, parents acknowledged that while they had previously been indifferent to music activities (in particular to classical music), with this art form being perceived as something distant, these perceptions had changed after their children’s musical involvement. Most of parents expressed positive attitudes when they knew the children would be part of the orchestra, while only a minority expressed uncertainty or thought there would be a decrease in academic achievement. From the students’ point of view, some parents were still resistant to think that music could be an alternative future career.

Israel (2012) explored teacher perceptions of parental involvement, in the context of six American El Sistema programmes. Despite perceptions of inconsistent overall levels of parental interaction, participants indicated that parents or caregivers were mostly cooperative and respectful of staff members. Some believed that there was more scope for parental involvement and all were generally supportive of the concept of parental involvement, for example in some cases, welcoming parents as observers.

One notable area of interest for a number of USA programmes is the kind of family involvement that the students’ participation in the programme can inspire (Rossi, 2011). On parental surveys, many parents report spending more time together as a family, sometimes through their attendance at performances or Sistema-related events. In addition, many programmes offer students and their families the opportunity to attend local concerts or other events at a reduced or free rate of attendance. These kinds of opportunities give the families access to events they might not otherwise attend for reasons of time, money, or other obligations. Students sometimes also report themselves, or their parents report, that they demonstrate an increased interest in music. They prefer to practise or engage in music in some manner instead of doing other activities that they might have previously preferred like watching television or playing video games. For this reason, the students’ increased interest in music also allows families the chance to spend more time together instead of having children be engaged in more isolating activities such as these.

Many USA programmes involve parents by including a parental ensemble as part of its course offerings. Some parents have even requested an increase in this type of opportunity, in their responses to open-ended questions on evaluation surveys, as they did on a B-sharp parental survey (Schurgin, 2012). Parental volunteer rates and opportunities are frequently encouraged at almost all USA programmes. Many programmes keep records of the number of events attended by parents, either through independent count or through self-report data included on parent evaluation surveys. Some of these programmes include B Sharp Fort Worth (Schurgin, 2012), the Boston Conservatory Lab Charter School (2012), El Sistema Colorado
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(Brennan, 2013), Harmony Stockton (2013), KidZNotes (2012) and YOLA (Silk et al., 2008).

SUMMARY OF FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The role of parents and caregivers in supporting El Sistema is vital, yet has been under-reported. Parents play a key role in supporting their own children as well as supporting the programmes in a number of different ways. Crucially, parents and caregivers represent a most important link with the community. Generally, many studies have reported raised aspirations for their children amongst parents of Sistema-inspired programme participants. Parents themselves have been found to benefit, reporting a sense of empowerment and self-efficacy in relation to being able to support their children as well as forging a stronger sense of community amongst parent networks. Just one study reported that parents remained doubtful with regard to the view that music could offer a career pathway. Generally, where the views of parents have been reported, these are positive and demonstrate a high value placed upon their children’s participation in El Sistema or Sistema-inspired programmes. Teachers were generally supportive of parental involvement in the programmes.

4.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

Several evaluations of Sistema-inspired programmes have attempted to capture some evidence pertaining to community engagement. Freire’s concept of Praxis (Freire, 1970) has been used to explain the social transformation fostered by El Sistema at a community level (Rincón Prat, 2013; Uy, 2012). Freire conceptualized oppression as a psychological condition, attributable to specific social structures that could be transformed through education. From this perspective, it is through reflection and action within the El Sistema programme that ‘stakeholders’ (students, parents, teachers, organizers) effect social change within their own communities (see Section 6 for critiques of the idea that the symphony orchestra can function in this empowering way).

4.3.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A strong and consistent sense of community engagement with El Sistema was noted by Hollinger (2006), who visited six case study Venezuelan núcleos. This, according to Hollinger, was fostered through recognition amongst families of the positive outcomes derived from participation in the programme amongst their children. Community engagement was also generated through frequent community concerts and intensive media campaigns that celebrated the programme within local communities. However, López and Berrios (2007) reported that the relationship between Venezuelan youth orchestras and the local environment had two sides: while the orchestra was positively recognized for its contribution to the community, tensions existed between the orchestra and the school system (e.g. allotted time and schedules, homework, practice time).

Processes that underpin community involvement have also been investigated in the context of Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA), with range of paradigms offered (Flenaugh, 2012: see sections 4.4 Pedagogy and 4.6 Quality of provision for further details). Programmes for parents were seen as significantly contributing to YOLA's successful community involvement. Felt to 'foster personal growth and empowerment' (Flenaugh, 2012, p. 55), these programmes included formal and informal parental surveys and the use of bilingual parent liaisons. The programme was noted for its ability to listen to parents and to subsequently react to their needs and aspirations.

The Renaissance Arts Academy (2012a, 2012b, 2013) and YOURS programme are examples of USA programmes that are highly invested in community engagement. With regard to the Renaissance Arts Academy, because of the unique structure and curricular design of the charter school, it frequently partners
with organizations which feature its students in other performances. Just as an example of some of its most notable performances, students from the school have performed for international diplomats for the U.S. State Department. School ensembles have also performed with the musical group the Black-Eyed Peas for a Nickelodeon Awards Ceremony. The school was also the site of a visit by attendees at the Take a Stand symposium in January of 2012. School ensembles and musicians have also performed at Disney Hall several times, as well as at the Hollywood Bowl. This type of performance is indicative of the kinds of performances and engagement with the community that programmes create and sustain.

In the UK, children and parents from In Harmony Norwich (Smithurst, 2011) were reported to have formed new social networks and to experience enhanced family relationships, with parents expressing pride in their children’s achievements and children keen to perform and share their new skills with family and friends. The qualitative data from parents suggested that the programme had fostered a sense that the areas where they lived were becoming positive places to be. The parents also expressed the view that In Harmony Norwich had fostered more positive home-school relationships.

Parents who were interviewed as part of the In Harmony Lambeth pilot evaluation (Lewis et al., 2011) were clear that the programme had helped to support community engagement. The opportunities for parents to become involved in their children’s learning and to attend performances as well as the after-school club were highly valued and the programme was found to have had a high impact on parental involvement in school activities. In addition, the parents noted the importance of feeling that they and their children were part of a wider In Harmony community and children demonstrated a greater awareness of a community beyond the school and estate. However, there were challenges, noted by the project coordinator, with regard to engaging the hardest-to-reach children, who experienced a range of emotional and physical neglect in their homes.

In Ireland, Kenny and Moore (2011) report that the theme of community was a predominant one in all of the responses to the evaluation of ‘Sing Out With Strings’ and that there was a palpable sense of pride within the school and the wider community, related to being associated with the project. Community links were also strengthened by partnership with the University of Limerick, which was deemed to have contributed to breaking down perceived social barriers and raising aspirations amongst the children.

Community engagement has been found to be a key strength of Big Noise, Sistema Scotland, where several specific initiatives are in place (Gen, 2011a). These include the buddy system whereby members of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra act as mentors for the children and take part in a ‘Take a Musician Home for Tea’ scheme, which is used as a mechanism for connecting with disengaged families. Furthermore, there are frequent opportunities for children to perform in local community venues that are accessible for family and wider community members. Big Noise also hosts a community orchestra (25 parents have taken part) and parents are invited to attend outings to professional performances (37 parents attended one outing), parents’ meetings (approximately 20 parents attended meetings), and to act as volunteers (four currently act in this role).

Analysis of dialogue amongst Big Noise stakeholders, recorded in the context of open space knowledge exchange opportunities, revealed several points of agreement with regard to community engagement (Allan et al., 2010). Big Noise was understood by children, parents, service agencies, and the programme team as being significant part of daily life for children within the community, including children who were not directly involved in the programme. For those involved in the programme, there were shared experiences of meaningful family involvement in the Big Noise events and a shared recognition that the Big Noise teachers, particularly male teachers, functioned as powerful role models.
Wilson, McKeeg et al. (2012) reported that ‘Sistema Aotearoa is a high performing programme, with strong leadership and management, good systems and structures, and high levels of support from the community, funders, schools, and parents’ (p. 9). In the community setting, all value indicators overall were rated at 3/5 (Reasonable Performance) including community sense of pride and ownership of the programme, positive community transformation, and new opportunities for children’s musical aspirations.

Allan (2010) has noted that social development within communities is a long-term process; this has been recognized by some Sistema-inspired programmes that have put research in place investigating with the issues of community engagement and impact. For example, the Atlanta Music Project (2013) has contracted an external evaluator from Georgia Regents University to assess the programme’s impact. This evaluation will not conclude until 2014, but it will focus on how programming has impacted the student participants, their families, and the communities in which they operate (including the nearby neighbourhoods and schools).

4.3.2 IMPACT WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

The extent to which In Harmony Liverpool has fostered community engagement and impacted positively within the community has been explored by Burns and Bewick (2012). Data were collected via community well-being surveys carried out on four occasions, focus groups with parents and community members, and home visits (reaching the homes of 37% of the participating children). The well-being surveys comprised 30 items that participants responded to on a five-point Likert scale. Results revealed positive increases with regard to a sense of being involved in the school community and the wider local community, a sense of pride in the local community, enhanced family relationships and home-school relationships, and perceptions of improved behaviour amongst the In Harmony school children. Less positive responses were found with regard to statements concerned with hopefulness about the future, a sense of autonomy and control over one’s life, and the belief that people in the community treated each other with respect. While there was undoubtedly enthusiasm for In Harmony, qualitative data revealed a perception that more could be done to harness this enthusiasm and develop structures that would strengthen the links between In Harmony and the local community. For example, community events, increased opportunities for volunteers, and a community orchestra and choir were suggested, as part of widening the scope of the programme so that it was not solely focused on children and schools.

In their subsequent report (Burns and Bewick, 2013), Burns and Bewick reported significant changes in the area of community engagement and empowerment. Four years on, the In Harmony initiative was now perceived as being a part of the community, as opposed to an external benefactor. Community members indicated ‘increased civic pride, hope and enthusiasm, positive relationships with children, increased well-being and confidence in the future, and increased involvement with the community as a result of In Harmony’ (p. 5). The researchers reported that qualitative evidence indicated clearly ‘that trust and ownership are strong and are creating a climate that over time will build social capital and community strength’ (p. 63).

With regard to socio-economic impact of Sistema-inspired programmes, Burns and Bewick (2012) reported that data monitoring had been implemented, tracking socio-economic indicators including anti-social behaviour, residential burglary, drug offences, theft of and from motor vehicles, employment, and incapacity benefit. The data were to be compared with comparable data collected from a neighbouring ‘control’ area, with a view to establishing information about the wider impact of In Harmony Liverpool on the local community. Some encouraging trends have emerged. For example, overall rates of anti-social behaviour, domestic burglary, and drug offences decreased in West Everton between 2008 and 2011, compared with an overall rise in these crimes within the neighbouring area. However, Burns and Bewick (2012) cautioned that it was too early to draw definitive conclusions.
When surveyed, 88% of the parents/caregivers of children in Big Noise, Scotland indicated that Big Noise was changing the way that people living in Raploch thought about their community. Many also indicated that they believed external perceptions of Raploch would improve as a result of Big Noise. These findings were supported by qualitative data, with case study examples of individuals who expressed the strong view that Big Noise would have a long term positive impact, helping to change perceptions and the reality of the local community (GEN, 2011a).

More recent evidence regarding the socio-economic impact of Sistema-inspired programmes, has been published by the Glasgow Centre for Population health (GCPH, 2015). Although the cost-benefit analysis is based on assumptions rather than hard data (see Logan, 2015a for a critique), this evaluation of Big Noise, Sistema Scotland adds some weight to the view that such programmes offer the potential for positive impacts within the communities they serve. The Sistema Scotland evaluation (GCPH, 2015) revealed that cost-free after-school and holiday provision had impacted positively on families in terms of financial savings and childcare which both eased financial stress and increased employability options for parents. Furthermore, frequent performances functioned as a forum where families could meet and develop a shared sense of pride in their children’s achievements. New friendships and social support systems, as well as increased cultural awareness, were noted. The ‘Take a Musician Home for Tea’ initiative, alongside field trips and concerts, offered a structure within which musicians could build relationships with families. The intergenerational impact within the wider communities was also fostered through the Big Noise adult orchestra and opportunities for volunteering. Through volunteer work within the programme adult community members gained work experience and training, as well as an enhanced sense of purpose and fulfillment.

The work carried out by Burns and Berwick (2012) and GCPH (2015) follows earlier studies carried out in Venezuela (Cuesta, 2008; Cuesta et al., 2007; Guevera, 2006; Sanjuán, 2007) who investigated the socio-economic impact of El Sistema. According to Guevara (2006), who undertook a cost-benefit analysis of FMSB, communities with the highest number of núcleos per capita reported lower dropout and crime rates, supporting the view of FMSB as a source of healthy socio-economic development in Venezuela. Although a correlation was demonstrated between the decreased number of crimes and the existence FMSB, Guevara acknowledges that a cause-effect relationship could not be established. In relation to employment, Guevara argues that the difference between the costs of job creation within FMSB as compared with outside of FMSB was relatively small, and that FMSB expenditure had a positive effect in the creation of job positions.

With regard to employment, in a further study carried out within El Sistema, Venezuela, Sanjuán (2007) reported that participation in El Sistema resulted in significant and positive impact. El Sistema seems to delay students’ entry to the job market, and those who are already working did so in better conditions than a comparison non-El Sistema group.

Cuesta (2008) reports that the programme’s ratio of benefits to total costs for 2007 was 1.68. Furthermore, for every dollar invested there was a savings of 36 cents, when compared with an alternative of providing the same amount of addition tuition hours within public education. These findings were derived from a survey where children enrolled in El Sistema were compared with their classmates who were not, with regard to a number of socio-economic indicators. There is insufficient detail with regard to how well-matched the two groups were and no information is provided about how long the El Sistema group had been involved in the programme. Nevertheless, the findings were compelling and point to the need for further research that includes cost-benefit analyses.
The study reported by Cuesta (2008) forms a basis for the final pages of Ceretti and Cornelli’s 2013 publication Cinque riflessioni su criminalita, società e politica (Five reflections on criminality, society, and politics), where El Sistema is presented as a model for democratic security. In previous chapters, the authors exposed a trajectory of youth violence experienced as a result of poverty, discrimination, control, and ultimately jail. In contrast, through El Sistema, the authors contend that Abreu has created ‘a microcosm of an ideal society’ (Ceretti and Cornelli, 2013, p. 219) thereby putting youth on a new path of dignity and empowerment. The authors support their position with evidence from the study carried out for the Inter-American Development Bank (Cuesta, 2008; Cuesta et al., 2007) as well as narratives collected from FMSB participants from a range of sources.

In the case of the former, Ceretti and Cornelli outline the Inter-American Development Bank’s rational for funding El Sistema. In reports to their Research Department, the organization states that El Sistema has directly produced individual and societal benefits by bringing participants out of poverty. As noted above, the bank has calculated that for every $1.00 invested in the programme, related social benefits have created a return of $1.68. The bank also contends that FMSB has diminished youth violence and victimization along with increasing school retention rates.

Personal narratives demonstrate how El Sistema has been a vehicle of crime prevention in Venezuela (Ceretti and Cornelli, 2013). Citing examples of gang members and violent youth transformed by the programme, El Sistema is painted as perhaps the only path for disenfranchised Venezuelan youth to escape violence. Former participants reveal how FMSB has enabled them to escape both material and spiritual misery, allowing them to transform themselves, their families and communities. Some specific, well-publicized cases are summarized by Tunstall (2012: 97) who tells the stories of several graduates of El Sistema who ‘have gone on to prominent international careers in classical music’, as well as others who have taken on prominent leadership roles within El Sistema itself. Amongst these musicians, many became involved in El Sistema initially as a way to stay away from street gangs and violence.

Ceretti and Cornelli, (2013, p. 222) conclude that El Sistema is a ‘concrete and credible alternative to violence’ that does not stigmatize or segregate. Rather, the programme does the opposite, allowing participants to experience beauty, a sense of citizenship, hope, joy, happiness, and respect. Using the orchestra as a metaphor for life itself, participants can realize their human value and capacity. As a democratic innovation, the orchestra can transform conflict and violence into a sense of community and humanism.

The question of whether the social development aims held by two Sistema-inspired projects in Argentina were reflected within the personal experience of participants was investigated by Wald (2011a). Participants were generally well aware of the social development aims of the orchestras; this was attributed to the visibility of the Argentina youth orchestra projects through ‘mass media’. These aims were not necessarily consistent with their personal goals, as reported by some students: ‘we are not more integrated to society by means of the orchestra; if I want to be integrated to society, I find a job and it’s done’ (Wald, 2011a, p. 5). In a second paper, Wald (2011b) reiterates that participants from both orchestras rejected the media discourse built around them. They did not like the media portrayal of the condition of ‘poverty’ or ‘vulnerability’ of orchestra members, rather than their work and effort. ‘The idea of the orchestra as a redeemer of the personal and social problems in popular neighbourhoods was opposed (with phrases such as ‘if I were not in the orchestra, I’d be at home’ or ‘I’d be playing football’ (p. 16).

Other students’ comments highlighted the ethical problems relating to media discourses: ‘they talk about us as if we were wild - instead of having a bow and arrow we have a violin’ … ‘we are not at risk, in my
house we never lacked anything’ … ‘we do not feel vulnerable because we are strong, we live here and we work, study, get ahead’ (2011a, p. 5). Wald states that the young participants rejected the objectives, results and secondary benefits that, in a romanticised account from the mass media, were attributed to their participation in the orchestra.

The two orchestras differed with regard to how the young people positioned the social impact of musical activities. In the Orquesta Juvenil del Sur, students, parents, and programme coordinators mentioned difficulties in the extent to which the results of the orchestra could be transferred to other contexts in their daily life (such as changing the violent context in which they live or to improve their living conditions). It is stated that although the orchestra did help students to connect with other social sectors, these connections did not necessarily assure the integration of students to the job market, access to better housing, reduction of violence. In the case of the Orquesta Juvenil de Villa Lugano, the situation seemed to differ since some students had become professionalized in music, working and living from it. This was explained by the fact that those students came from medium or medium-low socioeconomic backgrounds with cultural patterns more similar to medium-high stratus.

Notwithstanding the ambivalence regarding social impact, participants from both orchestras considered that the projects had positively influenced their lives. They appreciated the opportunity to learn how to play a musical instrument and to play in great concert halls. Although most students did not intend to pursue a professional career as musicians, they expressed interest in continuing their formal training at a university level. They recognized that the orchestra influenced their daily lives to certain extent but reported that their values and habits came from their families, and, at a lower extent, to their religious beliefs. Wald (2011a) concludes that students and their families had different experiences at the financial, cultural, and institutional levels, cautioning that in the context of the two orchestras studied it was impossible to draw generalized statements suggesting that one particular practice could result in the same outcomes for all. Nor was it possible to homogenize the biographies of those who live in poor neighbourhoods’ (2011b, p. 16).

**SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT**

Several evaluations of Sistema-inspired programmes have attempted to capture some evidence pertaining to community engagement and impact within communities. Many have noted a sense of community pride in being home to the programme, particularly amongst the families of participating children. Community engagement was also strengthened when families recognized the positive outcomes derived from participation in the programme amongst their children. Frequent community concerts and intensive media campaigns that celebrated the programme also contributed to engaging local communities. Increased opportunities for volunteers and a community orchestra and choir have been suggested as additional strategies for widening community engagement beyond children and schools. Some tensions have been noted between the needs of the programme (e.g., for time commitment and resources) and competing community institutions, such as schools, although where programmes have worked in effective partnerships with schools this has been found to enhance home-school relationships. Partnership working with a range of community organizations has also been noted as a key factor in establishing and sustaining strong links with local communities.

Some encouraging trends have been noted with regard to the socio-economic impact of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes, although this remains an under-researched area. There are indications that some programmes may be contributing to reductions in anti-social behaviour, domestic burglary, drug offences, youth violence and victimization, along with increasing school retention rates. There are several compelling individual case stories of El Sistema participants who, after initially joining as a way
to avoid crime or violence, have gone on to musical leadership positions within and outside of El Sistema. Notwithstanding this, further research is needed before cause and effect relationships can be established.

Some important ethical issues have been raised with regard to media discourses and rhetoric that highlight the condition of ‘poverty’ or ‘vulnerability’ of orchestra members, rather than their work and effort. Notwithstanding these issues, the experience of participation has, overwhelmingly, been reported in positive terms and many would argue that El Sistema does not stigmatize, but, does provide an opportunity for participants to experience beauty, a sense of citizenship, hope, joy, happiness, and respect. An important message for Sistema-inspired programmes is that care should be taken to celebrate the strengths of local communities and to attribute positive outcomes to effort and commitment.

4.4 PEDAGOGY

4.4.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TEACHER

The role of the teacher in Sistema-inspired programmes has been explored. Booth and Tunstall (2011) propose that effective teachers support the development of the whole child. Such teachers are able to help their students to improve artistically and play a key role in keeping students engaged in the programme.

4.4.1.1 INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The importance of the conductor in forming positive interpersonal relationships with the children and nurturing the musical development of the children has been highlighted. Cristanell (2012), who focused on an in-depth analysis of the experience of two case study children, summarizes the conductor’s role as being focused on helping the children to develop a sense of self-confidence and self-importance within the group as well as fostering motivation and high musical aspirations. Stupar (2012), who carried out a more extensive piece of research within the same context of Superar Austria, adds that within the Superar programme the musical outcomes, social and communicative relationships function in an interdependent way.

The salience of interpersonal relationships was reinforced in the initial findings reported from the evaluation of Sistema Scotland (GCPH, 2015). The researchers reported that ‘a recurring theme throughout this evaluation is Sistema Scotland’s emphasis on the quality of the relationship between musician and participant. It is this quality of relationship that is so important to the theorised impact pathways. Indeed, many of the strengths of the Big Noise programme delivery are designed to enable opportunities for this relationship to flourish’ (p. 71). Summarising this theme, the researchers highlight that it is people who change lives, rather than services, programmes, or even music itself.

4.4.1.2 PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

There has been much debate around what might be said to be characteristics of pedagogy within El Sistema and Sistema-inspired contexts. Overall, there is little consensus. For example, some make claims that a ‘Sistema pedagogy’ is premised on discipline, extensive repetition, and a directive teacher style (Baker, 2014; Dobson, 2016; Scripp, 2015) while others claim that the pedagogy is, by necessity, innovative and flexible (GCPH, 2015). While the theme of discipline and repetition has been applauded by some (e.g. Tunstall, 2012) others such as Baker (2014) and Dobson (2016) view such practices as problematic.

Dobson’s (2016) autobiographical narrative account of experience as an instrumental tutor within a programme modelled upon El Sistema depicts ‘heavy-handed managerialism’ (p.103) and rigid planning
frameworks which framed a teacher-centered pedagogy with limited recognition of children’s ‘capacity for any meaningful agency or creativity’ (p. 104). Logan (2016, p. 65) argues that an ‘orchestral training’ approach does not foster transferable skills, leading him to doubt whether ‘a musical training which belittles improvisation and experimentation can be of great assistance’ in terms of creative education.

Similarly, reporting on his ethnographic research in Venezuela, Baker (2014) reports many instances that demonstrate a focus on repetition in El Sistema rehearsals, describing practices characterized by disciplined repetition at the expense of innovation. Baker compares this to a ‘banking’ (cf Freire, 1970) or transmission approach to learning that takes little account of the alternative progressive pedagogical approaches to music education that have emerged since the 1970s (for example, Elliot and Silverman, 2015). Similarly, Scripp (2015) cites his key informant, a ‘graduate’ from El Sistema, who asserts that El Sistema is an orchestral training programme, inducting children into the orchestral canon, but claims that this programme cannot be characterized as comprehensive or progressive music education.

Baker (2014) also cautions against a ‘teach as you were taught’ mentality, whereby inexperienced ‘peer’ teachers are charged with responsibilities for guiding young musicians. This is elucidated by the case study reported by Scripp (2015) where the El Sistema ‘graduate’ recounts his own experiences as just such a teacher, with little awareness of pedagogical approaches apart from a directive and controlling style with methods focused on rote learning.

Within contexts outside of Venezuela some commonalities but also differences have been reported. For example, an investigation of pedagogical, philosophical, and community engagement practices that have contributed, in the USA, to the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles’ success in providing quality music education for historically under-served populations such as Blacks and Latinos (Flenaugh, 2012) indicated that YOLA teachers contributed significantly to the high quality level of the programme. Specifically, it was noted that teachers had high expectations, both musically and behaviorally, of their students. Pedagogical practices included constant repetition, attention to detail, the use of leading questions, and the creation of a safe learning environment. Students were encouraged to become engaged in the learning process by means of direct challenges, engaging problem solving activities, constructive criticism, and self-evaluation. Students were also encouraged to share insights from their own life situations to maintain levels of motivation.

Levels of motivation within YOLA have also been found to be maintained due to the inclusion of culturally relevant materials. Repertoire choices, though predominantly selected from the Western canon, reflected the ethnic diversity of the YOLA student population, including works from Latin America, Africa and Korea. Some popular music choices were also included in an attempt to provide culturally relevant materials from the United States (Flenaugh, 2012).

Results from the comparative, qualitative study carried out by Peterson (2010) suggest that pedagogical elements and approaches in Sistema-inspired programmes (Spain, Mexico, and USA) were consistent with those that have been reported from El Sistema, Venezuela. It was observed that some constructivist elements were involved in the pedagogical practice of most orchestras. Based on students’ perceptions of the importance of previous knowledge, three orchestras were categorized as ‘Direct Theory’ (premise: ‘there is no pedagogical use of previous knowledge’), two with the ‘Interpretive Theory’ (‘previous knowledge is used to determine what the student does not know in order to teach it correctly’), and two as ‘Constructivist Theory’ (‘previous knowledge is the start and engine from where all learning is built’). Findings from the interviews supported the view that peer learning was a fundamental strength of the programmes, suggesting that social interaction within the orchestras supported cognitive and musical development.
Hollinger (2006) refers several times to the 'clear and unified purpose' (p. 148) that she observed across six case study Venezuelan El Sistema núcleos, noting that this was sustained in part through an intensive commitment to professional development across the programme.

In a similar vein, a strong philosophical tie with El Sistema Venezuela’s core values appeared to positively influence the effectiveness of the YOLA programme (Flenaugh, 2012). Many of YOLA’s teachers and administrators have served as Sistema Fellows (formerly known as Abreu Fellows). This rooting in the philosophy of the Venezuelan model was viewed as a strongpoint. Specifically, YOLA employees embodied the following four practices in their daily activities: (1) the mission of social change; (2) access and excellence; (3) the use of ensemble; and (4) The CATS Model: Citizen / Artists / Teacher / Scholar’ (Flenaugh, 2012, p. 55).

4.4.2 THE PLACE OF ONE-TO-ONE TUITION WITHIN SISTEMA-INSPIRED PEDAGOGY

Sarrouy (2011) stresses that programmes employ group teaching and strive to be inclusive in nature. Notwithstanding the predominant and prevailing emphasis on ensemble, Israel (2012) reported fairly strong agreement amongst teachers from six American El Sistema programmes that some individual instruction could foster increased musical discipline and focus. In a similar vein, the introduction of one-to-one teaching in the In Harmony Liverpool Programme was reported by Burns and Bewick (2013). Positive outcomes with regard to musical development were attributed in part to this significant change in the programme structure, which had in turn been informed by the Artistic Director’s observations and discussions during his trip to Venezuela. There was a recognition that children at all levels would benefit from the one-to-one support; those who were excelling would benefit from further challenge, while those who had additional needs would benefit from targeted and differentiated support.

Hollinger (2006) framed her case study research, exploring the relationship of music education and social reform, with the principles of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1988; McLaren, 1995; Apple and Beane, 1999). From this pedagogical perspective the concept of education as a vehicle for social reform is advocated. She also incorporated the principles of Dewey (1916), who argued for democratic, child-centred education. Hollinger explores Freire’s notion that pedagogy can be developed as a means to counteract oppression. Freire’s ideas are premised on an optimistic commitment to social reform, captured in his call for ‘continuous struggle and hope’ (Hollinger, 2006, pp. 16-17), which provides a framework for FMSB teachers’ ideology whereby children are, on a daily basis, encouraged ‘to play and to fight - and to dream.’ Hollinger highlights Freire’s point that in order to effect real change there must be communion between the leaders and the people, so that they ‘become like one body, checked by a permanent process of self-scrutiny’ (Freire, 1970, p. 52). This links with the ongoing interplay between high achievers and young people at all levels, identified by Booth (2009; 2012). Experts who have arisen from the system remain an integral part of the system, returning and interacting with all levels of participants in acts of reciprocal exchange. This may be a key point in the effectiveness of the system, within the Venezuelan context.

Hollinger (2006) also stresses that dialogue and democracy can be consistent with rigour and application in education, framing this with Freire’s idea of ‘the tyranny of freedom’ and its misunderstanding, whereby children have no boundaries or discipline. Again, this theoretical perspective may provide a framework for understanding how a rigorous, disciplined approach, characterized by repetition and an insistence on perseverance, may be interpreted as being apposite with the critical pedagogy that Freire claims may underpin powerful social reform.

Gómez (2011) investigated the processes that underpinned socialization amongst participants in Batuta,
Caldas. He observed that socialization was dependent upon cooperative learning that was sensitive, problematized, open, affective, and equitable, allowing students to solve differences in a plural and public context. In this way, participating in the orchestra generated and strengthened senses of identity and membership. Gómez suggests that since students attended the programme as a non-formal activity, it had more impact than formal civic education.

4.4.3 MODELLING

Booth and Tunstall focus on modelling, proposing that excellent teachers model everything they wish their students to become, including ‘artist, teacher, learner, experimenter, and socially responsible adult (p. 5).’ Modelling is also noted by Hernández-Estrada (2012, p. 41), who suggests that ‘modelling musical involvement is crucial to motivating students into tapping into their expressive energies.’ In addition to modelling, the use of metaphor, questioning, encouraging problem-solving, and scaffolding in the form of singing and playing along are said to support deep engagement with learning amongst orchestral members (Hernández-Estrada, 2012).

4.4.4 CONSISTENCY

Within the USA context, consistency with the core principles and practices evidenced within the Venezuelan núcleos has been noted. While there were local differences in repertoire and mode of programme delivery, six Sistema-inspired programmes studied by Cline (2012) all offered daily access (with an average of 15 hours per week), high-quality group instruction, immersion in fun, fast-paced ensemble activities from the beginning, and peer learning. Sarrouy (2011) theorizes the importance of unified principles, advising potential El Sistema leaders to remain true to the El Sistema ideals to insure success. First and foremost, this includes teaching listening skills, as outside of the musical context, they will permit dialogue, understanding, and sharing of information.

4.4.5 QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Many USA programmes concentrate fairly intensively on improving the quality of pedagogical practices. For example, these include the Boston Conservatory Lab Charter School (2012), the Renaissance Arts Academy (2012a, 2012b, 2013), and the People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago (2013). The Boston Conservatory Lab Charter School partners with an external evaluation organization to record the kinds of academic progress being made by their students. The administration and faculty then use this information directly to inform the pedagogy enacted by the school and even tailored to individual students. Regular consultancy meetings are held to ensure the dynamics of this process. In a similar manner, the Renaissance Arts Academy faculty engages in regular peer evaluation and observations, and instructors obtain continuous feedback to ensure that their approaches are aligning with the school’s objectives and aims. They calibrate their teaching and pedagogical strategies from the information they obtain in this manner. The People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago also provides instructors with feedback and information from regular evaluation and observations. Instructors meet regularly to identify where their students are at, and to address any needs or challenges.

SUMMARY OF PEDAGOGY

The role of teachers and conductors in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes has been explored. Excellent pedagogy within these contexts has been characterized by:
• Positive interpersonal teacher-student relationships
• Nurturing of children’s musical development
• High expectations of musical excellence
• High expectations of positive behaviour
• Safe learning environment
• Unified purpose and shared values

Specific practices that have been noted include:

• Constant repetition
• Attention to detail
• Leading questions
• Direct challenges
• Problem solving activities
• Constructive criticism
• Ensemble from the beginning
• Encouraging students to make connections with their own life situations
• Use of culturally relevant materials
• Self-evaluation

There was some evidence that teachers continued to value one-to-one tuition, notwithstanding the focus on ensemble. Surprisingly, given the emphasis on peer learning and teaching within El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes, this has not been the focus of research to date. While many of the researchers noted the development of social skills and attributed this to learning through ensemble (see section 4.1.9), the pedagogy that underpins those reported positive benefits has not been explored fully.

4.5 LEADERSHIP, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND NETWORKING

4.5.1 LEADERSHIP

As noted above in section 2.4, the remarkable achievements of El Sistema have been attributed in large part to the transformational leadership style modelled by Abreu (Rodas, 2006; Sánchez, 2007). An effective leader, from this perspective, acts as a role model, communicates high expectations with regard to short and long term goals, encourages innovation and creative approaches and challenges prevailing beliefs and value systems. A further distinctive characteristic of Abreu’s leadership style has been described as his attention to individual needs and aspirations and his talent for facilitating and maximizing individual contributions to the overall system. Hernández-Estrada (2012, p. 134) describes this quality as ‘servant leadership’, highlighting that El Sistema has evolved ‘through a process of constant trial-and-error ... (involving) active listening to the needs of those who are to be served.’ Sánchez (2007) takes a slightly different view, describing Abreu’s leadership style as paternal and protective.

Rojas (2010) applied the ideas of Organizational Learning (Senge) and Multiple Intelligences (Gardner), in an effort to understand how the leadership style supported the wider benefits of participation in El Sistema. Results from the study showed that FMSB has a departmentalized structure with vertical hierarchies and
centralized organizational direction. A combination of management styles was noted, with a dominant style characterized as democratic, permissive and empathetic style, but with some autocrat features. It is concluded that 'music practice generates relationships that enhance the intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences, producing individual and organizational learning, based on the social development of communities' (p. xiii).

Sarrouy (2011) proposed that leaders within the El Sistema movement may achieve their objectives through acting as socio-cultural mediators. Interestingly, as in other French publications (i.e., Guillochon, 2011), Sarrouy’s paper reads like a strategy or plan of action to assist future El Sistema leaders. For example, using socio-cultural mediation, he repeatedly states how one might successfully convince the French Ministry of Culture to implement a national El Sistema programme. Citing difficulties in altering the existing paradigm, Sarrouy cautions future leaders of possible negative reactions from French conservatories and music educators. He goes on to list projected roadblocks for national acceptance of such initiatives and suggests solutions via examples from an international sample of El Sistema case studies representing France, Portugal, Brazil, Scotland, and the USA.

Sarrouy (2011) dissects macro and micro socio-cultural mediation. In the macro-mediation section, he outlines examples as to how potential El Sistema leaders could approach economic, institutional, and political issues. Using examples from the five countries studied, he suggests possible financial and organizational models. Above all, he emphasizes the need to clearly define budgets, organizational structure, and targeted clientele with attention paid to multiculturalism and multi-religious factors.

On the micro mediation side, Sarrouy (2011) outlines issues related to sociological and psychological rapport between stakeholders (participants, teachers, students, administrators, government agencies, etc.). Citing examples from Portugal, Brazil, and Venezuela, he cautions potential leaders to remain sensitive to differing definitions of community. He notes the effect of stigmatized populations due to poverty or race and the difficulty of integrating these populations into society.

Sarrouy (2011) concludes by stating that socio-cultural mediation can assist with the forward anthropological vision of a culture. He cautions however that innovation must be approached with sensitivity and is best achieved via well-designed teams. If done properly, through music or any of the arts, socio-cultural mediation can be a successful means of integrating or assisting stigmatized and disfavored populations. The model of El Sistema, Sarrouy believes, is one of the most effective ways to achieve this end.

After applying his theoretical framework within the Brazilian context, Sarrouy (2012) concludes that there really is no generalizable form for socio-cultural mediation. Rather, the mediator must always be in a constant state to react to the varying needs of the population. In the case of El Sistema based programs, the music must always be at the core of the artistic mediation. As outlined by the pragmatic philosophy, where art serves as a tool for social objectives, art is seen as more than an object. Instead, art is a relationship with space and time that allows the development of shared aesthetic experiences and, in turn, social development. El Sistema is an emblematic example of such social transformation.

4.5.2 ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Snow (2012), who explored the theory and practice of entrepreneurship within the context of the Sistema Fellowship programme, defines education entrepreneurship as a means to ‘self-create a career specifically in music education’. Entrepreneurship is conceptualized as a process that is both holistic and encompassing. Including such roles as ‘artist, citizen, scholar, community member, leader, and empowered individual’, the
The author emphasizes the ‘musicianship, personal strengths, interests, and creativity’ necessary to pursue such a goal outside of the traditional locations of the music classroom and rehearsal hall (Snow, 2012, p. 12).

The author then goes on to present the results from the interviews of the Sistema Fellows in a separate chapter. Overall, the chapter highlights how the Fellows believe that their programme provides a fresh and invigorating approach to music education. Specifically, when asked about what types of value the Fellows wish to have on their communities, they all enthusiastically responded that economic, social, community, and personal value to individual children and teachers were their priorities. In such times of fiscal restraint, where many orchestras are suffering financially, all Fellows firmly believed that El Sistema could provide a realistic model for sustainability.

In addition, the Fellows felt that their preparation for their upcoming role as leaders was excellent. They ‘felt that they were informed about the reality that would face them’ as related to risk taking, financial, organizational, managerial, and planning. This was due to the fact that they had been ‘engaged in practical work involving organizational planning and management, including problem-posing and problem-solving activities and exercises’ with professionals in the field of entrepreneurship (Snow, 2012, p. 179).

The Fellows also cited that they were encouraged to be creative and had many opportunities to do so throughout their studies. The students believed that they could ‘apply knowledge they have gained in seminars to hands-on experience in strategic project planning, forming partnerships, fundraising, managing a non-profit organization, and developing curriculum’ (Snow, 2012, p. 165). In summary, they felt that they had been transformed through their studies and were ‘now able to desire, and see the possibilities of, a greater role in society’ both as musicians and educators (Snow, 2012, p. 185). As also stated by the field, the ‘Fellows expressed similar opinions about the need for change in public school music education and about the power of individual teachers to do something to improve and expand music learning opportunities for a broader range of students both inside and outside of school’ (Snow, 2012, p. 188).

In subsequent chapters, Snow demonstrates how the model of entrepreneurial education, exemplified by the Sistema Fellows Programme, could serve as a model for reforming music teacher education. Citing specifically that the ‘experiential and community-oriented focus of the Sistema Fellows Programme has several important features that traditional post-secondary music teacher preparation programmes might consider adopting’ (Snow, 2012), the author goes on to describe how this transformation process might be initiated. Snow first suggests that institutions analyze the relevance of existing programmes from the perspective of the talents and interest of their students. She then encourages post-secondary institutions to re-envision their degrees and include entrepreneurship minors, mentorship, advisers, case study analysis, and model programme study.

4.5.3 Networking

Some research has been undertaken assessing the value of Sistema networks. For example, needs assessment research focused on identifying how Canada could benefit from a national organization for El Sistema (Petri, 2013). The findings of this research were presented in a one-day workshop in December 2012 to the Steering Committee and representatives of the National Arts Centre, Canada. At this time, consensus was reached that a national organization could fulfill a number of roles, including: networking and knowledge exchange; creating professional development programmes; creating measurement and evaluation tools; serving as a repository for evaluation results; assisting programme development (legal or financial concerns, etc.); and developing national partnerships with instrument donors. The organization was also envisioned to have a role in advocacy through the creation of national newsletters or websites.
along with serving as contact with other national organizations (e.g., Canadian Music Educators’ Association, Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers).

It was noted by the committee members that Canadian Sistema programmes need to clearly delineate how they differ philosophically from traditional music education programmes. They encouraged this delineation to include an emphasis on social development (especially in rural or remote areas); inclusiveness, as related to socio-economic, language, and cultural factors; high frequency or intensity; community development; and musical excellence.

In conclusion, the committee proposed that a Feasibility Study be undertaken immediately to best understand how to meet the identified needs of Canadian Sistema programmes. Such a study should involve increased communication with both Venezuelan and Canadian El Sistema leadership to insure that the specific needs of local programmes are met.

Donald et al., in their 2012 report to the newly formed ISME SIG on El Sistema, provide a detailed outline of the programmes and symposia recently undertaken in Canada. In the report, they briefly trace the rapid development of Sistema initiatives throughout the country, noting that activity began in 2007 with the opening of two programmes, one in Vancouver and the other in Ottawa. The authors go on to present historical materials on newer initiatives including those in Calgary, New Brunswick, Toronto, Winnipeg, and London. In studying the nature of such programmes, the authors note that their objectives appear to be social development for underserved populations (low-income, First Nations, multicultural or immigrant). With many programmes in the ‘pilot’ phase, Donald et al. speculate that, at this point, it is not yet clear exactly what role a national organization could play.

The research continues on to present detailed information on four national meetings held between 2011 and 2012. These include the Sistema Canada Summit: Sharing Best Practices (Moncton, NB, May 2011); Canadian Symposium I: Understanding Sistema, Music Education and Social Change (London, ON, May 2011); Symposium II: Demystifying the Sistema Ethos (Montreal, QC, November 2011); and Symposium III: Social Harmony Through Music Education (Ottawa, March 2012). The report includes a detailed list of the activities of each meeting including highlights of guest speakers’ presentations, summaries of discussion topics, and conclusions of round table meetings. Re-occurring issues throughout the various symposia include understanding Sistema fundamentals; a perceived need for a national organization, best practices, and models for success in Canada. The authors conclude that the symposia were highly successful noting that the connections made between national and international delegates were supportive for all programmes. Issues for further discussion on a national level included sustainability, funding, research, and building partnerships.

In their conclusion, the authors state that Canadian ‘organizers have been very resourceful in obtaining funding and developing successful partnerships.’ Further, ‘there is interest in conducting research to document and assess the influence of such programmes on the lives of participating children and their communities’ (Donald, et al., 2012, p. 15). Canadian programmes were seen as being highly organized and sustainable. In terms of adopting or adapting the Venezuelan model, the authors postulate that Canadian programmes look to Venezuela for their philosophical model yet the individual initiatives adapt to the specific needs of each locale.
SUMMARY OF LEADERSHIP, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND NETWORKING

The remarkable achievements of El Sistema have been attributed in large part to the transformational leadership style modelled by Abreu. This style of leader acts as a role model, communicates high expectations with regard to short and long term goals, encourages innovation and creative approaches and challenges prevailing beliefs and value systems. A further distinctive characteristic of Abreu’s leadership style has been the quality of ‘servant leader’, whereby the organization evolves through constant active listening to the needs of those who are to be served, whilst also capitalizing on the strengths of individuals within the system.

Leaders within the El Sistema movement have been said to function as socio-cultural mediators who must pay particular attention to responsiveness and rapport with community members and stakeholders. These leaders fulfill several roles, including artist, citizen, scholar, community member, leader, and empowered individual. Essential qualities include musicianship, personal strengths, interests, and creativity. Entrepreneurship has been used as a framework for understanding the skill-set needed to fulfill these roles. The Sistema Fellowship programme has been significant in equipping emerging leaders with skills such as risk assessments, financial, organizational, managerial, and planning skills, strategies for forming partnerships, fundraising, managing a non-profit organization, and developing curriculum. The experiential and community-oriented focus of the Sistema Fellows Programme could serve as a model for the wider community of post-secondary music teacher educators.

Networks have been found to be crucial in supporting effective Sistema-inspired programmes. Canada is a case study example of a country where research has assessed the value and function of national networks. Networks may fulfill a number of roles, including:

- Knowledge exchange
- Professional development
- Sharing evaluation tools and results
- Assisting programme development
- Sharing resources

Furthermore, an important function of Sistema networks is in delineating how Sistema-inspired programmes differ philosophically from traditional music education programmes, as well as being clear about how they contribute to the wider music education community.

4.6 QUALITY OF PROVISION

The overall quality of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes has generally been reported as being high. Some evaluation and research reports have highlighted specific facets that contribute to high quality programmes, as well as challenges and barriers to success.

A review of three In Harmony pilot projects revealed some significant barriers to the success in some of these programmes. These barriers related to inadequately trained music staff, as well as lack of communication, and tensions or breakdown in partnerships between school and music staff. Elements of the programmes which contributed to success included (Hallam et al., 2010, p. 6):
• The total commitment of the head teacher and the whole of the school staff;
• Inclusion of the whole school population promoting a shared ethos in relation to the programme;
• Staff prepared to learn alongside children to promote a learning community;
• Immersion of the children in music;
• A focus on ensemble work;
• Additional support for children with special educational needs;
• High-quality group teaching and direction of ensemble work which is supportive of the children’s learning;
• Opportunities for participating in high prestige performances;
• The visible musical success of the children;
• Opportunities to attend the performances of outstanding professional performers who can act as role models;
• Strong leadership with a clear vision which is communicated to the team;
• A committed team who are prepared to do what is necessary regardless of time;
• The provision of appropriate training of the team;
• The development of appropriately differentiated materials;
• A reflective approach to teaching and a willingness to adapt if plans are not meeting pupils’ needs;
• The recruitment of volunteers with appropriate expertise to offer support (e.g. Local universities, music groups, parents with skills in translation)
• Management and governance which is fit for purpose; and
• Effective partnership working.

A subsequent evaluation of six In Harmony (England) projects (Lord et al., 2013) proposed that factors underpinning the positive outcomes of the programmes included ‘the intensity of the learning programme, the discipline of orchestral music-making, ensemble part-playing where individuals are responsible for their own and their team’s input, the involvement of professional orchestral musicians, and the whole-school approach’ (p. vi). However, the researchers noted some diversity with regards ‘intensity’, for example with the total contact time ranging from fewer than 30 hours per school term to 50 hours per school term. The authors also noted issues relating to sustainability of the resource-intensive model ‘representing a large investment for a relatively small number of schools and children.’ (p. vi).

The 2012 evaluation of Sistema Aotearoa (Wilson, McKegg et al., 2012), which considered the overall quality of provision, was comprehensive and thorough. No less than 123 pages in total, the document serves as both a process and outcome based evaluation. Using a self-determined rubric, with five performance levels ranging from Excellent to Poor, the researchers conclude that: ‘Sistema Aotearoa is a high performing programme, with strong leadership and management, good systems and structures, and high levels of support from the community, funders, schools and parents’ (Wilson, McKegg et al., 2012, p. 9).

Process Evaluation findings indicated that overall the programme was operating at a Strong Performance level (4/5). Programme delivery, as related to systems and approaches, was rated 5/5; with content and design, human resources, and relationships rated at 4/5 and finances and sustainability at 3/5. A rating of Excellent (5/5) as related to systems and approaches was given for 9 out of the 10 areas including
accessibility, group learning experiences, structured approach to teaching, role modelling by staff, safe environment, access to and performance of classical music, demystification of classical music, sense of belonging, and overall positive experience. Retention levels (4/5) received a rating of Strong Performance. However, funding related issues were viewed as being barely adequate (2/5).

The evaluation summary stated that ‘Sistema Aotearoa is a high performing programme that is making a difference in the lives of the children and the families participating in the programme. There is promising evidence of potential long-term outcomes being realized. Given sufficient time and resources, early indications are that Sistema Aotearoa is likely to have a long lasting and transformative influence on the lives of the participants, their families and the community’ (Wilson, McKegg et al., 2012, p. 103).

The evaluation of the OAS orchestra programme for youth at risk in the Caribbean (Galarce et al., 2012) revealed some significant positive outcomes with regard to personal and social development of the participants. An analysis of qualitative data also revealed some areas in need of improvement. These included access to counseling services, intervention for disruptive behaviour in the classroom, lack of resources, transportation, and communication with parents. The authors listed five recommendations for programme improvement including recruitment of a target age group, marketing, communication, attendance monitoring, and an outlining of short and intermediate term goals.

Factors relating to the high quality of provision in the USA, in the context of Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, were identified by Flenaugh (2012; see section 4.4: Pedagogy for further details of specific pedagogical practices). Teachers and administrators were lauded for their multiple roles in the organization. Specifically, administrators regularly played in the student orchestra whereas teachers performed regularly throughout the community.

In terms of logistics, the choice of location for HOLA at YOLA also appeared to be significant. Located in a high-density area, the programme is easily accessed on foot by a large population. In this manner, transportation issues, known to be a concern in other núclei, are averted.

The author concludes that YOLA’s success in offering high quality music education to its urban Black and Latino population was due to primarily to ‘clearly articulated and well-vetted goals’ (Flenaugh, 2012, p. 56) as well as its continued partnerships with community members, businesses, and organizations. YOLA’s strategic use of pre-existing support systems, both within the schools and the community, also significantly contribute to its sustainability. The organization’s ability to insure a constant supply of volunteers and teachers is achieved through regular meetings, networking events, and visibility in the community.

Several other programmes in the USA have reported the facets of their programmes that contribute to high standards of curriculum design, instructional quality, and overall service to students and their larger communities. Among these, the Boston Conservatory Lab Charter School (2012), the Renaissance Arts Academy (2012a, 2012b, 2013), and the People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago (2013) stand out as exemplars in the way they integrate quality assurance into their ongoing evaluation approaches. Three of the four programmes were housed in or directly affiliated with charter schools focused towards a music-integrated curriculum. These programmes integrated ongoing evaluation of student progress, teacher pedagogy, and administrative foci into their regular ongoing activities and practices. They also revised and restructured their curriculums based on the evidence and information they uncovered through ongoing evaluation.
The Boston Conservatory Lab Charter School (2012) reported that a significant key factor in ensuring overall quality was the Board of Trustees, who collectively enriched and supported the school with their diverse skills and expertise, including law, financial management, education, early childhood development, technology, management, fundraising, school leadership, and the arts.

The evaluation of a one-year orchestra project in Costa Rica (Brenes Villalobos et al., 2012) showed positive changes at the individual, family and community levels. Participants (and their parents) expressed gratitude and positive expectations after being selected for the programme. In most cases, their commitment and desire to learn was constant. At the community level, the orchestra strengthened community relationships. However, the conditions in which the orchestra developed were adverse. Limited teaching positions, delayed salaries, instability due to the lack of job contracts, insecurity to get in or out from the community and a lack of infrastructure resulted in the lack of a continuous and relevant teaching-learning process. It also influenced dropouts and absenteeism. At the time of the report, only 29 students were still active, as compared to the initial group of 70.

It is reported that the characteristics of the teaching-learning process generated great insecurity among students; most of orchestra members were reluctant to play solo or in front of their peers. According to the researchers, frustration, anger, and sadness were common when the participant could meet a goal. However, many other students made extra efforts and practised individually. The teachers were performers in one particular musical instrument, and had to find alternatives to teach students from various instruments with limited advice. Teachers expressed their concerns about not reaching the expected musical outcomes. The results in the second administration of musical abilities test showed lower scores than had been recommended as targets; however, those scores were still considerable higher than the first measurement. Communication between the research group and the IDB seemed to be insufficient and no exchange of feedback and information was fostered (Brenes Villalobos et al., 2012).

An analysis of the overall quality of provision in the Geração project in Portugal are summarized in Malheiros, André, Reis, and Costa (2012, p. 101). Among the strengths, the researchers report positive student motivation, self-esteem, and confidence; empowerment of disadvantaged children (and their families), improvement in academic achievement and behaviour; importance of collective work; higher cultural valuing by children and families; increased confidence in the future of children and families; strengthening of family ties; and increased contact and interest to orchestral music.

Alongside the strengths that included many areas of positive impact with regard to personal development amongst children and families, there were some weaknesses. These were: uncertainty about the continuation of the project, delays in providing musical instruments, coordination of schedules and spaces, difficult pedagogical relationships with students, difficult integration of Romani students, recruitment and training of teachers (under the method used), small size of orchestras preventing improved performance, and limited impact within the local community.

Amongst the opportunities observed, the researchers reported: social innovation (original social inclusion through art), job creation (although it is also reported that only 15.4% of music teachers had a contract, creating a situation of great professional and personal instability), democratization of access to orchestral music, symbolic capital, provision and services and entertainment in local community, development of a regionally articulated project within a national framework, mitigation of stigmata of territories and local communities.

Finally, a number of threats were reported that impacted upon quality of provision. These included: funding
cuts, difficulty in creating a professional management structure that is permanent and involves all partners, maintaining the quality of the quality in the various núcleos, and difficulty to involve new sponsors outside the public sector.

**SUMMARY OF QUALITY OF PROVISION**

Overall quality of provision has been found to be dependent upon a wide range of factors that include:

- Inclusion and commitment amongst the whole school population promoting a shared ethos in relation to the programme (where partnered with schools)
- Staff prepared to learn alongside children to promote a learning community
- Immersion of the children in music
- A focus on ensemble work
- Additional support for children with special educational needs
- High-quality group teaching and direction of ensemble work which is supportive of the children’s learning
- Opportunities for participating in high prestige performances
- The visible musical success of the children
- Opportunities to attend the performances of outstanding professional performers who can act as role models
- Strong leadership with a clear vision which is communicated to the team
- A committed team who are prepared to do what is necessary regardless of time
- The provision of appropriate training of the team
- The development of appropriately differentiated materials
- A reflective approach to teaching and a willingness to adapt if plans are not meeting pupils’ needs
- The recruitment of volunteers with appropriate expertise to offer support (e.g. Local universities, music groups, parents with skills in translation)
- Management and governance which is fit for purpose
- Effective partnership working
- Accessible and safe locations

Generally, many evaluations reported a high quality of overall provision. Further support and development needs for some programmes related to:

- Access to counseling services;
- Lack of access to counseling services
- The need for strategies for disruptive behaviour
- Lack of resources
- Transportation issues
- Poor communication with parents and amongst stakeholders
- Lack of community engagement
- Instability in teacher contracts
- Uncertain futures
- Poor management structures
- Marketing issues
- Attendance monitoring issues
- Unclear short and intermediate term goals

4.7 MUSICAL PROGRESSION

Although El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes have social development as a fundamental objective, there has been considerable interest in the musical progression of young people involved in these programmes. This reflects the dual aims of social values alongside musical excellence, expounded by Abreu himself (Tunstall, 2012). It may be argued, of course, that the frequent performances offered by El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes speak for themselves. However, some researchers have evaluated musical progression with measures of musicianship, musical knowledge, singing, and instrumental proficiency.

Musical progression was investigated by Lewis et al. (2011), who reported on teacher assessments of In Harmony Lambeth children’s musical skills, including measures of singing voice, pitch matching, and keeping a steady pulse. Teachers rated each child on a scale that included ‘yet to develop’, ‘developing well’ and ‘exceeds expectations.’ Significant improvements were noted with regard to all three of the measures. For example, at the time of the first baseline assessment, none of the children were rated as ‘exceeding expectations’ in the use of their singing voices, compared with the third assessment a year later, when 98% of the children were rated in that category. In the ‘pitch matching assessment’ the percentage rated as exceeding expectations rose from 0% to 44%, while for keeping a steady pulse the percentage rated in that highest category rose from 27% to 46%.

The researchers noted that during focus group interviews held once per term, children demonstrated progression in their knowledge about musical instruments. Furthermore, questionnaire responses from the children demonstrated consistently positive experiences of music-making. When interviewed, parents and teachers reported that the children would not have had access to learn a musical instrument were it not for In Harmony and they noted that the children had developed a love for music and openness to classical music. However, after approximately one year, evidence from focus group interviews with pupils seemed to suggest that there may have been a slight dip in motivation, as playing the instruments became more demanding.

Observations of children engaged in music-making activities offered by In Harmony Norwich (Smithurst, 2011), over a period of one year, provided evidence of significant musical progression. The view that participation in the programme fostered notable musical development over a short time-span was also highlighted by parents and teachers, when interviewed.

Assessments of a range of musical skills were carried out amongst the children participating in In Harmony Norwich, on three separate occasions over the course of one year. Children were assessed in relation to seven areas of development that included pulse, musical development, rhythm, pitch, interpersonal relationships, communication, and performance/ensemble. Comparisons were made between children who accessed the in-school music sessions only and those who regularly attended the intensive after-school In Harmony provision. The two groups were approximately equal at the time of the first assessment, but over the course of the year those who accessed the after-school provision scored consistently more highly than their peers,
In Harmony Liverpool participants were assessed each term for musical progression, using a framework that included musicality, confidence, posture and technique, pulse, reading, and singing. Individual children and ensembles were assessed. Initially the framework comprised eight levels for each indicator, with descriptors for each level; in 2011–2012 this was revised to include 11 levels, taking account of progression amongst the children. Crucially, the level indicators have been linked to national attainment standards so that the children’s progress may be monitored both internally and against national standards.

Consistently high levels of musical progression were reported, amongst In Harmony Liverpool children with ‘very few examples of slow progression’ (Burns and Bewick, 2012, p. 28). It was reported that some children were achieving standards that were comparable to the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music Gold Music Medal or Grade 2. However, qualitative data also revealed increasingly differentiated levels of skill amongst the children, leading to some issues relating to motivation. In 2013, Burns and Bewick reported that 88% of the children in the programme were achieving or exceeding the targets set for them by the In Harmony team. These very positive outcomes with regard to musical development were attributed in part to a significant change in the programme structure, reported in 2013, which was the introduction of some one-to-one tuition. This development was informed by the Artistic Director’s observations and discussions during his trip to Venezuela, the rationale being ‘to stretch as far as possible those children excelling and needing further challenge, and also to support those children who may have missed some tuition in order to catch up, or to support those children with additional needs to continue to feel a valued part of the orchestra and programme’ (Burns and Bewick, 2013, p. 33).

In Sistema Scotland (GCPH, 2015) the development of excellent musical knowledge, skills and abilities through high quality and intensive provision is a high priority. The rationale is that ‘in the long term, these factors have the potential to increase cultural participation, broaden opportunities and destinations in adulthood, and ultimately improve health and wellbeing throughout the life-course’ (p. 57). Key musical outcomes expected of participants after five years in the programme include ‘strong instrumental skills, creativity, rhythm and pulse, and the ability to read music’ (ibid). As reported by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH, 2015), approximately one fifth of programme participants had been successful in competitive admission procedures for the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, the National Youth Choir of Scotland, and the Royal conservatoire of Scotland.

The second evaluation of the two-year trial Sistema Aotearoa programme focused specifically on the musical learning outcomes and factors affecting these outcomes (Trinick and McNaughton, 2013). In comparing the musical skills of the two cohorts over 10 observations, it was concluded that the more experienced students demonstrated increased musical skills including a greater degree of focused listening, playing with more rhythmic accuracy and control, following the conductor’s lead, consistency of technique, and knowledge of theoretical concepts. Notably, the researchers state that it would be ‘impossible to ascertain how much student achievement may be attributed to new learning arising from involvement in the programme.’ However, they do contend that ‘differences between the outcomes for each of the cohorts indicate progress’ (Trinick and McNaughton, 2013, p. 28). In terms of specific string technique, improvements were seen in the second cohort as related to consistently of posture, left hand position, right hand position, bow usage, intonation, and crossing strings.

Concurring with the earlier 2012 evaluation report, the 2013 evaluation of Sistema Aotearoa revealed that the programme ‘offers students quality learning in music, with enjoyment and engagement, in a safe, nurturing environment.’ The researchers state that ‘it is clear that the music skills and understandings
developed in the programme provide young children with a solid foundation for musical growth, both in terms of string playing, general musicianship, and ensemble playing, while retaining the integrity of El Sistema’ (Trinick and McNaughton, 2013, p. 47).

Cristanell (2012) explored that processes that supported two case study children from Superar, Austria, in their progression to the Vienna Boys Choir. According to Cristanell, Superar offered a space where children who would not otherwise have had musical opportunities could develop their musical potential to internationally recognized standards. Cristanell highlights that the enjoyment of singing, nurtured within the Superar programme, underpinned the boys’ motivation to excel.

Despite only a limited number of the Batuta Pre-Orchestra Programme participants having had previous musical experience, and most participants were not receiving formal music education in their regular schooling, the programme was reported to have met the stipulated musical aims (Unión Temporal SEI S. A.- Economía Urbana, 2010). Differences between a group of Batuta participants and a comparison group of non-participants were statistically significant in all music measurements except in rhythmic repetition. The variables with the lowest scores involved matching pitch; the highest scores were observed in timbre recognition, ensemble empathy, and accent and pulse internalization.

Several USA programmes (Conservatory Lab Charter School, 2012; Renaissance Arts Academy, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Silk et al., 2008; YOURS, 2013) evaluate the musical progress that their students make, and they integrate regular assessment of this development into their overall evaluation structures. The most notable results from these kinds of evaluations come from the Boston Conservatory Lab Charter School, the Renaissance Arts Academy, and the People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago.

The Boston Conservatory Lab Charter School regularly administers musical assessments of its students. They establish benchmarks for entire grades to meet by the end of the academic year, and they keep close track of whether the benchmarks are fulfilled or not. A majority of their benchmarks have been fulfilled on an annual basis. In addition to this type of tracking, faculty and administrators frequently meet to assess individual student progress, and to identify specific areas where further development might be needed. This type of comprehensive approach is similar to that utilized by the Renaissance Arts Academy. Small group ensemble practice and closely monitoring during instruction allows the faculty to determine the degree of student musical progress being made. In addition, participation in ensembles during both the school day, and also, the after school Conservatory which is regularly attended by a majority of students ensures this facet of the school’s overall success. Since the People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago is also housed in a charter school centered on a music-integrated curriculum, a comparable mode of assessment and evaluation is also undertaken by this programme.

SUMMARY OF MUSICAL PROGRESSION

Although El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes have social development as a fundamental objective, there has been considerable interest in the musical progression of young people involved in these programmes. It may be said, of course, that the frequent performances offered by El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes speak for themselves. However, some researchers have evaluated musical progression with measures of musicianship, musical knowledge, singing, and instrumental proficiency.

Significant progression has been evidenced with regard to measures of basic musicianship skills and knowledge amongst early years and primary-aged participants in Sistema-inspired programmes. Children have been found to advance rapidly in the acquisition of instrumental skills, achieving levels comparable
with national examination boards. Children in Sistema-inspired programmes have demonstrated particularly strong performance in timbre recognition, ensemble empathy, and accent and pulse internalization. Crucially, many reports highlight the fact that Sistema-inspired programmes provide musical opportunities for children who would not otherwise have been supported formally in developing their musical potential.

### 4.8 INCLUSIVITY

El Sistema is founded on principles of inclusivity; thus some researchers have investigated the extent to which programmes may be said to be inclusive. Social inclusion involves embracing differences in socio-economic background, ethnicity, and culture. Uly (2012, p. 12) notes that that the orchestra provides a context where children may become ‘decategorized’, fostering a redefinition of ‘multiple communities into a more harmonious – yet still diverse – single entity.’ In a similar vein, Rosabal-Coto (2016, p. 166) portrays the Costa Rican Sistema-inspired programme where ‘the student members of an orchestra enjoy meeting new people from different social classes and nationalities and making friends, while they engage in collective activity’.

As López (2008) has noted, the testimonials from well recognized music personalities (Plácido Domingo, Claudio Abbado, Simon Rattle, amongst others) in the video ‘Tocar y Luchar’ legitimize the project. López (2008), who carried out a content analysis of three documentaries about El Sistema programmes in Colombia, Chile and Venezuela, suggests that El Sistema represents a ‘political proposal, in which orchestral training is the remedy for problems of the mass, that is, to bring culture to the more needed in order to overcome their needs’ (p. 91).

Qualitative data collected as part of the In Harmony Norwich evaluation (Smithurst, 2011) suggested that the In Harmony programme was inclusive, providing access to learning orchestral instruments for children who would not otherwise have had that experience. In Harmony Liverpool (Burns and Bewick, 2012) have highlighted some issues relating to inclusive practice. While one of the founding principles of the programme is a commitment to inclusivity, evidenced by the whole school approach, some tensions have emerged with regard to equity issues between those who access the after-school extended provision and those who do not.

Similarly, some issues relating to inclusivity were reported in an evaluation of Batuta, Colombia. Data collected within stakeholder communities and educational institutions indicated that the benefits of the programme included positive perceptions of social inclusion, promotion of local culture and arts (Matijasevic et al., 2008). According to interviewees, valuable opportunities for learning, interaction and feedback were provided. However, alongside significant positive outcomes, some challenges were reported, including a sense of segregation or exclusion amongst the population who are not in risk conditions and therefore not eligible to participate in the programme.

Evidence from Big Noise Scotland parent survey responses (n = 64) show that overall the programme is reaching a spectrum of families that is representative of the local area, including some of the most disadvantaged groups (GEN, 2011a). An outreach programme is in place, designed to help families to overcome barriers to participation. The Big Noise inclusion programme offers one-to-one sessions for children with challenging behaviour. The aim is to build trusting relationships with these children, facilitating them in developing the social skills that are required in order to participate fully.

The evaluation of Sistema New Brunswick (Savoie, 2012) examined the extent to which the programme could
Sixty-eight parent participants completed the baseline survey with 132 completing the post-test measure approximately 10 months later (Savoie, 2012). Results of the parent survey indicated that new students in the programme were coming from disadvantaged households, thereby supporting Sistema NB’s mandate of inclusiveness. Data indicated that 35.9% of new parents were unemployed as compared to the average of 7.3% (Saint John) and 8.5% (Moncton). In addition, the household income of 70% of the parents was below the provincial median with 27% listing annual intakes of less than $20,000.00 CD.

Although almost all USA Sistema programmes are focused on bringing access to quality music instruction to student populations who might not otherwise receive it, two programmes specifically emphasize the importance of the inclusive quality of their sites by integrating consideration of this dimension into their overall evaluation structures. The Renaissance Arts Academy (2012a, 2012b, 2013) allows students entrance by lottery, with no prerequisite requirements concerning prior musical knowledge or arts training. The school prides itself on its diverse population, and numerous reports about the school mention the difference ethnicities and cultural backgrounds of its student population. In addition to the Renaissance Arts Academy, YOLA (Silk et al., 2008) also ensures that students from the most challenged areas can participate at one of the two main sites operated by the programme. The emphasis on making all students feel like a critical person in a complete whole programme is a cornerstone of these programmes’ missions and approaches, and their evaluation has demonstrated how students benefit from this dimension.

Sarrouy (2012) compares Neojibá (Brazil) with other global El Sistema programs, referencing materials from Portugal and outlining implications for possible initiatives in France. Using the orchestra as a metaphor for society, he analyzes his data from a multi-religious and multicultural perspective. Sarrouy contends that Brazil, like Venezuela, possesses a stronger sense of inclusive community because 80% of the participants come from the same cultural background. Neojibá participants easily develop a sense of community fuelled by hope and optimism, feeling themselves to be part of a pioneering project that is unified by language, background and religion.

In contrast, Sarrouy believes that youth orchestras in Portugal and France have difficulty in developing a sense of community. He attributes this to a lack of unity in language, culture, and religion. Disenfranchised youth in Europe come from ghettos of exclusion and stigmatization, factors that are not prevalent in Bahia. He further theorizes that prejudices towards and of the dominant culture in Europe makes it difficult to break through the exclusion and stigmatization.

This prejudice is exemplified through the choice of repertoire. Sarrouy believes that, in Europe, classical music is synonymous with the elite. As a result, disenfranchised communities equate performing classical music with a loss of their cultural identity and adoption of elite European values. To overcome this, he suggests that socio-cultural mediators (leaders) assist in determining repertoire choices that are more appropriate for their representative participant populations such as gypsy or African music. He cites similar issues related to religion, offering that the cultural mediator, usually the conductor, needs to find ways to link the various populations so as to make materials meaningful. By doing so, the aesthetic meaning and value of the performances will be greater.

**SUMMARY OF INCLUSIVITY**

El Sistema is founded on principles of inclusivity; thus some researchers have investigated the extent to which programmes may be said to be inclusive. Generally, programmes have been found to be inclusive, providing access to learning orchestral instruments for children who would not otherwise have had that
experience. However, some equity issues have been noted with regard to:

- Segregation or exclusion amongst the population who are not in risk conditions and therefore not eligible to participate in the programme
- Barriers that exclude some children from after-school provision offered as an extension to in-school programmes

Some programmes have developed specific strategies to overcome barriers to participation. For example, the Big Noise inclusion programme offers one-to-one sessions for children with challenging behaviour as well as putting considerable investment in to engaging hard-to-reach families. Many have emphasized that repertoire choices must be appropriate and meaningful for their representative participant populations.

4.9 CULTURALLY AND CONTEXTUALLY-SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE PROGRAMMES

There has been much interest in how El Sistema may be interpreted, transposed, and adapted within diverse cultural contexts. A key finding to emerge from the extensive evaluation of In Harmony Liverpool between its inception in 2009 and 2012 (Burns and Bewick, 2012) was that central to its success was a flexible and responsive framework. The researchers emphasize that In Harmony Liverpool is dynamic rather than static and that this characteristic is a major success factor in terms of connecting children, families, and community. While the researchers do advocate sharing of practice and dissemination of the learning that has occurred within the In Harmony Liverpool experience, they highlight the importance of remaining responsive to other music and social development programmes, as well as being responsive and learning from the local community.

While the types of partnering organizations, curriculum, and number of students have been found to vary amongst Sistema-inspired programmes in the USA, the overarching mission of social change through music has been reported as being consistent across a sample of six American programmes, ‘serving as a unifying source of inspiration and identity’ (Cline, 2012, p. 15). The six programmes included in Cline’s study were united particularly in their aim of providing ‘a safe, nurturing environment that supports musical, social, and academic growth of students’ (p. 110). Indeed, Cline’s questionnaire results revealed that this was perceived as the most important goal across the six programmes. Notwithstanding this, an analysis of the six mission statements did reveal some differing emphases, with some, for example, focusing specifically on academic success while others more ambiguously referred to ‘opening doors’ and ‘youth development’ (p. 110), while another focused on professional development for teachers.

One example of a USA programme where the aims are very specific to the context is the Renaissance Arts Academy (2012a. 2012b, 2013). Because the Renaissance Arts Academy exists as such a uniquely structured charter school, it seeks to fulfill aims that can only be attached to its distinctive design. In particular, the uniform curriculum employed by the school, coupled with its emphasis on mixed classrooms and instructional groups make its modes of evaluation particular to its own established and defined objectives. The interaction among the faculty, and the role they play in offering feedback and suggestions to the administration, and its impact on the operations of the school, also demarcate this programme as creating its own distinctive educational dynamic.

Shoemaker’s (2012) critical analysis of Baltimore’s OrchKids provides a further example. Shoemaker compares and contrasts the programme with its Venezuelan counterpart, highlighting several contextual differences. Factors that influenced differences in programme delivery included availability of supplies, logistics, and location. Funding and regulations were further areas where differences were notable. With
minimal fundraising activities, generally relegated to the acquisition of new instruments, Venezuelan El Sistema programmes rarely search for outside funding sources. In addition, the Venezuelan government has kept a ‘hands off’ approach, allowing El Sistema Venezuela a somewhat free rein over its activities. In contrast, Shoemaker cites the Baltimore programme as typical of the American funding model: dependent upon private funding from philanthropic organizations. Outlining the importance of advocacy, sustainability, and well-developed partnerships, the American model requires constant exposure and promotion in the public sector along with subsequent monitoring or evaluation. Shoemaker notes that donations for the Baltimore programme have come from organizations not typically associated with orchestras or music education ventures.

Shoemaker notes that El Sistema Venezuela also differs from the Baltimore programmes with regard to the distinction between musical and social skills. In Baltimore, non-musical skills are taught separately from musical ones in the hopes that they will provide future opportunities for participants outside of the field of music. This is in direct contrast with Venezuelan model. In South America, ‘self-confidence is gained through the mastery of music-specific skills’ (Shoemaker, 2012, p. 59).

Shoemaker goes on to discuss identity formation in both contexts. ‘El Sistema and OrchKids are similar in that they both aim to guide the formation of successful persons in neighbourhoods that do not have the resources to do so on their own’ (Shoemaker, 2012, p. 61). The two programmes however do have distinct differences. The sense of nationalism permeating the South American programme is not present in the Baltimore model. Also, a prevailing model of the orchestra as a function of collaboration predominates in Venezuela. ‘Students not only feel a sense of belonging with the other members of the System, but a connection to musicians all over the world’ (Shoemaker, 2012, p. 67).

Shoemaker notes the two programmes share some core values. In particular, both OrchKids and El Sistema ‘use the orchestra as a metaphor for community and place great importance on that community. They teach the students to be responsible and work together in their own núcleos and also show them that they are a part of an international music community. All of these values prove to be cross-cultural’ (Shoemaker, 2012, p. 109).

**SUMMARY OF CULTURALLY AND CONTEXTUALLY-SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE PROGRAMMES**

There has been much interest in how El Sistema may be interpreted, transposed, and adapted within diverse cultural contexts. Debates surrounding this issue are discussed extensively in chapter 6 of this document (Critical debates). Overall, the research and evaluation literature revealed that successful programmes have emphasized the need to be responsive and flexible. Programmes differ considerably with regard to their partners, curricula, funding, resources, and their modes of delivery. Furthermore, notwithstanding the overarching mission of social change through music, programmes have been found to have differing emphases, with some focusing specifically on academic success while others take a broad view, referring to youth development and ‘opening doors.’ Finally, while some differentiate between musical and social skills, others do not. Nevertheless, El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes may be said to be unified by the use of the orchestra as a metaphor for community, where students learn to work together in a supportive manner. The community exists at the level of the individual núcleo, as well as at the wider level of national and international networks.
5. KEY FINDINGS: CHALLENGES OF THE PROGRAMMES AND HOW THEY ARE OVERCOME

In this chapter we summarize and synthesize key findings relating to some specific challenges identified in the studies outlined in Appendix 1. The findings are divided into:

- Keeping children engaged in the programme
- Transition
- Teacher development
- Partnership working
- Sustaining family and community engagement

5.1 KEEPING CHILDREN ENGAGED IN THE PROGRAMME

A small number of programme evaluations have noted issues relating to sustaining engagement and motivation amongst the participants. As noted above in section 4.7, some motivation issues were attributed to the increasingly differentiated levels of musical attainment amongst participants in In Harmony Liverpool (Burns and Bewick, 2012). Lewis et al. (2011) reported a dip in motivation amongst the children involved in the In Harmony Lambeth pilot programme, after approximately one year, when the demands of learning an instrument became greater. One way of addressing this could be via the researchers’ recommendation that the programme be increased in scope so that there could be a daily musical activity. A venue would be needed that would accommodate the musical and social activities associated with this, and administration of the project. The dip in motivation could also have been due to a range of barriers to participation, including issues relating to emotional and physical neglect that some children experienced within their homes. This is a complex issue and the In Harmony Lambeth report does not offer specific recommendations, other than flagging up that mechanisms need to be developed in terms of pastoral support.

Some U.S. programmes focus their evaluation on their programme retention, or how many students stick with the programme and also, perhaps attend on a regular basis (Austin Soundwaves, 2011–2012; Potter, 2013; Renaissance Arts Academy, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Silk et al., 2008). In particular, the Austin Soundwaves, OrchKids, YOLA, and the People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago have worked this dimension into their evaluation formats. By ensuring that children are enjoying the programme and have a positive attitude towards it, they gain important information, not only about how many students they are serving, but also, they find out what parts of the programme prove most enjoyable to children. By focusing on this part of a programme, they can also discover when students leave due to unavoidable circumstances – for example, a parental relocation.

Drawing on his extensive observations and engagement with the Venezuelan context, Booth (2012) emphasizes the importance of Sistema-inspired programmes staying focused on fostering intrinsic motivation amongst the children and being prepared to be flexible, to ‘reflect in action’ and be responsive to individual needs and unexpected occurrences. While the underlying shared vision is ever-present, and while El Sistema is underpinned by a national structure and sequence to learning, creativity and motivation are, according to Booth, sustained through a reflexive and responsive approach whereby the needs of individual children are prioritized and the ‘rules’ are contextualized and re-interpreted at local level.

SUMMARY OF KEEPING CHILDREN ENGAGED IN THE PROGRAMME

A small number of programme evaluations have noted issues relating to sustaining engagement and
motivation amongst the participants. Where this has been noted, it has become an issue after approximately one year, when the demands of learning an instrument became greater and the novelty of the experience has waned. It has been acknowledged that motivation is a complex issue that needs to be addressed within a framework of reflective practice. There may be a range of barriers to participation that impact upon motivation; Successful programmes have developed solutions to these barriers in ways that are appropriate within each specific context.

5.2 TRANSITION

A further issue raised in the evaluation of In Harmony Lambeth (Lewis et al., 2011) related to mechanisms that would support longer-term engagement with the programme and particularly help children to remain engaged when they make the transition to secondary school. Concerns over transition were also voiced by stakeholders in Big Noise, Scotland (Allan et al., 2010). Similarly, drop-out at age 12 has been recognized as a significant issue that needs to be addressed within the Colombian programme, Batuta.

In Harmony Liverpool (Burns and Bewick, 2012) achieved 71% continuation rate of children leaving primary school and transitioning into school-based instrument lessons and/or West Everton Super Strings. This was attributed to the development of a well-defined progression route for the young people, partnerships with the Liverpool Music Support Service and Heads of Music in the local secondary schools as well as the increased commitment of the pupils themselves to continue making music. Lewis et al. (2011) advocate monitoring the impact of the programmes as children reach secondary school, with a special focus on commitment and behaviour. In Batuta, the transition issue has been tackled with a heavy investment in teacher development as well as the creation of some flagship youth orchestras (Booth and Tunstall, 2011).

Another English programme, Music First, has made the issue of transition a priority. The programme is delivered after-school within two secondary schools that serve as ‘hubs’ for children from feeder primary schools. It is anticipated that the experience of learning and participation within the secondary school environment, for primary-aged children, will have wider beneficial effects with regard to the transition to secondary school, as well as supporting retention within the programme. When children reach secondary school age they will be invited to continue in the programme, with additional responsibilities as mentors. However, this aspect of the programme has not yet been evaluated as the first cohort is just reaching transition (Strowger and Leaver, 2013).

SUMMARY OF TRANSITION

Concerns have been raised over how to support long-term engagement, particularly with regard to the time when children make the transition from primary to secondary school. It has been noted that good practice in this respect involves careful planning and monitoring of commitment and behaviour amongst the students, as they approach the transition. This may require investment in teacher development. Where high retention rates have been noted, this has been attributed to well-defined progression routes, effective communication with secondary school music departments, as well as the commitment of the students themselves.

5.3 TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Increasingly, initial training and continuing professional development for teachers working within Sistema-inspired programmes has been recognized as a priority area. Following the Sistema Fellowship programme (see section 2.3) some notable initiatives have developed, including a Master of Arts in Teaching, designed for musicians who aspire to work within the EL Sistema movement in the USA and combining the expertise of
Longy School of Music of Bard College with YOLA at the Heart of Los Angeles (Longy School of Music, 2013). More recently, a Masters-level Post-Graduate certificate for musicians working within Sistema-inspired and other inclusive learning contexts has been developed at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, one of Europe’s most prestigious Conservatoires. The evidence reviewed in this document supports the view that teacher development, including initial teacher training programmes as well as continuing professional development and mentoring, is a high priority area that requires significant attention.

With regard to issues that may influence recruitment of new teachers into training for teaching within Sistema-inspired programmes, Castañón Rodríguez and Valles del Pozo (2012) revealed beliefs amongst university students that a competent teacher in the arts must have specific knowledge of the artistic field, as well as teaching skills in order to act in the manner required by the context and the needs of project beneficiaries. According to the students, the teacher must have critical skills, adaptability, versatility and creativity, understanding of diversity, amongst other qualities. However, the students believed that these skills are not required through the university curriculum. A ‘calling’ and personal interest in education were perceived as the main factors that motivated graduates to obtain relevant training in specific areas, particularly if they were away from a homogeneous school environment.

In their overview of three In Harmony Sistema England pilot projects, Hallam et al. (2010) highlighted teacher professional development as an area for further investment. Recruitment of staff with high level musical skills in combination with a skill set for teaching large groups of children many of whom may have Special Educational Needs (SEN) or behavioural difficulties had been difficult. The teams had also needed to develop materials to cater for the high levels of differentiation required for pupils at different levels of expertise to play together. Problematic issues relating to inadequately trained music staff, as well as poor communication, tensions or breakdown in partnerships between school and music staff were noted as barriers to the success of the pilot projects.

Lewis et al. (2011) recommended that the In Harmony Lambeth project take on a teacher-development role, helping to train teachers in the aims and ethos, as well as the teaching skills. This would go some way to mitigating some of the issues raised by classroom teachers, who felt that the In Harmony teachers required support in, for example, behaviour management and planning.

Similar issues were raised during interviews with In Harmony Liverpool school staff (Burns and Bewick, 2011). The interviews revealed a strong and growing sense of being part of a learning community, attributed to the approach whereby classroom teachers learnt instruments alongside pupils. However, at the time of the 2011 evaluation Burns and Bewick reported a perception that the In Harmony music staff members were not part of this reciprocal learning process and that more could be done in order to build relationships between the two staff teams. Following this a joint staff training workshop took place where the two teams were facilitated in developing better ways of working together and learning from each other for the benefit of the school community (Burns and Bewick, 2012). Some positive changes were made; for example, the music staff adopted the school behaviour management system and classroom teachers were able to share their expertise with regard to developing differentiation strategies. However, the 2012 evaluation report recommended a regular programme of staff training, suggesting that In Harmony would benefit from more dialogue and shared planning time between music staff and classroom teachers. In 2013, Burns and Bewick reported ‘evidence of enhanced dialogue, communication and engagement and this is impacting well on the programme’ (p. 58). The distinctive skills sets and methods of the two teams (classroom teachers, musicians) were seen as complementary, contributing to a shared vision. Although the two teams were found to ‘work together yet separately’ (also being managed separately) this was see as beneficial, providing the children with ‘different role models, different voices and ears and different perspectives’ (p. 59). Burns and Bewick
conclude that it ‘remains important that the two teams continue to regenerate and refresh their shared vision to ensure that true partnership working continues to develop within a shared culture, management and commitment to the experience and development of the children and the school community’ (p. 59).

Some USA programmes integrate opportunities for teacher development into their evaluation structures as an ongoing dimension of their programme’s operations (Conservatory Lab Charter School, 2012; Renaissance Arts Academy, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Silk et al, 2008; the People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago, 2013). For example, the Renaissance Arts Academy ensures that all faculty members receive continuous feedback from their colleagues, and also, engage in observations so that they can also offer the same type of information to other teachers. Instructors then integrate this feedback and information into their pedagogical approaches and strategies. Teachers also meet regularly with the school’s co-directors, administration, and board to offer guidelines themselves on the school’s operations. In this way, teacher development goes hand-in-hand with ensuring that the school’s dynamics, climate, and operations align with the articulated objectives, stated mission, and philosophy.

YOLA cultivates a similar type of teacher development structure into their regular operations as an ongoing dimension of their evaluation process. Teachers are observed as are the major sites; any feedback or information is then discussed with teachers so they can integrate them into their own lessons and practices. In a similar fashion, the People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago utilizes continuous evaluation of their teachers so that they can best understand how to support their teachers in providing high quality and effective instruction to the school’s students.

Bernstein and Tunstall (2013) note that the ‘Sistema approach’ may require considerable investment in professional development for teachers, particularly when attempts are made to translate El Sistema principles and practices within diverse cultural contexts. In some instances, they point out, the principles of learning through ensemble rather than individually, total immersion and inclusion, as well as family and community engagement may contrast with well-established local practices as well as being fundamentally different to the way in which the teachers were themselves trained.

The idea of peer learning and teaching is fundamental to the growth of El Sistema and this concept appears in several mission statements and programme descriptions, internationally (Rodas, 2006). Vignettes outlined by Hernández-Estrada (2012) demonstrate the important role that peer learning plays within the núcleos, taking place outside of the classroom, in informal and impromptu ways. The strength of a system that capitalizes on peer teaching and blurs the distinction between student and teacher has been highlighted (Uy, 2012). Bestowing students with teaching responsibilities provides opportunities for fostering a sense of ownership and deep engagement, or, to use the Freire interpretation, for providing a space where students may experience praxis, reflecting and acting in such a way as to effect positive change within their environment. As Uy (2012, p. 14) points out, ‘this role allows students to view themselves as resources rather than as problems.’ However, while the teachers in Israel’s (2012) survey of El Sistema instructor perceptions generally supported the idea that peer learning was valuable, they were less clear about how this practice was fostered and supported amongst students and there was little sense of its methodological application. This lack of clarity is reinforced by Baker (2014), who cautions against a ‘teach as you were taught’ approach to peer learning and highlights the quality and safeguarding issues associated with charging inexperienced ‘peer teachers’ with responsibility for guiding young musicians in their personal and musical development.

There is, in the wider educational literature, much support for the idea of peer interdependence in learning (Creech and Long, 2012). However, it has been acknowledged that peer learning and teaching may be
most effective when students are supported with guidance on strategies and approaches to listening, encouraging and explaining, as well as building trust and respecting boundaries. Kutnick, Ota and Berdondini (2008, p. 86), for example, state that ‘if pupil groups are to be an effective social pedagogic support for classroom-based learning, children must be able to relate well with one another and teachers must provide opportunities for the development and support of these relational group-working skills.’ Given the emphasis on peer learning and tutoring within Sistema-inspired programmes, this is an area of teacher development that deserves attention.

Furthermore, although most teachers who responded to Israel’s survey of American El Sistema teachers were fully aware of their programme mission statements, not all were aware of the extra-musical goals of their programmes, suggesting that some programmes may benefit from enhanced communication and teacher development in the area of social pedagogy. This view is supported by Sandoval (2013, p. 2) who claims that ‘there is a current need to support teacher training that would put more emphasis on the social needs of the students.’ Given the fundamental premise of social development goals amongst El Sistema programmes, training that draws on expertise in this area would seem to be fundamental. In particular, the expertise from ‘social pedagogy’ (Kyriacou et al., 2009, for example) could be of considerable interest for teachers in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes, who take some responsibility for the holistic development of the children in their programmes.

Within the rapidly expanding context of El Sistema in Venezuela, teacher shortage is a potential problem (Scripp, 2015). Uy (2012) points out that the expansion may have contributed to an over-reliance on student teachers who receive just a small amount of training in the form of an apprenticeship and short observation period. A further potential problem within a system which produces its own teachers is a perpetuation of practices that may become outdated or irrelevant. This risk makes the issue of continuing professional development for teachers even more salient.

**SUMMARY OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT**

The evidence reviewed in this document supports the view that teacher development, including initial teacher training programmes as well as continuing professional development, is a high priority area that deserves significant attention. Teachers require a wide skill-set including critical skills, adaptability, versatility and creativity, understanding of diversity, amongst other qualities. In addition, teachers need to have a deep understanding and knowledge of the aims and ethos of the programmes. Where Sistema teachers work in partnership with school classroom teachers, it is important that there are strong partnerships, with shared understandings and practices with regard to behaviour management strategies and wider pedagogical approaches such as differentiation. The perspective of social pedagogy may also have much to offer in terms of continuing professional development for Sistema teachers, who play a significant role in the holistic development of their students.

Although learning through the ensemble is a core principle of El Sistema, the pedagogy that underpins the positive peer learning and teaching that has been noted has not been thoroughly investigated within Sistema-inspired contexts. Peer interdependence, learning and teaching may be most effective when students are supported with guidance on strategies and approaches to listening, encouraging and explaining, as well as building trust and respecting boundaries. Given the emphasis on peer learning and tutoring within Sistema-inspired programmes, this is an area of teacher development that deserves attention, and where successful Sistema programmes have much to contribute to the wider music education community.

Within the rapidly expanding context of El Sistema in Venezuela and elsewhere, teacher shortage is a
potential problem. In Venezuela this expansion may have contributed to an over-reliance on student teachers who receive just a small amount of training in the form of an apprenticeship and short observation period. A risk associated with a system which produces its own teachers is a perpetuation of practices that may become outdated or irrelevant – this risk makes the issue of continuing professional development that supports critical reflective practice amongst teachers even more salient.

5.4 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Partnership working has been identified as a key factor in bringing about community engagement and sustainability of Sistema-inspired programmes (Burns and Bewick, 2012, GEN, 2011a; Ofsted, 2012). According to Lesniak (2012), El Sistema’s greatest success has not been in the creation of a new approach to orchestral teaching but rather in the creation of partnerships amongst all of the programme stakeholders. Strong partnerships have been found to foster the necessary unified advocacy and financial support systems that underpin a programme’s sustainability.

In the UK, the regulatory agency for schools (Ofsted, 2012) undertook a survey of 59 partnerships between musicians and schools, highlighting that strong partnerships were a cornerstone of good practice. Although this survey did not focus on El Sistema programmes, it offers important messages about partnership working in the context of music education. All 59 schools were visited and a further six follow-up visits took place to observe good practice. Where partnerships worked well, schools ensured that all pupils benefited equally from the partnership and the projects complemented the wider music curriculum in school. Crucially, headteachers needed to engage in dialogue with the musicians, while both classroom teachers and visiting musicians needed to engage in a reciprocal process of reflective learning and professional development. Where this happened, high quality musical experiences were noted.

In Harmony Liverpool is an example where a focus on partnership development and establishing a sense of ownership amongst the partners has been a key strength in planning for long-term development of programmes (Burns and Bewick, 2012). Indeed, Burns and Bewick (2013) report that ‘developing partnership has been a key element of the programme and potentially its greatest strength in terms of future development and sustainability’ (p. 6). In this example, the partnerships fall into two categories, comprising community partnerships and strategic partnerships, for example including Royal Liverpool Philharmonic; Liverpool Primary Care Trust; Liverpool City Council; Liverpool Music Support Service; Liverpool Hope University.

Similarly, Sistema Scotland (GCPH, 2015) report that the contributions of delivery partners have been crucial in fostering positive outcomes within challenging times characterised by ‘increased service demand and reduced resource’ within communities affected by multiple deprivation, ‘unemployment, austerity measures and welfare reforms’ (p. 70). In particular, the innovation, commitment, and flexibility on the part of partner schools (where the programme is located) have been key in delivery of a high-quality programme.

In contrast, in some instances partnership approaches have been problematic; for example, Smithurst (2011) reported that establishing partnerships had been initially problematic for In Harmony Norwich. Her report does not offer a detailed analysis of why this was so or what steps were taken to resolve the problem, but she does emphasize the importance of strategic partnerships with key community and voluntary organizations, for the sustainability of Sistema-inspired programmes. Problematic issues around developing strong partnerships with schools were identified in the Big Noise implementation phase and subsequently addressed (GEN, 2011a), although the programme did have effective partnerships in place with statutory agencies. Burns and Bewick (2012) intimate that some of the challenges associated with developing
partnerships are related to resources and tensions between the demands of programme maintenance and day-to-day delivery with investing time in developing longer-term strategic partnerships.

Snowden (2003) reviewed literature relating to the factors that underpinned successful partnership working in community arts education within the USA. Her stated objective (p. 45) was ‘to identify waysto engage the music programme into the community via cultural resources, arts organizations, and/or community venues that are receptive to ideas of enhancement of musical learning for all students.’ Snowden adopts the concept of ‘Paideia’ (p. 13), a philosophical framework for understanding the role of community-school partnership in education. From this perspective, Snowden claims that comprehensive arts programmes that emphasize culture and community engagement must be centres for lifelong learning that nurture a sense of personal responsibility and ownership amongst individual students, require that teachers model lifelong learning and continue to be supported with professional development and finally, expect all children to learn and succeed. With specific reference to music education, Snowden proposes that ‘Paideia’ can be achieved through ongoing and systematic relationships between orchestras and local schools, such as those that characterize many Sistema-inspired programmes around the world. Such partnerships should, according to Snowden, support structured professional development for teachers.

A range of partnership models was included in Cline’s research involving six Sistema-inspired programmes in the USA. The six programmes were variously led by a professional symphony orchestra, a community music school, a charitable family foundation, a public university, and a public charter school. A key finding of the study was that partnership working, while adding significant strengths to the programmes, could also pose challenges with regard to their definition, management, and day-to-day collaborative practices. The six Sistema-inspired programmes involved in Cline’s research (2012), whilst differing in their partnership model, all agreed that the most critical success factor was funding. When working effectively, collaborative partnerships could address this issue in creative ways. Based on evidence gathered from the six Sistema-inspired programmes, Cline proposes that within contexts where music education programmes are well-established, partnership working could usefully be employed in order to promote Sistema-inspired principles and practices.

A ‘needs assessment’ of 54 American El Sistema programmes was undertaken in 2011-2012 by a group of Sistema Fellows (cited in Hulting-Cohen, 2012). The findings revealed that the participating programmes functioned in ‘first-tier’ (the programme and its host institution) partnerships with schools (71% had partnerships), community centres (26% had partnerships) and churches (3% had partnerships). A further complex array of ‘second-tier’ partners characterize many programmes, such as symphony orchestras, higher education institutions, school districts and others who provide funding and support in kind. Hulting-Cohen emphasizes the importance of partnership working in 1) establishing stable organizational environments and 2) ensuring that El Sistema programmes are firmly rooted within the community.

Community organizations, in turn, benefit from collaborative partnerships with El Sistema programmes that offer a vehicle for community engagement. Uy (2012) sets out some of the ways in which partnerships with local community businesses may be mutually beneficial. Drawing on his experience of five months of immersion within the Venezuelan El Sistema context, he cites examples of local businesses offering support for scholarships that reward young people for commitment and pro-social activity. Alternatively, business may provide support in kind, such as rehearsal space. Importantly, investment in the local núcleo is seen as a positive investment in the community.

Several programmes in the USA concentrate especially on fostering partnerships, not only with the local community, but also, with the broader music education community of which they are a part. YOLA (Silk et
al., 2008) has established as part of its evaluation structure the objective of ensuring that it is interacting with and actively contributing to the music education community on a national and even an international level. The kinds of materials they make available to other programmes, and which are often utilized by other Sistema núcleos, testifies to their success in this endeavor, in addition to their own tracking of how well they are fulfilling this goal.

The Renaissance Arts Academy (2012a, 2012b, 2013) takes it upon itself to shoulder a similar responsibility. The school prides itself on the success of its innovative curricular structure, and it warmly welcomes interactions with and associations, not only with local related organizations (such as the Los Angeles Philharmonic), but also, with other institutions and related groups.

In Rossi’s (2011) study of the potential for a Sistema site to be established in Massachusetts, she uncovered evidence obtained from survey results concerning the reception from local businesses to the presence of a thriving arts programme in their community, and also, their willingness to offer support for such an entity. Though she had a limited sample size, her findings reveal that local businesses in this area would be supportive of the development of such a programme.

Hulting-Cohen (2012) examined the role of the symphony orchestra in partnership with El Sistema programmes, categorizing this in terms of ‘responsibility’ and ‘survival.’ From this view, the symphony orchestra partners bear an organizational responsibility, for example in terms of allocation of resources, as well as a moral responsibility to ‘give back’ to their communities. However, the benefits are reciprocal and, according to Hulting-Cohen, orchestras have much to gain in terms of revitalizing their own support base and making themselves relevant within a changing economic and social context.

The role of the professional symphony orchestra in partnership with El Sistema programmes in the USA was also investigated by Mauskapf (2012). Mauskapf highlights the view that there are many challenges as well as potential reciprocal benefits in these partnerships. This is particularly so, given the complex challenges that American orchestras face, alongside El Sistema’s ‘potential to serve multiple organizational objectives, including education, audience development, and even public relations (p. 218).’ Based on extensive interviews with leaders within orchestra/Sistema partnerships, Mauskapf highlights numerous ‘ideological, political and cultural gaps’ (p. 228) between the goals of Sistema programmes and traditional orchestral values and organizational practices. This was evidenced by, for example, the predominance of hierarchical structures and conservative ideology within major American orchestras, as well as – in a more practical way - the fact that few full-time orchestral members were involved in the education work associated with the YOLA partnership (LA Philharmonic) or the OrchKids partnership (Boston Symphony Orchestra). Mauskapf argues that orchestras have much to gain from forging strong partnerships with Sistema programmes, but cautions that such partnerships require orchestras to refocus their missions around community needs and social goals, addressing fundamental questions relating to their raison d’être. Rodas (2006) adds that for orchestras to adopt the social mission of their El Sistema partners, change must be embraced with regard to leadership. From this perspective, for example, conductors must become more connected with their communities and orchestral members must take leadership roles.

SUMMARY OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Partnership working has been identified as a key factor in bringing about community engagement and sustainability of Sistema-inspired programmes. In addition, strong partnerships have been found to foster the necessary unified advocacy and financial support systems that underpin a programme’s sustainability.
Where programmes operate in partnership with schools, it is important that all pupils benefit equally from the partnership and that the programme complements the wider music curriculum in school. Crucially, head teachers need to engage in dialogue with the musicians, while both classroom teachers and visiting musicians need to engage in a reciprocal process of reflective learning and professional development. Furthermore, partnerships that emphasize culture and community engagement must be centres for lifelong learning that nurture a sense of personal responsibility and ownership amongst individual students, require that teachers model lifelong learning and continue to be supported with professional development and finally, expect all children to learn and succeed.

A range of partnership models have been identified, including, for example, professional symphony orchestras, community music schools, community centres, churches, charitable family foundations, higher education institutions, school districts and individual schools. Partnership working, while adding significant strengths to the programmes, may also pose challenges with regard to their definition, management, and day-to-day collaborative practices. A critical success factor is funding; when working effectively, collaborative partnerships can address this issue in creative ways.

Partnerships with local community businesses may be mutually beneficial. Importantly, investment in the local núcleo (for example, in the form of scholarships that reward commitment and pro-social activity, of support in kind) needs to be understood as a positive investment in the community.

There are many challenges as well as potential reciprocal benefits associated with partnerships with professional orchestras. Symphony orchestras have much to gain from forging strong partnerships with Sistema programmes, in terms of revitalizing their own support base and making themselves relevant within a changing economic and social context. However, such partnerships require orchestras to refocus their missions around community needs and social goals, addressing fundamental questions relating to their raison d’être. For orchestras to adopt the social mission of their El Sistema partners, change must be embraced with regard to leadership. From this perspective, for example, conductors must become more connected with their communities and orchestral members must take leadership roles.

5.5 SUSTAINING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

While engaging families and community is a core tenet of successful Sistema programmes, challenges with regard to this aspiration have been noted. Specific findings relating to how family and community engagement has been supported are reported in sections 4.2 (Family involvement) and 4.3 (Community engagement and impact). For example, one of the primary objectives of the YOLA programme (Silk et al., 2008) is its emphasis on cultivating and maintaining family and community engagement. As part of its initial structural plan, YOLA emphasized the importance of integrating the families of the student participants into its operational practices. YOLA has articulated a commitment to building an active role within the local community as well as the broader music education community. To this end, an internal evaluation of how well the programme fulfills these goals has also been an integral element of its dynamics.

Bernstein and Tunstall (2013) point out that community engagement is a long-term process and requires a commitment to partnerships with local organizations and initiatives that take the children out in to the community, performing frequently and widely in accessible spaces and acting as ambassadors for their own communities.
SUMMARY OF SUSTAINING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a long-term process that requires commitments to partnerships with local organizations that are grounded within communities. Community engagement may be promoted through taking children into the community frequently, performing in accessible spaces, and reaching out to diverse audiences. Family members represent a crucial link with wider communities. To this end, successful community engagement may begin with forging strong links with families.

6. CRITICAL DEBATES

In this chapter we set out a number of critical issues that have been identified in a range of documents that theorize and critique El Sistema. These critical issues have been described as ‘aporias’, ‘counterpoints’, ‘dissonances’ and ‘opposing tendencies’. We have organized these debates into sections concerned with:

- Musical standards and social inclusion
- Venezuela and local contexts
- Programme needs and community needs
- Group and individual pedagogy
- The impact of Sistema-inspired programmes upon the wider music curriculum and the wider community of music education programmes
- Assessment and evaluation

Several tensions, or competing discourses, have been identified in relation to El Sistema (Allan, 2010; Booth, 2009; Majno, 2012). Eric Booth refers to these as ‘opposing tendencies’ (2009, p. 6), and claims that this dynamism is an underlying strength, rather than a weakness, of El Sistema.

Several of these ‘opposing tendencies’ were revealed by Allan (2010), who led a knowledge exchange project embedded within Big Noise, Scotland. The research team focussed on social, educational, personal, and musical aspects of Big Noise, exploring these facets of the programme through a series of knowledge exchange activities involving children (including some who were involved in Big Noise and others who were not), service providers, members of the Sistema Scotland Programme Board, and the local community (parents, friends, and family of Big Noise participants). The aim of the knowledge exchange approach was to reveal any divergence in views and to allow an open space where ‘competing obligations’ could be articulated and heard. Allan (2010, p. 116) uses the term ‘aporia’ to describe these tensions. The idea underpinning the knowledge exchange approach was that the dialogue could be used as a tool for critical reflection, with a view to establishing the basis for inclusive and creative strategic planning. These critical issues provide a framework for the following discussion that takes account of some tensions discussed in the wider literature concerned with El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes.

6.1 MUSICAL STANDARDS AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The juxtaposition of aspirations for musical excellence with a deep commitment to social inclusion has been reported as being ‘synergistic’, within the Venezuelan context (Booth, 2009, p. 5; Hollinger, 2006). It is acknowledged that the El Sistema structure comprises a ‘high-achievement track’ in the form of the ‘Academy’ system where those identified as having the greatest musical proclivity and motivation are accelerated in their development. However, a characteristic of the System is an ongoing interplay between the ‘high achievers’ and other young people at all levels. Booth (2009) highlights this reciprocal exchange
as being a crucial factor in mediating the ‘inclusion versus expertise’ discourse, developing expertise, and keeping alive the goals relating to social inclusion.

Nevertheless, Baker (2012; 2014) points to the need for further research into the processes by which El Sistema pursues the dual aims of social action and musical excellence. Baker likens the highly competitive ‘high achiever’ track within El Sistema to many other classical music training pathways elsewhere in the world. He questions how El Sistema’s privileging of international musical expertise, as opposed to expertise in social justice or social pedagogy (for example) may be interpreted as being in accordance with the fundamental principles of inclusion and social action.

In a similar vein, knowledge exchange opportunities that involved stakeholders in Big Noise, Scotland revealed a competing discourse concerned with ‘musical standards and social inclusion’ (Allan, 2010). While Big Noise has emphasized that it is a project for social transformation with social inclusion as a core principle, there have been questions relating to, for example, the messages that are given when staff are identified as ‘musicians’ rather than ‘music teachers.’

Borchert (2012b, p. 56) adds to this critique, suggesting that while cases of extraordinary musical accomplishments are held up by FMSB as flagship examples of success, there is little information forthcoming with regard to participants who, following different pathways, ‘have in fact overcome poverty as a result of being part of the programme.’ This debate points to the need for further research that fosters a deeper understanding of the relationship between the dual objectives of musical excellence and social change, as well as research that explores the long-term trajectories of those who do not follow musical career pathways.

The issue of striking a balance between ‘quantity and quality’ is raised by Majno (2012, p. 60), who refers to this as one of the ‘counterpoints’ or ‘dissonances’ fostered by the El Sistema movement. While it is acknowledged that uniformly high levels of achievement may be unrealistic, Majno asserts that ‘acceptably elevated standards’ should remain as a priority, thereby privileging musical standards alongside inclusiveness. Majno goes on to highlight some potential tensions between deep artistic quality and ‘the pitfalls of a performance machine more concerned with impressive appearances’, citing for example the predictable encores where after a blackout the young musicians appear dressed in their jackets depicting the bright Venezuelan national colours. Indeed, the same tensions may exist between the overall educational/social aims of many programmes and an imperative to produce impressive performances with popular appeal.

Majno (2013) defends El Sistema programmes by stating that they exceed the dilemma of social transformation. Discussing the polarity between artistic and musical ambitions and social objectives, she quotes Govias, stating ‘that through music, one happens via the other without ever imposing itself at the expense of the other’ (Majno, 2013, p. 139). Despite the qualitative differences between Italian and Venezuelan students (emotional poverty rather than material), Majno proposes that because music can transform people, both personally and in their social group, it can therefore change the world.

Neojibá (Brazil) is proposed as an exemplary case where an artistic programme functions as a tool for social transformation (Sarrouy, 2012). With well-defined goals and objectives, the programme is geared to serving the needs of its population. The research carried out by Sarrouy (2012) reveals the complexity involved in both creating and maintaining a programme like Neojibá. The goals are worthy, states Sarrouy, as the programme is very successful: not only in returning youth to society but more importantly in preventing future youth from becoming disenfranchised in the first place.
SUMMARY OF MUSICAL STANDARDS AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The juxtaposition of aspirations for musical excellence with a deep commitment to social inclusion has been reported as being 'synergistic', within the Venezuelan context. A characteristic of El Sistema is an ongoing interplay between the 'high achievers' and other young people at all levels. This reciprocal exchange as being a crucial factor in mediating the 'inclusion versus expertise' discourse, developing expertise, and keeping alive the goals relating to social inclusion.

However, there is a need for further research into the processes by which El Sistema pursues the dual aims of social action and musical excellence. In particular, questions remain relating to the role of the highly competitive 'high achiever' track within El Sistema and whether the emphasis on international musical expertise should be balanced with expertise in social justice or social pedagogy. While individual cases of extraordinary musical accomplishments are held up by FMSB as flagship examples of success, there needs to be more rigorous research with regard to the socio-economic trajectories of participants, including those who do not follow musical career pathways.

The issue of striking a balance between 'quantity and quality' has been raised. While it is acknowledged that uniformly high levels of achievement may be unrealistic, some argue that high standards should remain as a priority, thereby privileging musical standards alongside inclusiveness. There may be further potential tensions between artistic or educational quality and the imperative to present impressive performances with popular appeal.

Notwithstanding the critiques, many argue that music can and does function as a tool for social transformation. With well-defined goals and objectives, effective programmes serve local needs. Although creating and maintaining Sistema-inspired programmes can be highly complex, many argue strongly and convincingly that the goals of these programmes are worthy, particularly with regard to the potential for such programmes to diminish disenfranchisement amongst youth.

6.2 VENEZUELA AND LOCAL CONTEXTS

Notwithstanding some debate about the historical antecedents of El Sistema in Venezuela (see Section 2.3 – History), there can be little doubt that the Venezuelan context is distinctive in many respects. As Botstein (2014, p. 495) attests, Abreu ‘found a way to place music at the core of a revolutionary social program’, doing so by mustering massive government support.

The question of whether the Venezuelan model can be transplanted to other cultural contexts has been discussed extensively (for example, Allan, 2010; Allan et al., 2010; Majno, 2012; Tunstall, 2012; Mauskapf, 2012; Bernstein and Tunstall, 2013). According to Abreu himself, ‘a translation to the specificities of each context’ is required (Majno, 2012, p. 58). Others (e.g. Eatock, 2010; Silberman, 2013) concur; emphasizing that flexibility and responsiveness to local contexts are key factors to success. Challenges relating to transferability have been identified, including funding structures, repertoire and local cultural traditions, teacher and leadership development, and resources.

Based on interviews with 10 leaders within the global Sistema community, Silberman (2013) identified four areas where support was needed to facilitate the growth and sustainability of Sistema-inspired programmes within diverse communities. These were increased funding and creative approaches to harnessing new funding streams, development of teacher and leadership training (discussed in this document in section 5.3: Teacher development), the development of structures for sharing of resources (see section 4.5:
Leadership, entrepreneurship, and networking), and support for further research and evaluation (see section 6.6: Assessment and evaluation), particularly with regard to the social impact of the programmes. Further issues related to general organizational structures, socio-economic and cultural differences, and diversity of musical genres.

Reflecting upon related questions concerned with how El Sistema has been understood outside of Venezuela, Pedroza (2014a) provides an historical, philosophical, and theoretical exploration of why El Sistema has been so enthusiastically received in the United States. Pedroza’s discussion is based upon her scrutiny of the international media construction of the programme, published statements from prominent leaders both in Venezuela and the USA, and ‘the neo-idealistic aesthetic and historical frameworks that bring together the values of El Sistema’ (p. 3). Pedroza acknowledges that the El Sistema movement in the USA is comprised of many autonomous programs, but she nevertheless seems to suggest that comparisons between the United States and Venezuela can be made in a fairly straightforward way and that specific voices (e.g. Tunstall) represent the beliefs of American proponents of El Sistema. According to Pedroza, as El Sistema has been adopted within the USA, the neo-idealism priorities have shifted from Abreu’s apparent emphasis upon creating a performative space for youth (in which, according to some, the schism between classical and popular music was dismantled) to reinforcing the USA perception of the innate value of classical music. Both paradigms cite the capacity of their respective music programmes to make deep and lasting social change, however, Pedroza highlights differences in what is attributed as the catalyst for such change. Additionally, she asks whether the American public school system could be considered as an infrastructure for ensemble-based music making that is at least as sophisticated as that of Venezuela’s El Sistema.

6.2.1 Funding

A major challenge is funding. Within the Venezuelan context dependence upon state support has been in an ‘operational condition from the start’ (Majno, 2012, p. 59; Sánchez, 2007). Jiminez (2013) highlights this issue in her review of Tunstall (2012), pointing out that government funding for the Venezuelan El Sistema has been forthcoming despite much of the evidence as to the programme’s economic efficacy being anecdotal. In other contexts, such as the USA, there is perhaps a greater imperative for evidence-based social policy making. Without significant government support, Sistema-inspired programmes have had to develop models that involve partnership working, for example with symphony orchestras, community arts organizations, higher education institutions, conservatories, social service agencies, and charitable foundations.

While El Sistema, Venezuela enjoys the benefits of central government support, arguably, there are costs associated with this. Although some argue that Abreu has retained an apolitical stance, Hulting-Cohen (2012, p. 43) suggests that along with central support comes ‘duties to the nation’s political leaders.’

6.2.2 Organizational Structure

Hulting-Cohen (2012), who examined the adoption of El Sistema in the USA from an organizational perspective, points out that while in Venezuela the branched network ensures some degree of standardization and central leadership, in the USA there exists only a very loose connectivity amongst programmes that are independently funded and operated. Thus, while in the USA Sistema-inspired programmes have the scope to be driven truly from the grassroots and to be responsive to local community needs, they perhaps do not demonstrate the cohesion that characterizes El Sistema, Venezuela. Notwithstanding this, recent initiatives have fostered a burgeoning community of practice, both nationally and internationally (Hulting-Cohen, 2012), sharing strategic priorities, values and practices.
6.2.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

The Latin American youth orchestra movement emerged within a social context where social action was conceptualized as 'a structured method, as opposed to an impulsive act by a group of individuals' (Rodas, 2006, p. 37), seeking to instill a sense of self-awareness, self-reliance and empowerment amongst individuals and communities and to, in turn, effect change in social institutions. The imperative for a programme of social action through music is perhaps particularly clear within the Venezuelan context where, for example, poverty levels are ‘double those in the United States’ (Hulting-Cohen, 2012, p. 44). Amongst the challenges relating to adopting or adapting El Sistema within different cultural contexts is the issue of making a salient and compelling case for supporting programmes underpinned by social action aspirations, within diverse socio-cultural contexts.

A related issue is the extent to which young people are prepared to commit time to one intensive activity. Within some programmes, intensive commitment on the part of the young people may represent a very clear and well-understood pathway out of disadvantaged or dangerous environments (Uy, 2010) – a pathway that may not be so clear or so salient in all contexts. Within a programme that relies on intensive and sustained rehearsals, this may be a significant issue for any attempts to replicate the approach, outside of the Venezuelan context. Illustrating this point, Hulting-Cohen (2012, p. 45) cites Abreu who stated, in his 2012 keynote speech at a symposium devoted to exploring El Sistema applications in the USA: ‘our realities cannot be yours.’

The term ‘glocalization’ is used by De Silva and Sharp (2012) as a framework for interpreting the application of global ideas such as those encapsulated within the El Sistema ideology within local contexts. DeSilva and Sharp use the example of Canada as a national context where glocalization is particularly salient. Within the multicultural and pluralistic Canadian context, adaptations of El Sistema may require glocalization at national and provincial levels as well as at a more ‘micro’ level within communities.

6.2.4 DIVERSITY OF MUSICAL GENRES

A further challenge relates to repertoire choices and ensuring that these are representative of local culture as well comprising a rich diversity of musical genres. Logan (2016, p. 69) critiques the privileging of the Western classical canon, which he terms ‘El Sistema’s aesthetic prejudices’, arguing that the fact that this goes ‘relatively unquestioned in multi-cultural societies’ is problematic.

In this vein, a competing discourse identified in relation to Big Noise, Scotland was concerned with local context and was summarized as ‘Venezuela and Scotland’ (Allan, 2010). This ‘aporia’ included questions relating to the extent to which the Venezuelan model could be replicated in Scotland. In particular, there was a sense that the emphasis on Western classical music needed to be balanced with a recognition and responsiveness to the very rich cultural context of Scottish traditional music. Borchert (2012b, p. 58) added his voice to this debate, suggesting that some of the rhetoric associated with El Sistema ‘appears to assume that such communities either do not have their own musical tradition or would not be capable of creating one …in this light, classical music becomes a cultural asset that is bestowed upon the ‘uncultured.’

In Raploch, the home of Big Noise, while there was considerable pride in being an official partner of El Sistema, Venezuela, there was also recognition that Sistema Scotland needed to be responsive to the local cultural context (Allan, 2010). In a similar vein, in the USA many Sistema-inspired programmes, according to Bernstein and Tunstall (2013) incorporate musical genres other than Western classical, as a means of forming stronger connections with local communities.
However, the importance of celebrating local cultural traditions and diverse musical genres has been acknowledged as a critical issue in the Venezuelan context as well (Billaux, 2011). The Venezuelan system has been critiqued on the grounds that its repertoire is limited and choices are not always underpinned by an obvious pedagogical rationale (Chang, 2007; Lesniak, 2012). For example, scholars critique El Sistema programmes on the grounds that repertoire is largely restricted to the Western European canon and rarely employ contemporary music, popular or multicultural music (Snow, 2012).

Although initially El Sistema relied heavily on nineteenth-century masterworks by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Mahler (for example), this emphasis may have been at least in part attributable to limited musical resources as well as an aim of allowing for sharing of resources and connecting the núcleo network (Mauskapf, 2012). Increasingly genres other than Western classical music, and in particular Venezuelan folk music as well as newly composed Venezuelan works, have been integrated into El Sistema repertoire (Tunstall, 2012). For example, Marcus (2012b) points out that ‘folk music is automatically taught and played in every núcleo in Venezuela alongside classical music. Children start with Llanero (plains) folk music, national songs, often using folk harps, bandolas, quatros, and maracas as well as singing, because that is what they have as their inherited culture.’ Furthermore, Marcus rejects the idea that Western culture is imposed upon participants in El Sistema, emphasizing that in Venezuela ‘music is music.’

In accordance with this view, Booth (2009, p. 6) departs from the idea that El Sistema is a ‘classical music programme’, claiming that El Sistema is a ‘many-kinds-of-music-programme’ that encompasses folk, popular, and jazz as well as generating new hybrid compositions. This view is reinforced by Pedroza (2014b), whose analysis of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes in the USA advocates the view that El Sistema pupils ‘are raised in ideological environments that cultivate intimate relationships with popular musics’ (p. 334). According to Pedroza, while El Sistema maintains an aesthetic belief ‘that symphonic practice should be available to all people’ (p. 333) there is also a strong sense that ‘dichotomies between classical and popular musics should be dismantled. In the marriage of these tenets, the symphony orchestra emerges as the paramount musical ensemble, capable of voicing any music through its rich timbral fabric’ (p. 333). This phenomenon of a changing musical face of El Sistema may be interpreted as being in accordance with the idea that núcleos have a level of autonomy in terms of how they contextualize the programme in response to local needs.

However, it has been argued that the embracing of genres other than Western classical music has been limited (Baker, 2012; Borchert, 2012b) and there are critiques relating to the persistent value systems that underpin such shifts, evidenced for example by Billaux (2011, p. 28) who positions the incorporation of Venezuelan music as an adjunct to the ‘best music in the world’. In a similar vein, Tunstall (2012, p. 183) cites Bolivia Bottome, then Director of Institutional Development and International Affairs, who describes how the traditional folk idiom has been recontextualized within a Western classical music paradigm: ‘as Sistema musicians have worked within the folk idiom, new and more complex versions of the traditional musics have evolved. It’s become kind of our own, particularly Venezuelan chamber music’. The main argument here relates to what is valued in the folk music; with critics such as Borchert (2012b) and Aharonián (2004) suggesting that Venezuelan folk music has a rich intrinsic value of its own that is in danger of being lost through a kind of fusion with a Western classical approach.

One rationale for the emphasis on Western classical music is, according to Eatock (2010), a belief that Western classical music functions as a medium through which lower class children may acquire the cultural capital that will help to gain entry into middle class worlds. The idea that classical music is associated with social class and the acquisition of cultural capital is supported by Bull (2016). Bull puts forth the view that classical music practices are imbued with middle-class morality, for example being founded on the idea that
persistent hard work and engagement in respectable cultural practices produces accumulated reward in the long term.

Although the acquisition of cultural capital has been positioned as a positive outcome of El Sistema, others highlight some paradoxes implicit in such a view. For example, Mauskapf (2012, p. 209) suggests that it is impossible to ignore the cultural and political value system that underpins the idea of using Western art music as a vehicle for social development, suggesting that one interpretation of El Sistema is that of a programme that ‘reflects the vision of a political and cultural elite.’ In a similar vein, Aharonián (2004) presents a highly critical response to a report on El Sistema published by Hemsy de Gainza and Méndez (2004; reference not available), focusing on the politics and philosophical foundations of El Sistema. The main criticisms that the author puts forth are related to what he terms colonialist, euro-centric musical practices immersed in El Sistema; the economic and political power underlying the programme; and governmental control over the type of music to be performed, inhibiting (he claims) participants’ creativity. These concerns are summarized by Rosenbal-Coto (2016, p. 174) who, interrogating the context of the Costa Rican Sistema-inspired programme, questions the implications of a structure whereby ‘socially at-risk children and young people devote their time, physical and psychic energy, and expectations to Western art music orchestral performance, a hegemonic, institutionalized practice since the cultural europeanization of Costa Rica. It is necessary that the students submit to Western art practices and values, and be grateful for that.’

Countering these arguments, Yang (2014) argues that music education is a major arena in which Western art music is undergoing dramatic transformations. According to Yang, ‘although the Los Angeles Philharmonic, like most renowned classical music institutions, retains vestiges of elitism and exclusivity, it is functioning, in some surprising ways, as a champion of the marginalized...’ (p. 146). Drawing on interviews with leaders from the Los Angeles YOLA programme, Yang suggests that ‘investment in youth through comprehensive music education would ensure the future survival, even resurgence, of classical music (p. 2). Further, she argues that ‘music outreach programs create new public spaces, within which young budding artists can practice new identities and forge new social relationships’ (p. 149), defending the place of Western classical music within the Sistema movement on the grounds that ‘classical music can now claim social relevance by giving voice to those in the margins... This music is no longer used to take away power, as in the colonialist days of old, but instead, to bestow power’ (p. 164).

Using her framework of ‘cosmopolitanism’, which is said to support citizenship by emphasizing a balance of loyalty to the known with openness to new experiences, Sandoval (2013, p. 10) advocates for programmes that are responsive to local musical cultures, embracing the ‘musical roots and routes the student is already familiar with.’ In this vein, Sandoval adds that the symphony orchestra is not the only form for social transformation and advocates that ‘exploring music in a variety of ensemble types might urge students to critically contemplate different ways in which they themselves might inhabit the world as creative citizens’ (p. 12).

Similarly, El Sistema has been conceptualised as a form of ‘cultural cosmopolitanism’ (Bates, 2014). Whilst this has been defended within a framework whereby cosmopolitanism is thought of as ‘a moral stance requiring every human to be concerned with the well-being of every other human being on earth,’ Bates highlights the complex relationship between cosmopolitanism and power. He uses El Sistema to illustrate an unexpected consequence of cosmopolitanism, in the form of ‘cultural colonization of local peoples and places’, suggesting that ‘a better alternative is to fully recognize the importance of and to celebrate local musical practices and avoid placing higher priority on global values’ (p 310).
This issue of the ‘legitimation’ of El Sistema’s focus on Western classical music has been explored empirically (Bergman and Lindgren, 2014a). Bergman and Lindgren reported on a longitudinal ethnographic study carried out in the context of the El Sistema choir and orchestra school in Gothenburg, Sweden. The programme’s focus was on breaking the typical segregation patterns found in metropolitan regions and the related social exclusion. Analysis of extensive interview data with a range of stakeholders in the programme, as well as field notes and programme policy and promotional documents, revealed three predominant themes relating to the legitimisation of the approach taken in this programme. The first theme, ‘music with the power to unite’, related to ‘the overarching aspiration to achieve an intercultural dialogue in which individuals from diverse backgrounds establish contact with each other and work to achieve a less segregated society’ (p. 47). The researchers noted an ambivalence with regards musical genre, with multiple genres of music incorporated into the programme, including an African folk tune that had become a programme ‘theme’. However, the researchers also reported that these musical genres were presented in a musical hierarchy, with Western classical music being privileged in the discourse relating to programme activities and aims. The second theme, ‘music to provide individual development’, was linked by the authors ‘with the 19th-century bourgeois musical tradition in which music was considered to foster culture and promote personal growth’ (p. 52). Notwithstanding this, they point out that ‘El Sistema may just as well be considered to be a progressive force ... a response to the openness and uncertainty of what aesthetic ideals have been described as typical of late modernity’ (p. 52). Finally, the third theme, music as a social ladder, legitimises the focus on Western Classical music, positioning the programme as providing leverage within a context characterised by a social and economic elite power structure.

In fact, there has been little research within Sistema contexts that has been concerned with the process of acculturation, a consequence of immersing children in the Western classical music tradition. Frankenberg and Bonard (2013) have developed a research tool (noted below in Appendix 1: 1.3.5) that could be used to explore this.

SUMMARY OF VENEZUELA AND LOCAL CONTEXTS

The question of whether the Venezuelan model can be transplanted to other cultural contexts has been discussed extensively. According to Abreu himself, ‘a translation to the specificities of each context’ is required. Challenges relating to transferability have been identified, including funding structures, organizational structures, repertoire, and embracing local cultural traditions.

A major challenge is funding. Within the Venezuelan context dependence upon state support has been in an operational condition from the start. Without significant government support, Sistema-inspired programmes have had to develop models that involve partnership working, for example with symphony orchestras, community arts organizations, higher education institutions, conservatoires, social service agencies, and charitable foundations.

Further challenges as well as opportunities relate to organizational structures. While in Venezuela the branched network ensures some degree of standardization and central leadership, in other contexts (for example, the USA) there exists only a very loose connectivity amongst programmes that are independently funded and operated. Thus, while some Sistema-inspired programmes have the scope to be driven truly from the grassroots, responsive to local community needs, they perhaps do not demonstrate the cohesion that characterizes El Sistema, Venezuela. Notwithstanding this, recent initiatives have fostered a burgeoning community of practice, both nationally and internationally, sharing strategic priorities, values and practices.

Amongst the challenges relating to adopting or adapting El Sistema within different cultural contexts is the
issue of making a salient and compelling case for supporting programmes underpinned by social action aspirations, within diverse socio-cultural contexts.

The Latin American youth orchestra movement emerged within a social context where social action was conceptualized as a structured method that had the potential to instill a sense of self-awareness, self-reliance, and empowerment amongst individuals and communities and to, in turn, effect change in social institutions. The imperative for a programme of social action through music is perhaps particularly clear within the Venezuelan context where, for example, poverty levels are double those in the United States. Within some programmes, intensive commitment on the part of the young people may represent a very clear and well-understood pathway out of disadvantaged or dangerous environments - a pathway that may not be so clear or so salient in all contexts.

The term ‘glocalization’ has been used as a framework for interpreting the application of global ideas such as those encapsulated within the El Sistema ideology within local contexts. For example, within the multicultural and pluralistic Canadian context, adaptations of El Sistema may require glocalization at national and provincial levels as well as at a more ‘micro’ level within communities.

A further challenge relates to repertoire choices and ensuring that these are representative of local culture as well comprising a rich diversity of musical genres. Many argue that the emphasis on Western classical music needed to be balanced with a recognition and responsiveness to the very rich cultural contexts of local communities, warning that Sistema-inspired programmes can appear to assume that their constituents do not have their own musical traditions.

The Venezuelan system has been critiqued on the grounds that its repertoire is limited and choices are not always underpinned by an obvious pedagogical rationale. However, others reject the idea that Western culture is imposed upon participants in El Sistema, emphasizing that in Venezuela ‘music is music.’

Although initially El Sistema relied heavily on nineteenth-century masterworks by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Mahler (for example), this emphasis may have been at least in part attributable to limited musical resources as well as an aim of allowing for sharing of resources and connecting the núcleo network. Increasingly genres other than Western classical music, and in particular Venezuelan folk music as well as newly composed Venezuelan works, have been integrated into El Sistema repertoire.

However, it has been argued that the embracing of genres other than Western classical music has been limited. Furthermore, there are critiques relating to the persistent cultural and political value system that underpins the idea of using Western art music as a vehicle for social development. From this perspective, critics question the extent to which popular music from Venezuela, which has its own rich intrinsic value, has been enriched through its incorporation into the El Sistema repertoire.

One rationale for the emphasis on Western classical music is a belief that Western classical music functions as a medium through which lower class children may acquire the cultural capital that will help to gain entry into middle class worlds. This idea has been critiqued, with others arguing that such an approach recasts and reinforces elitist values and furthermore may not allow sufficient scope for creative practice. However, to date there has been little research within Sistema contexts that has focused on the process of acculturation, a consequence of immersing children in the Western classical music tradition.
6.3 PROGRAMME NEEDS AND COMMUNITY NEEDS

As noted above, increasingly it has been recognized that any attempt to use music to effect social development or change must be in response to local community needs. This is emphasized by Silberman (2013) who highlights the role that Sistema-inspired programmes play in serving the social development goals of their local communities. Indeed, to be truly effective, it may be argued that the strong community partnerships must be at the heart of the programme.

A tension between the needs of the Big Noise, Scotland programme and what the community desires for itself was identified by Allan (2010). In particular, there were some concerns relating to the ethics around portraying the local community within a deficit model, for example highlighting the high level of need for social worker support. This resonates with the perceptions articulated by participants in youth orchestra programmes in Argentina (Wald, 2011a; 2011b), where young people opposed the media portrayal of them as vulnerable and disadvantaged. Baker (2014), too, reports that in El Sistema, Venezuela, some young musicians rejected claims that their positive personal development was attributable to participation in the programme, highlighting instead the influence of their supportive families.

In Scotland, there was recognition that the community must have ownership of the project, but also a competing discourse relating to a sense that access to information needed to be controlled until the programme was well-established (Allan et al., 2010). In particular, complex issues relating to the distinction between community desires for itself and the programme’s view of what might be best for the community. There was a sense, for example, that the programme required an ‘unquestioning faith’ in its intrinsic value (Allan et al., 2010, p. 344). A related ‘aporia’ was the potential for competing interests of the various Sistema Scotland stakeholders.

Finally, Pedroza (2014) encourages readers to reflect on her point that ‘while music’s powers are often described through the eloquence of metaphorical discourse, poverty and violence exist squarely in the physical realm that music is believed to transcend, and demand unequivocal action on that realm’ (p. 17). Pedroza argues passionately that the community’s physical and structural needs need to be addressed with physical solutions, rather than solely with a transcendent and metaphorical music programme. This view is elucidated by Logan (2015a) and Bull (2016), who argue that an underlying assumption of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes is that the causes of socio-economic deprivation can be attributed to the individuals who find themselves in such circumstances. These authors critique the idea that interventions at an individual level can alleviate such social conditions by ‘bolstering ideas about the reasons why people are poor, in particular the idea that the reason they are poor is because of their behaviour and their culture’ (Bull, 2016, p. 142).

SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME NEEDS AND COMMUNITY NEEDS

Any attempt to use music to effect social development or change must be in response to local community needs. There have been some concerns relating to the ethics around portraying a local community within a deficit model. Complex issues have been noted, relating to the distinction between community desires for itself and the programme’s view of what might be best for the community. Effective programmes are responsive and flexible, with regard to these issues. It must also be acknowledged that physical and structural solutions, beyond the music programme, are often needed to meet community needs.
6.4 GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PEDAGOGY

The musical ensemble has been conceptualized as ‘a school of social life’ (Sandoval, 2013, p. 2). From this perspective, learning through immersion in an ensemble is powerful because of its potential to foster a sense of cosmopolitanism, a concept that is associated with the personal resources for meeting the challenges of being an individual within a world of rapid social transformation. It is argued that through participation in the ensemble, young people develop a ‘reflective openness to new influences’ whilst retaining ‘reflective loyalty towards the tried and known’ (Sandoval, 2013, p. 3). The ensemble has the potential to function as a context within which young musicians may develop a sense of affiliation as well as an awareness of their potential to contribute to society (Sandoval, 2013).

Some argue, however, that too great a focus on ensemble brings with it a risk is that individual creativity may be thwarted. The issue of how to promote creativity within a Sistema-inspired context has been addressed by James (2015). Reflecting on some limited literature concerned with El Sistema (e.g. non-academic sources and advocacy materials), James suggests that facilitation of creativity, as conceptualised by Amabile (i.e. involving freedom, positive challenge, supervisory encouragement, work group supports, sufficient resources and organizational support) can be used as a framework to explain creative practice within El Sistema. Notwithstanding the limitations of James’ argument, she does highlight the profound potential of creativity within any kind of education, and the need for teachers to be supported in developing skills to promote creativity within their practice, irrespective of the subject.

While there are undoubtedly significant benefits – both intended and unintended – that may be attributed to the central role of the ensemble in El Sistema, it has been acknowledged that participants in El Sistema value highly the individual support that is available (Slevin and Slevin, 2013). Indeed, Burns and Berwick (2013) report that the English In Harmony Liverpool programme had introduced one-to-one or paired tuition to their curriculum, as has Sistema Scotland (GCPh, 2015). While rapid expansion of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes may make individual support less and less viable (Uy, 2012), it is clear that there is a perceived value in embedding this approach alongside the ensemble model.

Slevin et al. (2013, p. 135) advocate a system where the group remains at the centre but is complemented with one-to-one instruction. They conceptualize this approach as a ‘feedback loop’, whereby one context informs the other. While the group offers a social space for peer learning, nurturing positive sense of citizenship and experiencing the joy of the collective sound, Slevin et al. warn that one cannot assume that all individuals within the group are ‘okay’ just because the group is functioning well.

It is striking that, amongst the El Sistema literature emanating from the USA, the interest in the principle of ‘ensemble’ has been particularly strong; there may well be cultural differences in the view that privileging the ensemble in music education is a novel idea (Service, 2010). For example, Murphy, Rickard, Gill, and Grimmett (2011) highlight a number of string programmes founded on the principle of group teaching. The USA is, of course, renowned for its values that support individual autonomy and it may be that, as Slevin and Slevin (2013, p. 133) suggest, ‘an outcome of El Sistema work might be political empowerment on impoverished communities in a United States sputtering and sparking due to the lack of ensemble work.’

Baker (2014) calls for a critical analysis of the group-oriented pedagogy that is advocated within El Sistema programmes. In particular, he raises questions relating to the extent to which disciplined, mechanical rote learning described by his informants and reiterated in Scripp (2015) can be said to be a ‘model for music education for the 21st century.’ Baker (2012; 2014) calls for research and a critical analysis of this very issue, pointing out that although the orchestra is positioned within El Sistema rhetoric as a vehicle for
collaboration, the reality may be that there is little opportunity within a hierarchical orchestral structure for true collaboration or dialogue (see also Borchert, 2012b and Mauskapf, 2012, cited in section 2.4: Literature relating to El Sistema principles). While individuals work together towards a pre-determined goal, there are questions relating to the extent to which this can be said to promote collaborative creative practice.

Focusing on limitations in terms of creativity and individual musical expression, Borchert (2012b, p. 57) proposes that symphony orchestra practice is permeated with the predominant ‘ideals of fidelity, accuracy, uniformity, precision, and excellence’ in contrast to exploring opportunities for freedom of individual creative expression. In a similar vein, Lesniak (2012) cautions that learning note-by-note is not necessarily a practice that should be emulated and that the development of a well-rounded, independent, and self-sufficient musician involves instruction in technique, theory, history, improvisation and composition. Kruse et al. (2016) and Fink (2016, p. 42) add to this critique, proposing that the ideology around ‘ensemble’ in El Sistema may be interpreted as ‘indoctrination into an ideology of harmony’. Fink questions the power relationships that are implicated in such an ideology. Highlighting the dialectical nature of harmony (embracing both harmony and dissonance) and the relevance of discord and struggle for individual development, Fink cautions that deep thinking is needed in order to understand fully the complex implications of an ideology of social harmony when it is articulated as a mode of control.

SUMMARY OF GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PEDAGOGY

While there are undoubtedly significant benefits – both intended and unintended – that may be attributed to the central role of the ensemble in El Sistema, a risk is that individual creativity may suffer. Furthermore, the relationship between learning through ensemble and individual support, within Sistema programmes, has not always been clear. It has been acknowledged that participants in El Sistema value highly the individual support that is available, yet this is within a context where the group is central.

Some advocate a system where the group remains at the centre but is complemented with one-to-one instruction. While the group offers a social space for peer learning, nurturing positive sense of citizenship, and experiencing the joy of the collective sound, one cannot assume that all individuals within the group are ‘okay’ just because the group is functioning well.

There may be cultural differences with regard to the view that privileging the ensemble in music education is a novel idea. For example, a number of string programmes founded on the principle of group teaching have been highlighted.

Questions have been raised regarding the pedagogy that is advocated within El Sistema programmes. In particular, the disciplined, rote learning approach has been critiqued on the grounds that it takes little account of progressive movements in music education that have taken place over recent decades.

Although the orchestra is positioned within El Sistema as a vehicle for collaboration, some argue that there is little opportunity within a hierarchical orchestral structure for true collaboration or dialogue. While individuals work together towards a pre-determined goal, there are questions relating to the extent to which this can be said to promote collaborative creative practice. However, it may be that a combination of other factors apart from the specific type of ensemble (e.g. orchestra as opposed to other kinds of musical ensemble) that contribute to the collaborative practice that has been noted within El Sistema.
6.5 THE IMPACT OF SISTEMA-INSPIRED PROGRAMMES UPON THE WIDER MUSIC CURRICULUM AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY OF MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Some researchers and educators have debated the question of what makes ‘Sistema’ distinctive, attempting to define and position Sistema-inspired programmes within the wider music education landscape. Lesniak (2013), for example, calls for increased collaboration between El Sistema and existing US music education programs and organizations. According to Lesniak, ‘new El Sistema programs must also be cognizant of how they can contribute and enhance their local music education communities’ (p.74). Lesniak advocates that one important step in integrating El Sistema and developing reciprocal relationships amongst music education programmes would be for El Sistema teachers and administrators to become members of existing national and state music education organizations such as NAFME and the American String Teachers Association...’ (p.73).

Allan (2010) reported considerable tensions relating to the extent to which Sistema Scotland might be in competition with other sectors of the music education community. Participants in the discussions hosted by Allan (2010) warned of potential dangers with regard to investment in Sistema projects undermining other well-established music education programmes. In a similar vein, Logan (2015, p. 242) cautioned that ‘...important and courageous cultural projects run along egalitarian lines are less likely to prosper as a result of El Sistema and the economism articulated by its powerful backers.’ In a subsequent paper, Logan (2016, p. 59) warns that El Sistema’s emphasis upon ‘improving the morale and the minds of young people’ leaves little room to focus on creative potential. Consequently, he questions whether ‘Sistema-style projects [are] helping to impoverish expectations of musical education.’

The view was expressed that the ideology claimed by El Sistema is not in fact new. The emphasis on social change is the facet of El Sistema that its supporters claim makes it stand out as an important movement in music education in the USA. However, according to one Abreu Fellow (cited in Olsen, 2012, p. 46), this ideology is shared by many music educators: ‘There is a lot of fanfare around El Sistema because of the success of the orchestras that come out of Venezuela. But as a teacher, I know the purpose behind it is no different than the purpose we have here when we go into [this profession].’ Sandoval (2013, p. 2) adds that ‘El Sistema practitioners struggle to define what aspects of their classroom practices evidence the goal of social justice, especially when questioned by public music educators who have rightfully begun to feel threatened by the immense attention El Sistema is receiving.’

Lord et al. (2013) claim that the distinctiveness of the English In Harmony projects lies in the particular focus on ensemble work, the discipline of orchestral music-making in particular, the input of professional musicians, and the whole-school approach. However, not all of the programmes under the banner of In Harmony demonstrate all of these characteristics (for example, not all adopt the whole-school approach). Furthermore, the researchers’ argument that the focus on ensemble differs from more traditional peripatetic instrumental teaching in England (i.e. one-to-one or in small groups) fails entirely to acknowledge the rich tradition of ensemble provision established in England through the Local Authority Music Services (see Hallam and Creech, 2010). Nor do the authors consider the overlap between the practices of In Harmony and the ‘whole class instrumental teaching’ approach which has become predominant over recent years (ibid, pp 97-100). Finally, the authors do not make it clear how traditional peripatetic approaches might differ from the one-to-one and paired tuition that is described as part of the Liverpool In Harmony programme in Burns and Bewick (2013).

The view has also been put forth that the symphony orchestra is not the only musical medium for bringing about social transformation (Allan, 2010; Sandoval, 2013). Several projects, outside of El Sistema, have applied the concept of the musical ensemble as a microcosm of society and a vehicle for social
change (Sandoval, 2013). Nevertheless, Lesniak (2012) points out that El Sistema plays a valuable role in highlighting and reinforcing the wider view that society should not tolerate economic barriers to high quality music education.

A tension between the Sistema-inspired programme and the wider school music curriculum was also noted in the evaluation of the Irish Sistema-inspired project (Kenny and Moore, 2011). There were questions relating to the dependence on highly expert musicians brought in from outside of school, and a possible under-use and under-development of classroom teachers’ own expertise and ideas in music. Interviews with classroom teachers revealed that the time taken by the project meant that often no other music was taught in school. Similar tensions were hinted at in the research concerned with a Canadian Sistema-inspired programme (Morin, 2014). The programme, it seemed, had not always integrated well with the school music curriculum.

In a similar vein, one of the tensions identified by Burns and Bewick (2012) in relation to In Harmony Liverpool was the relationship between In Harmony and the wider music curriculum. During interviews, children expressed interest in alternative musical genres and instrumentation. There was some ambiguity over whether In Harmony represented the entire music curriculum or whether it formed part of a wider music provision.

The place of Sistema-inspired programmes within the wider music education community has been examined and debated in a number of contexts. Some programmes have prioritized their relationship with neighbouring music education providers with whom they have shared aims. For example, in Colombia the Batuta programme was developed within a context where, unlike Venezuela, there was an existing well-established network of youth orchestras, many of which served disadvantaged groups. The Batuta leadership, according to Booth and Tunstall (2011, p. 3) has ‘emphasized the roles of coalition builder and service provider,’ serving as ‘coordinator for regional gatherings of many music programmes.’

In their analysis of the Swedish Sistema-inspired programme in Gothenburg, Bergman and Lindgren (2014b) argue that the programme may ‘sit’ within the framework of community music, with characteristics that include music education outside of formal school, an inclusive perspective, a focus on democratization, personal and social development, involvement of families and local culture. Analyzing the Swedish programme through a critical lens, the authors ‘deconstruct’ three themes that characterize El Sistema as implemented in the Swedish context. First, they demonstrate how ‘El Sistema as identity practice’ is central to the movement and permeates discourse around their programme. However, they caution that ‘by creating exclusion towards other groups, El Sistema’s inclusive approach of strengthening group identity could paradoxically have an adverse effect on its ambition to create space for meetings between different social and cultural groups’ (p. 371). The second feature, ‘El Sistema as educational practice’, representing the belief that a high musical level creates the conditions for programmes to achieve their social development goals. The authors highlight that this belief has been critiqued on the grounds that El Sistema is a political project, where culture is used as a tool to bring about change. Finally, the third theme, ‘El Sistema as civic education practice’, highlights the focus on obedience, discipline, and cooperation, carrying with it the exercise of power and control. However, the authors conclude that ‘another way to understand El Sistema is that through its strong management and principles of discipline it can function as a zone that is free of many of the requirements associated with late-modern life ... by offering a collective identity El Sistema can also counteract the experience of ambivalence and loss of meaning experienced by people facing many life choices that are difficult to navigate’ (p. 374).

A further example is Canada, where this issue of Sistema’s place within the wider music education landscape
has been debated thoroughly. In 2012, the Canadian Music Educators’ Association (CMEA) created a seven-member Ad Hoc Committee to investigate EL Sistema initiatives throughout the Canada. One of the first music education organizations to formally state their support via a position paper, CMEA also indicated ways in which the association could assist with EL Sistema initiatives.

Specifically, the document stated that EL Sistema based programmes support the CMEA mandate and mission by encouraging the growth of musical communities. The authors congratulated the various Canadian EL Sistema programmes for serving a range of historically under-serviced populations as well as for their focus on teaching and sustainable lifelong musical learning. The CMEA also noted the positive impact of ‘transformative social interventions and expansive learning opportunities’ (CMEA ad hoc EL Sistema Committee, 2012, p. 2) as well as increased partnerships between private corporations and government agencies that previously had not been involved in music education in Canada.

The association further offered several cautionary notes. They stressed that implementation of EL Sistema programmes should not ‘lessen the responsibility of governments at all levels to provide quality music education within school systems’. Neither should such programmes ‘serve as a replacement or substitute to state-supported music education’ (CMEA ad hoc EL Sistema Committee, 2012, p. 2). The document outlined seven differences between the mandates of the CMEA and EL Sistema based programmes. These include student assessment; consistency with provincial music curricular outcomes; integration of technology; provincially mandated objectives for inclusiveness and diversity; teacher qualifications; repertoire; and frequency of delivery.

Thus, the CMEA offered their assistance to EL Sistema based initiatives. In addition to their stated endorsement, they proposed to share their resources with the programmes including their expertise in professional development for teachers, research, and pedagogical knowledge.

This move to share resources and support professional development networks is in the spirit of the core principles for Sistema Europe (Marcus, 2012) where there is a strong emphasis on the importance of communities of practice, networking and sharing. While the Sistema Europe document is focused on networks amongst EL Sistema programmes, there is no doubt that the ideology enshrined in its core values (human rights, duties, responsibilities, lifelong learning, trust) and some of its principles (access, inclusivity, excellence, for example) are shared by the wider music education community (see for example, UNESCO, 2010, where the three core values for music education are identified as access, excellence and social development). Indeed, there are critical debates with regard to ‘ownership’ of those values (for example, Service, 2010). Dialogue and collaborative networks, such as those proposed by the CMEA, could greatly support a highly integrated and cohesive approach to achieving social development through music.

In accordance with the idea of a wider, integrated and cohesive approach, Snow (2012) states that the EL Sistema model should not be used exclusively. Rather, she paints its approach as ‘just one piece of the puzzle’ (Snow, 2012, p. 246). Citing other innovative initiatives throughout the United States (sl’mART, Young@Heart, Musicorps, music in prisons), Snow stresses the importance of expanding the role of music education in American society via a collaborative model. In this manner, music education can create a ‘win-win’ situation by encompassing a wider demographic. Highlighting the curricular changes at the University of Texas, she notes that such innovative programmes are beginning to develop.

Snow (2012) notes a historical absence of political, cultural, and educational criticism of EL Sistema programmes in the United States; only recently has this begun to appear in the literature. Notwithstanding
the recent critiques, the author firmly concedes that music education in the United States could serve a far greater clientele in a far more socially relevant and empowering manner than it has historically. This could be achieved in part by adopting an entrepreneurial focus as exemplified through the training of the Sistema Fellows at the New England Conservatory.

In a similar vein, Shoemaker (2012, p. 104) contends that ‘El Sistema programmes seem to be weaving an essential thread of musical joy’ into the traditional elitist model of music education in North America. Calling for a shift in the delivery of North American programmes so as to serve a greater percentage of the population, Shoemaker outlines how music education at the post-secondary can revitalize itself with the assistance of the El Sistema model.

**SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT OF SISTEMA-INSPIRED PROGRAMMES UPON THE WIDER MUSIC CURRICULUM AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY OF MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

A tension has been noted with regard to the relationship between Sistema-inspired programmes and the wider music education community, including school music curricula, formal music education pathways, and music education initiatives within the community. Some warn of potential risks with regard to investment in Sistema projects undermining other well-established music education programmes.

Questions have been raised in some school-based programmes, relating to the dependence on highly expert musicians brought in from outside of school, and a possible under-use and under-development of classroom teachers’ own expertise and ideas in music. Interviews with classroom teachers have revealed that the time taken by the project meant that often no other music was taught in school.

There are issues relating to ‘ownership’ of the ideology claimed by El Sistema. Some argue that this ideology is not in fact new and that the symphony orchestra is not the only musical medium for bringing about social transformation. For example, the ideology enshrined in Sistema Europe’s core values (human rights, duties, responsibilities, lifelong learning, trust) and some of its principles (access, inclusivity, excellence) are shared by the wider music education community (for example, UNESCO’s Seoul Agenda for music education where the three core values are identified as access, excellence and social development).

Nevertheless, others point out that El Sistema plays a valuable role in highlighting and reinforcing the wider view that society should not tolerate economic barriers to high quality music education. Furthermore, Sistema-inspired programmes have played a vitally important role in serving a range of historically under-serviced populations.

Implementation of El Sistema programmes should not lessen the responsibility of governments at all levels to provide quality music education within school systems. Neither should such programmes serve as a replacement or substitute to state-supported music education. Dialogue and collaborative networks could greatly support a highly integrated and cohesive approach to achieving social development through music.

**6.6 ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

Evaluation is increasingly being recognized as being crucial in ensuring the sustained development and effective delivery of El Sistema programmes. Discussing the sustainability of El Sistema, Venezuela, Mora-Brito (2011) drew attention to this issue: ‘the other major issue identified during the interviews is that FESNOJIV has not been pursuing rigorous evaluations of its program, relying almost exclusively on the idea
that its results are “good by definition.”

Particularly within a climate where there is increasing competition for funds alongside intensifying critical debate regarding the principles and practices of Sistema-inspired programmes, robust evaluation is a priority area. In this vein, Erik Holmgren (then Director of Teacher Education and Education Initiatives at Longy’s Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) programme) summarized Sistema-inspired programmes as having ‘three straightforward key elements, a) programme that identifies and meets a social need within a community, b) that addresses the need through playing music together, and c) then evaluates how well the need is being met’ (cited in Silberman, 2013, p. 72).

Landin, Roldan, Sandoval, and Zanussi (2013) carried out a survey of USA El Sistema project mission statements, with a view to identifying appropriate approaches to documenting and measuring the impact of El Sistema programmes in the USA. They reported that the mission statements were broad in scope and in some cases non-specific. Furthermore, a comparison of the mission statements revealed diverse interpretations of the El Sistema ethos. Nevertheless, the authors identified musical literacy, personal agency, and sense of community as overarching areas of aspiration for the programmes and proposed that rigorous tools for evaluation and assessment of these areas should be developed. Their analysis of research needs is grounded in a positivist approach, whereby the goal is to design experimental research with a view to naming objective truths relating to the impact of participation in El Sistema programmes.

In contrast, Allan (2010) cautions against evaluation approaches that seek to provide evidence of transformation or empowerment, advocating a more imaginative approach to accessing knowledge about how engagement with the arts occurs and how it is experienced. In a similar vein, Jimenez (2013) cautions against the potential unintended consequences of having to produce evaluation evidence quickly, to satisfy funders. For example, as Dobson (2016, p. 105-106) highlighted, the imperative to produce showcase events demonstrating measurable outcomes can foster a climate of uncertainty and anxiety, prompting ‘pre-concert injunctions that the children be coached to look like they were having fun, demonstrating their enjoyment in their bodies and faces.’ Furthermore, Dobson raises questions relating to the validity of some evaluation measures, drawing particular attention to five levels of evaluation of ‘pride’ and ‘passion’ and questioning ‘the extent to which such things are indeed measurable.’

Landin et al. (2013) emphasize the complex nature of the teacher role in El Sistema programmes, comprising both musical instruction and social/pastoral care. They advocate that teacher evaluation should be built in as an integral part of teacher professional development, providing teachers with tools for developing reflective practice and approaches to assessment that support deep engagement with learning. For example, at the Conservatory Lab Charter School (2012), teachers meet for four hours every six weeks to examine the data from the interim examinations. This information is also made public, and teachers collaboratively analyze the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. Teachers receive support from coaches and administrators to re-teach action plans that target the most foundational skills within a content area so students reach mastery in specific areas before advancing in the curriculum. A continuous process of evaluation and revision of action plans occurs over the course of the academic year. In this respect, an action research evaluation and assessment plan is utilized by the school.

Similarly, the school evaluation approach at the Renaissance Arts Academy, Los Angeles (2012a; 2012b; 2013) is based on a vision of professional development being an integral part of the actual work engaged in by the teachers; thus, time is built in to the actual school day for this evaluation component to take place. Invested stakeholders at all levels participate in this internal evaluation process, as the school’s board, administration, faculty, staff, students, parents, and nearby community all assess how well the school is
working towards realizing its organizational mission and goals.

Landin et al. (2013) emphasize that evaluation and assessment tools need to take account of local, contextual differences, with each núcleo identifying what constitutes quality or successful teaching to them. This perspective seems to be more in accordance with a research approach whereby, rather than an objective truth, best practice would be seen to be located within specific contexts, socially constructed over time, and grounded in the lived experience of participants.

Evaluations can serve an important purpose in establishing an evidence base relating to the extent to which El Sistema programmes accomplish their stated aims. However, ‘defining excellence continues to be a struggle’ (Hulting-Cohen, 2012, p. 73). Personal development, collaborative working and social responsibility may be difficult to assess in a rigorous manner, as are aspects of musicianship such as communication and creativity. Nevertheless, the emerging ‘communities of practice’ amongst Sistema-inspired programmes provides an opportunity to bring a level of coherence, rigour and meaningfulness to future research and evaluation.

A critical perspective relating to the extent to which El Sistema programmes achieve their goals may be difficult to achieve, particularly against the backdrop of the Venezuelan phenomenon with successes so dramatic and messages so inspiring (Eatock, 2010). Majno (2012) argues that it is imperative that coordinated, large-scale research is carried out that tests claims relating to cognitive benefits as well as those relating to social improvements.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Evaluation is increasingly being recognized as being crucial in ensuring the sustained development and effective delivery of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes. There are several challenges associated with this imperative.

A comparison of programme mission statements has revealed diverse interpretations of the El Sistema ethos. Nevertheless, musical literacy, personal agency, and sense of community have been identified as overarching areas of aspiration for several programmes and it has been proposed that rigorous tools for evaluation and assessment of these areas should be developed. Others caution against evaluation approaches that seek to provide evidence of transformation or empowerment, warning against unintended consequences and advocating an imaginative approach to accessing knowledge about how engagement with the arts occurs and how it is experienced.

Some have advocated that teacher evaluation should be built in as an integral part of teacher professional development, providing teachers with tools for developing reflective practice and approaches to assessment that support deep engagement with learning. Evaluations can also serve an important purpose in establishing an evidence base relating to the extent to which Sistema-inspired programmes accomplish their stated aims. However, defining ‘excellence’ is challenging. Furthermore, personal development, collaborative working and social responsibility may be difficult to assess in a rigorous manner, as are aspects of musicianship such as communication and creativity.

Nevertheless, the emerging ‘communities of practice’ amongst Sistema-inspired programmes provides an opportunity to bring a level of coherence, rigour and meaningfulness to future research and evaluation.
7. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In this final chapter we summarize the major findings from our review. We first contextualize the key findings within a) the framework of the fundamental principles and practices underpinning El Sistema and b) the wider knowledge relating to the benefits of participation in instrumental learning. Secondly, we outline the limitations of the studies that have been included, as well as the limitations of our own review of the literature. Finally, we offer six overarching messages from the review.

7.1 HOW THE FINDINGS RELATE TO EL SISTEMA FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

7.1.1 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MUSIC

There is considerable evidence of the transformative impact of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes at an individual level, with many reports of enhanced self-esteem, raised aspirations, personal development, and improved psychological well-being. There are also hopeful indicators that support the view that El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes are having a positive and transformative impact upon communities. However, there are methodological problems with some of the studies that have addressed this issue and this remains an area where further longitudinal research is needed.

Families represent one crucial link between the programmes and wider communities. The idea of Sistema-inspired programmes achieving legitimacy by virtue of ‘automatically improving the lives of children and their families … [who are] shown to benefit from partaking in music, conveying harmony and gratitude due to El Sistema’ has been interrogated and critiqued by Kruse et al. (2016). Nevertheless, there is some evidence that El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes have a significant effect on parents, in particular, with reports of a greater sense of empowerment, self-efficacy, self-esteem and raised aspirations for their children. This finding is in accordance with the wider literature concerned with parental involvement in their children’s musical learning (for example, Creech and Hallam, 2009; McPherson, 2009). There is also evidence that the benefits of parental engagement are reciprocal, with the programmes benefiting greatly from parental involvement. However, this remains an under-researched area in the context of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes, although there is a wealth of evidence that supports the view that parental involvement and home-school partnerships are highly significant in supporting children’s development (for example, Creech, 2009; Crozier, 1999; Drummond and Stipek, 2004; Henry, 1996).

Accordingly, there is scope for research that focuses on the influence of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes in the lives of parents as well as grandparents. Furthermore, it may be that a powerful route to achieving social development goals is through engagement with intergenerational groups within the community. It is well-known that one of the significant social challenges of the 21st century is an ageing population, with associated risks of high rates of depression and isolation amongst older people (Christensen et al., 2009). It is also well-known that social networks play an important role in alleviating these risks and there is a growing body of literature supporting the view that musical social networks may be particularly important (for example, Creech et al, 2013a; 2013b; Smith and Christakis, 2008). Thus, El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes, in seeking to address salient social development goals, could broaden their scope and focus, to include intergenerational groups in music-making. This could be a distinctive and powerful feature of programmes that have at their heart the aim of social development.

With regard to the social development aims of the programmes, there remains a need for teacher training and continuing professional development that focuses on these aims, possibly drawing upon expertise within the field of social pedagogy (Kyriacou et al., 2009). Very importantly, more research is needed that looks at the impact of participation in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes as compared with other...
interventions that have social development aims. This is a crucial part of the evidence base, addressing the question of whether there is something special about music that makes it a particularly powerful vehicle for social change, development, or even transformation. In particular, and of crucial significance for developing progressive practice within the music education community, research is needed that focuses on how best to maximize creative learning and development within orchestral contexts.

7.1.2 LEARNING THROUGH ENSEMBLE

All of the programmes we reviewed were premised on the idea of learning through immersion in an ensemble. This approach offered a rich context within which participants formed protective social networks characterized by strong interpersonal bonds. Within ensembles, young people developed sophisticated skills in working as a team and formed a positive group identity. Some evidence demonstrated significant improvements in pro-social behaviour, after just six months of participation in a Sistema-inspired programme.

Some writers have attempted to theorize the pedagogy that underpins these positive outcomes that are associated with learning through ensemble. However, overall this area remains under-researched. For the most part, the ‘ensemble’ in the programmes we reviewed was an orchestra, although some other group formats were included, such as chamber groups, sectionals, percussion groups, and choir. There are critical debates with regard to the focus on the symphony orchestra as the privileged ensemble. Little research has focused on this issue. There is scope for research that explores whether there are specific facets of a symphony orchestra that support (or indeed constrain) the reported benefits of participation in El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes, as compared with other types of musical groups.

A related issue is concerned with ensemble repertoire. Again, there are critical debates with regard to privileging Western classical orchestral music. There has been little research that has focused on the question of whether particular musical genres are associated with specific outcomes, or whether, as Marcus (2012b) suggests, ‘music is music’ and the wider benefits are more strongly related to contextual and pedagogical factors other than musical genre.

Learning through ensemble, within El Sistema, is organized around a model that resembles a spiral curriculum (Bruner, 1960), whereby concepts and materials are introduced initially in a simple and accessible way and then revisited again and again, with ever-increasing depth and nuance in understanding. Although this approach has been reported within many Sistema-inspired programmes, it is an area of pedagogy that remains under-researched within those contexts. It may be that there are unexplored risks as well as benefits associated with this way of learning.

A further issue relates to the pedagogy associated with peer learning and teaching. Whilst heralded as a significant positive aspect of many programmes, this aspect of El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes requires further attention. Within the wider field of educational research there is considerable evidence that children need to be supported in developing the interpersonal skills and strategies for effective peer learning (for example, Kutnick et al., 2008). This body of research may have much to offer El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes, where peer learning and teaching are highly valued. Conversely, El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes provide a rich context for research concerned with peer learning and teaching. Research with this focus, carried out within Sistema-inspired programmes, would have much to contribute to the wider literature relating to peer learning.
There were some indications that in many of the programmes there were opportunities for one-to-one tuition as well, although the scope of this approach was vague and none of the evaluations or research papers focused on the contribution that one-to-one tuition might have made within the overall experience, or indeed whether the availability of one-to-one tuition may have influenced the social or musical trajectory of the students.

7.1.3 Accessibility and Inclusivity

Interestingly, there was little mention of the concept of ‘differentiation’ in any of the research papers or evaluation reports, although there was some evidence that this was in fact a core aspect of some excellent practice. Differentiation is a key concept relating to inclusion, whereby teachers and facilitators of groups organize the group activities in such a way as to include all participants. The wider literature on effective pedagogy would strongly support the view that differentiation is key in helping children to become engaged with learning and sustaining their motivation (for example, Husbands and Pearce, 2013).

Although some programmes have responded to visible barriers to participation, little research has focused on potential ‘invisible’ barriers to participation and how these could be addressed. A related issue is motivation. While some studies noted dips in motivation, it was not always clear how motivation was being conceptualized and measured. This is an exceptionally complex construct that may be related to barriers to participation (see Hallam, 2009; Schunk, Pintrich, and Meece, 2010). There is scope for further research in this regard.

7.1.4 Frequency and Intensity of Contact

Amongst the programmes reviewed there was considerable variation in the frequency of contact. It appears that many programmes share the ideology that underpins El Sistema, but are structured rather differently with regard to contact time. There may be cultural differences as well as structural barriers (not least, funding) that impact upon this feature of the programmes. In some contexts, children may have a number of competing commitments, making daily contact problematic. There is scope for further research that focuses specifically on this issue. For example, is frequency of contact within the group a key indicator of wider benefits such as personal development, well-being, and academic attainment? Can individual practice compensate for daily contact within the group? These questions remain under-researched.

With regard to intensity, this is an issue that relates to pedagogy. Within the literature that we reviewed the idea of ‘intensity’ was not clearly defined. Nor was it specific focus of research or evaluation. Several researchers have, within the wider field of music education, researched related concepts such as pace and organizational structure of group rehearsals (for example, Berg, 2008; Goolsby, 1996; Saunders, 1990; Scruggs, 2009; Yarbrough and Price, 1989). Sistema-inspired programmes provide a salient context where research could be carried out that addresses this specific issue of intensity – involving pace, organization, verbal and non-verbal behaviours – and its relationship with social and musical outcomes. Such research would make a significant contribution to knowledge in this area of rehearsal practices.

7.1.5 Connectivity

The evidence reported here highlighted three important strands of ‘connectivity’. The first is concerned with connection between programmes and their local communities. It is clear that social development goals must be grounded within the local context, with programmes remaining responsive to community needs and conversely, community stakeholders having a sense of ownership within the programmes. In order to
achieve this, effective partnership working, as well as a responsive leadership style, are essential (see Ofsted, 2012).

The second strand associated with the idea of ‘connectivity’ relates to connections within and between programmes. Individual programmes as well as wider networks of programmes may function as lifelong learning communities, characterized by communication and sharing of expertise and resources. The network of Sistema-inspired programmes represented within this review may be seen as a community of practice that is perhaps amongst EL Sistema’s most valuable resources. This community of practice offers opportunities for collaboration, sharing of material and problem-solving. Formal networks have begun to take shape and it is the responsibility of all stakeholders to ensure that these networks function in a positive and collaborative way.

The third strand of ‘connectivity’ is concerned with the place of EL Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes within the wider music education community and indeed within the wider community of community based programmes that aim to address social development goals. As noted earlier within this review, the fundamental principles that characterize EL Sistema resonate strongly with the key aims of access, excellence and social development that are enshrined in the UNESCO (2010) Seoul Agenda for music education. Sistema-inspired programmes have much to contribute to this wider agenda. Thus, there is a strong rationale for investment in connectivity, communication, and partnership working within the wider community of practice.

7.1.6 LIMITATIONS

Limitations of this review must be duly noted. First, many of the studies were student dissertations undertaken by sole researchers with limited resources. Access to the research sites was limited in many such cases. These limitations affected both the nature and breadth of the research. It is clear that large scale, cross-cultural, and multidisciplinary studies, involving skilled research teams would be invaluable. These studies could encompass a range of methodological approaches, including experimental, quasi-experimental, historical, philosophical, and ethnographical research.

Similar limitations were noted by Jindal-Snape et al. (2014) who carried out a background systematic literature review for their evaluation of Sistema Scotland. The focus of their review was evidence relating to the impact of participation in the art on health, well-being and academic achievement. Several gaps in the evidence base were noted, with recommendations that these areas would benefit from further research. In accordance with the findings of our literature review, Jindal-Snape’s team (2014, p. 6) recommended that:

- Health and well-being need to be conceptualised more consistently and within robust frameworks, in future research.
- The role of gender and specific needs relating to gender should be explored further.
- The influence of socioeconomic status deserves further exploration
- The influence of participation across the lifespan needs further research
- Future research, essentially longitudinal, is required to establish long-term impact and pathways of positive change
- Future research needs to explore the use of creative approaches to listening to the voices of participants in research.
Studies are needed that investigate the generalisation of the impact of arts to other contexts and domains, for example from community based arts to school achievement.

To a large extent, research has been undertaken within the context of programmes that could be considered as being in the ‘pilot’ or ‘initiation’ stage. Indeed, this was to be expected, as nearly half of the programmes represented in the review of evaluation and research evidence had been established as recently as 2010.

As found within the field of music education in general, there is a need for longitudinal research. It would be pertinent to investigate the trajectories of Sistema and Sistema-inspired participants after they leave the núcleo of the orchestra. In addition, there is little longitudinal research relating to the impact of such programmes at the community level. Although some such studies had been implemented and early findings published in time for inclusion in this second updated version of the literature review, longitudinal research within Sistema-inspired contexts is in its infancy.

Although several programmes allowed access to their financial records, to date, there is a paucity of research related to cost-benefit analyses of Sistema and Sistema-inspired programs. Such research would require a multidisciplinary approach and expertise.

There were further limitations in terms of the review methods of the literature review team. Any global review of literature requires extensive language skills. For this review, the team was limited to working in six languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French, and limited German). There is no doubt that this may have restricted our capacity to present a truly global understanding of the topic. In particular, there are programmes in Scandinavia and The Netherlands where a review of evaluation reports may have revealed further understandings.

Our second, revised edition has been limited by available resources. Furthermore, while we have endeavoured to provide a thorough account of the up-to-date published and peer-reviewed literature, this has been limited to literature published in the English language.

### 7.1.7 Final Word

El Sistema has fostered a remarkable renewal of interest in the transformative potential of music and the power of music education. This is, perhaps, its greatest legacy. Importantly, this movement has highlighted the principle that music is a universal practice, with the accompanying aspiration that music education should be accessible to all. The rapid proliferation of Sistema-inspired programmes has fostered discussion and critical analyses of how these principles and aspirations might best be articulated in practice. We have, in this review, attempted to synthesize the debates, discourses, and evidence relating to the phenomenon that is known as El Sistema. We have highlighted methodological flaws in some of the research and evaluation approaches. Notwithstanding these critiques, we acknowledge fully the complexity in any attempts to capture ‘hard’ evidence of the transformative power of participation in music, and congratulate all of the research teams in their efforts in this regard. We also commend all those who have engaged in critical debates around the theoretical and philosophical rationales for the concept of ‘Sistema-inspired’ music education, as well as the limitations of programmes that are positioned as ‘Sistema-inspired’. Such debates have prompted some deep thinking about the purposes and aspirations of music education, more broadly, as well as focusing attention on how practices within Sistema-inspired contexts can be continually developed in progressive, creative and inclusive ways.
Our overarching messages remain, as with the first edition:

1. A significant legacy of El Sistema, internationally, is the widespread interest and discussion it has fostered around the links between music education, community, and social, emotional, and cognitive well-being
2. The evidence to date adds a valued contribution to the wider literature concerned with the power of music
3. Partnership working is a key to success.
4. Investment in teacher development is fundamental to achieving the dual aims of social and musical development
5. Dialogue and collaborative networks could greatly support a highly integrated and cohesive approach to achieving social development through music
6. El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes provide a rich context for further research into (in particular) the pedagogy of learning through immersion in ensemble, barriers to participation, and the impact of programmes at a community level
7. The emerging ‘communities of practice’ amongst Sistema-inspired programmes provides an opportunity to bring a level of coherence, rigour and meaningfulness to future research and evaluation
8. There is much scope for developing innovative and creative pedagogical practices within the ‘Sistema-inspired’ framework. To this end, greater dialogue between ‘Sistema’ stakeholders and the wider music education world has the potential to foster significant innovations in practice.

The global El Sistema community of practice provides an extraordinary example of how, given excellent support, high expectations, and high quality resources, individuals and groups can achieve remarkable things through participation in joyful music-making. The emergent body of critical debate challenges programmes within the ‘Sistema-inspired’ movement to develop further as progressive, community-oriented, creative music education contexts, fulfilling their promise of social development.


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APPENDIX I: OVERVIEW OF STUDIES INCLUDED IN THE REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION OF EL SISTEMA AND SISTEMA-INSPIRED PROGRAMMES

This appendix sets out an overview of the El Sistema and Sistema-inspired programmes that were the focus of the majority of research and evaluation key findings reported in Sections 4 and 5. In section ‘a’ we set out an overview of all 277 programmes that we reviewed for the first edition of this literature review. In section ‘b’ we provide an overview of the 44 programmes identified for the first edition of the literature review, where research and evaluation had been carried out. Following this, in section ‘c’ we set out the specific context, aims, and methods of each of the studies that were included for the first edition, organized by country. Please note that for the second edition we did not carry out a review of programmes; therefore, these appendices were not updated for the second edition of the literature review.

A. SUMMARY OF PROGRAMMES REVIEWED AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

In this section we set out details of the total of 277 programmes we reviewed. As noted in Chapter 3 (Methodology), we analyzed documentation and websites for each programme and extracted key information about the scope, mission, and organization of the programmes. It is important to note that this was not a formal survey; the information included here was simply what was publicly available and, in some cases, supplied through personal communication. In some cases, information was not available and therefore numbers do not always add up to the total number of programmes.

I. TOTAL NUMBER OF PROGRAMMES, BY COUNTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
<th>Percentage of total number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Lucia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>277</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. OVERVIEW OF AIMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence/ self-esteem/ well-being</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation/ enjoyment</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised aspirations/ Personal Growth/ progression</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagination and Creativity</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual development</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Development/ Stay at school</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline/ respect/ responsibility</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural awareness</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musicianship/ musical Quality/ build orchestras</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access for all/ inclusive</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community engagement</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonspecific wider benefits/ transform</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. CONTEXT FOR DELIVERY AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH PROFESSIONAL ORCHESTRAS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extra-curricular after-school provision</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops and Projects offered</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In school</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked with a professional orchestra</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. HOW LONG THE PROGRAMMES HAVE BEEN RUNNING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year programme was established</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980s</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2005</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2009</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 onwards</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. TYPES OF FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE PROGRAMMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of funding</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private/ corporate</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National/ state government</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU/ UNICEF/ OFID</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable trusts/ foundations</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lottery</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income (e.g. concerts)</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VI. COST TO PARTICIPANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost to participants</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants pay for year 1 (varying amounts)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants pay beyond year 1 (varying amounts)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VII. AGE RANGE OF CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post secondary</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIII. FREQUENCY OF CONTACT WITH STUDENTS PER WEEK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of contact</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
<th>Percentage of total programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not known</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 session per week</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 sessions per week</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 sessions per week</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 sessions per week</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 sessions per week</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 sessions per week</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 sessions per week</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 days in-school; 4 days- after-school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 2 and 5 sessions per week</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 3 and 5 sessions per week</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Between 4 and 5 sessions per week 1 .4
4-6 hours per week 1 .4
8 hours per week 3 1.1
Once a year and regional meetings 1 .4
Once a year for 3 weeks 1 .4
Once a year: seminars, choral symposium, sources for directors, choral training centers and choral festivals for the benefit of all stakeholders 1 .4
Total 277 100

IX. INSTRUMENTS OFFERED BY THE PROGRAMMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruments offered</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strings</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brass</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percussion</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X. SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of teacher support</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher training (CPD)</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher training (mentors)</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. SUMMARY OF THE 44 PROGRAMMES REPRESENTED IN THE REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Out of the total number of programmes and papers reviewed, we identified 85 research and evaluation documents, including student dissertations, research papers and evaluation reports. These represented 44 programmes in 19 countries (Table 3). These 85 papers reported empirical evidence, historical research, or theoretical models that were based on research within a Sistema-inspired context.

XI. NUMBER OF COUNTRIES AND PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of papers included in review of research and evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many of the 44 programmes that were represented in the 85 papers included in the review of research and evaluation were relatively new. Nearly half (20) of them had been established since 2010 and a further 18 had been established between 2000 and 2009 (Table XII).

### XII. START DATES OF PROGRAMMES INCLUDED IN THE REVIEW OF EVIDENCE AND RESEARCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start date</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 - 1999</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 2009</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 onwards</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XIII sets out the age groups that the programmes catered for, and the instrument groups that were offered within the 44 programmes represented in the review of research papers and evaluation reports.

### XIII. NUMBER OF PROGRAMMES OFFERING SPECIFIC INSTRUMENT GROUPS, AT EACH SCHOOL-LEVEL (FOR PROGRAMMES INCLUDED IN THE REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruments offered</th>
<th>School level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Strings</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 44 programmes varied in size, considerably. Table XIV sets out the number of participants enrolled in the programmes represented in the review of evaluation and research.

**XIV. NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAMMES INCLUDED IN THE REVIEW OF EVALUATION AND RESEARCH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of children involved in the programme</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
<th>Percentage of total programmes represented in the review of evaluation and research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>up to 500</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501-1000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501-1000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 5000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the programmes catered for primary (elementary school) school-aged children. Sixteen programmes had early years (pre-school) provision. Over half of the 44 programmes included in the review of research and evaluation evidence also catered for secondary school-aged young people, and just 12 provided for post-secondary (Table XV).

**XV. AGE GROUPS CATERED FOR IN THE PROGRAMMES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group catered for</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Secondary</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We analyzed the mission statements of each of the 44 programmes included in the review of evaluation and research papers, and categorized the aims and objectives, using language directly drawn from the mission statements. The aims are set out in Table XVI.
XVI. AIMS OF THE PROGRAMMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Number of programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence/ Self-esteem/ well-being</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation/ enjoyment</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Raised Aspirations/ Personal Growth/ progression</strong></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imagination and Creativity</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional intelligence</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual development</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intellectual Development/ Stay at school</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discipline, respect, responsibility</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural and musical</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural awareness</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musicianship/ Quality/ build orchestras</strong></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusive</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access for all/ Inclusive</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community engagement</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community engagement</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-specific</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonspecific/ wider benefits/ transform</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. RESEARCH AND EVALUATION PAPERS: CONTEXT, AIMS, AND METHODS

Section ‘c’ sets out details of the papers we reviewed, including details of the context, the aims of the research, and the methods. The key findings are reported in Chapter 4 of the literature review.

1. CANADA

1.1 DONALD, STATHOPOULOS, AND LORENZINO, 2012

Context
This paper was presented at the ISME Biennial Conference in Greece in 2012. The research was undertaken in order to provide an outline and critique of existing Sistema programmes in Canada for the first meeting of ISME’s Special Interest Group (SIG) on El Sistema. T. Stathopoulos, a co-author of the paper, was and continues to be influential in the development of this SIG.

Aims
The goal of this research was to provide a brief history of the development of El Sistema programmes in Canada as well as to document the proceedings of various national symposia related to these initiatives. The paper also aimed to study the relevance of the Sistema model for Canadian music education and to determine whether or not there was a need for a national organization to support initiatives throughout Canada.
Methods
Data collected for this research consisted primarily of print and electronic documents related to Sistema programmes in Canada. These included materials found on the websites of various Sistema initiatives (programme mandates, objectives, etc.), press releases, newspaper articles, and related print documents. Once collected, common threads were identified and data were analyzed as to whether or not Canadian programmes were adopting or adapting the Venezuelan model.

Key Findings: See section 4.5 Leadership, entrepreneurship, and networking

1.2 PETRI, 2013A; 2013B

Context
Building upon the release of the Canadian Music Educators’ Association position paper in support of El Sistema (CMEA ad hoc El Sistema Committee, 2012), research was undertaken by the National Arts Centre Foundation of Canada in conjunction with the McConnell Family Foundation. Its purpose was to gain an understanding as to whether or not Canada could benefit from a national organization for El Sistema. Currently, thirteen such programmes are in operation with plans to significantly increase these numbers as early as September 2013.

Specifically, the research had the following objectives: ‘Identify specific areas where Sistema programmes can benefit from a national network; assess Sistema programmes’ unique and common needs; identify communities in Canada where additional Sistema-inspired programmes could be encouraged; learn about the scope and models of other national Sistema organizations around the world; and learn about organizational structures and models in Canada’ (Petri, 2013b, p. 2).

Methods
Methods included a survey of existing Canadian Sistema programmes, interviews with national and global leaders/experts of Sistema, and a review of online materials of existing national Sistema organizations worldwide. Statistical data as to the ranking of low-income communities throughout Canada that could possibly benefit from such a programme were also gathered.

Key Findings: See section 4.5 Leadership, entrepreneurship, and networking

1.3 SISTEMA NEWBRUNSWICK

1.3.1 SAVOIE, 2012

Context
Sistema New Brunswick was initiated in 2009 as a French/English programme in Canada’s only bilingual province. The programme offers free after school orchestral music education to students five days per week. Currently, Sistema NB has two centres of operation, one in Moncton, the provincial capital, and another in Saint John. By 2014, the organization has plans to develop into four centres and to engage over 500 students in orchestral music education. Tied directly to the New Brunswick Youth Orchestra, Sistema New Brunswick’s goals are to promote engagement with the practice of music while simultaneously encouraging the personal growth of children and youth as well as their communities. The programme is inclusive in nature with a stated focus on assisting Aboriginal communities.
Aims
Published in 2012, this evaluation of Sistema NB was completed under the auspices of the New Brunswick Department of Healthy and Inclusive Communities. The goal of the research was to assess the relationship between involvement in Sistema NB and mental fitness. Research questions focused on whether or not Sistema NB was impacting participants’ school involvement, achievement, mental fitness, wellness, sense of belonging, and skills. The research also investigated if Sistema NB developed and recognized skills or offered choices and a voice to its participants (Savoie, 2012). Impact of the programme upon families and community was investigated as was employee satisfaction.

Methods
Data were collected at both Sistema NB locations (Saint John and Moncton) with baseline data and pre-evaluation completed in Sept. 2011. Programme materials were collected from May-August 2012. Data collected in both pre- and post-treatment included three surveys (children, parent, and Sistema employee) as well as videotapes of students in situ. Post-programme data collection included a survey of principals and school teachers.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.11 Collaborative learning and teamwork; 4.8 Inclusivity.

2. THE CARIBBEAN

2.1 OAS ORCHESTRA PROGRAMME FOR YOUTH AT RISK IN THE CARIBBEAN

2.1.1 GALARCE, BERARDI, AND SANCHEZ, 2012

Context
The OAS Orchestra Programme for Youth at Risk in the Caribbean (OASIS) is a government sponsored venture designed to prevent school dropout and violence in youth. Offering Sistema based programs in Haiti, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia, the initiative was established in 2009. Currently, OASIS includes three orchestral and choral training centres at the École de Musique Sainte Trinité in Port-au Prince, Haiti; Saint Andrews Technical High School in West Kingston, Jamaica; and at the Marchand Elementary School in Castries, Saint Lucia, all identified as high risk urban areas. Within each location, there is one coordinator, 17 teachers, and approximately 80 students ranging from 10 to 18 years of age. Classes are offered in a group setting two hours per day, five days per week.

Though based upon similar principles, the development of the programme has been unique in each setting. For example, in Jamaica, programme retention has been variable due to gunfight in the area close to the school, a result of the illegal drug trade. In Haiti, the relocation of the school, due to a major earthquake, has caused an unforeseen shift in the identity of the programme, now viewed as a tool to assist in the return to normalcy. Overall, however, there are overarching similarities in their philosophy and delivery. OASIS programmes emphasize the integration of ‘theoretical, instrumental, orchestral practice and performance.’ In addition, ‘group work ensures that participants get involved in joint activities’ from the onset. Goals of the programme include ‘early and continued exposure to great music works’ and ‘continuous contact between beneficiaries and their community’ (Galarce, Berardi, and Sanchez, 2012, p. 4).

Aims
The study was undertaken to document the impact of involvement in the OASIS orchestra upon students’ lives. Areas studied included school performance, emotional regulation, risky behaviours, and social capital.
Methods
Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in the evaluation. In the former, a quasi-experimental design was employed involving one pre-test and two post-test surveys. Surveys were administered in a group setting beginning in Jan. 2011 as well as 6 and then 18 months later in each of the three OASIS locations. Subjects included students involved in the OASIS programme along with a control group of non-OASIS students. Effort was made to control for gender and age between the two groups. Although attempts were made to insure retention of subjects throughout the duration of the research, this proved to be problematic. A total of 313 participants completed the baseline survey; 282 completed the 6-month inquiry whereas 323 filled out the final 18-month form. Only 96 participants completed all three surveys. Major themes of the survey included aggressive behaviours, misconduct, association with delinquent peers, educational aspirations, beliefs, self-efficacy, and connectedness with teachers and schools. The first two surveys were identical with the 18-month form adding questions related to self-regulation (concentration, impulsivity, delayed gratification, etc) and smoking, drug, and alcohol use.

‘Given that each country showed dissimilar recruitment success (i.e. participant retention throughout survey waves) and demographic characteristics, a joint analysis of all OASIS students was not performed’ (Galarce et al., 2012). Data were presented for each country with comparisons between the control and non-control group as well as changes noted for each participant in the OASIS programme. Quantitative results from Saint Lucia were not included due to the small sample size.

The qualitative portion of the study was significantly smaller in scope and minimally reported; little detail was provided. The authors identified that focus groups involving parents and teachers were held but outlined no specifics as to their nature, format, frequency, or overarching research question. Student narratives were collected from the Saint Lucia participants and four excerpts were included in the report however no additional details were provided regarding the methodology employed in obtaining these narratives.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.10 Pro-social behaviour; 4.6 Quality of provision.

3. EUROPE

3.1 AUSTRIA

Context
Superar Austria is a social project developed by the Wiener Konzerthaus, Caritas, Vienna, and the Vienna Boys’ Choir. Superar operates in inner-city schools to encourage social integration and learning through participation in choirs and other musical activities. Children in the inner-city school programme receive one hour of music per day, four days per week. The classes comprise singing, vocal technique, movement to music and music theory. Songs are in a range of languages, with care taken to include songs in the languages of origin represented amongst migrant children. Children take part in regular performances, including concerts at the Wiener Konzerthaus.

3.1.1 SUPERAR (CRISTANELL, 2012)

Aims
Cristanell (2012) carried out an in-depth case study, exploring the effect of group singing on the personal and musical development of two children who participated in Superar Austria, the Association for the Promotion of active music making, singing, and dancing for children and Young people. Both of the children progressed from Superar in to the Vienna Boys Choir.
Methods
Data were collected via in-depth interviews with the two children (aged 9 and 10) and seven of their teachers and choir directors from Superar and the Vienna Boys Choir. The demographic background of the two case study children is unclear, apart from a reference to parents having little money. The initial interviews were carried out prior to the move to the Vienna Boys Choir (VBC), with subsequent interviews carried out after the children had joined the VBC. Little information is provided regarding the approach to analysis of the qualitative data.

Key Findings: See section 4.1.8 Factors underpinning social, emotional, and cognitive well-being; 4.4 Pedagogy; 4.7 Musical progression.

3.1.2 SUPERAR (STUPAR, 2012)

Aims
The aim of the study carried out by Stupar (2012), also in the context of Superar, Austria, was to examine primary school teachers’ perceptions of the influence of musical stimulation on the social behaviour and performance of primary school children.

Methods
Seven Superar teachers took part in the study, with the intention that they would all be interviewed on three successive occasions over a period of four months. Due to illness, the full set of three interviews for each teacher was not achieved; in total 18 interviews were carried out. The teachers, who were recommended for the study by Superar, had between one and three years of experience with the Superar programme. The first set of interviews took the form of narrative interview structured with a topic guide. The second and third set of interviews adopted a problem-solving approach.

Key Findings: See section 4.1.8 Factors underpinning social, emotional, and cognitive well-being; 4.1.13 Memory; 4.4 Pedagogy.

3.2 EIRE (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND)

3.2.1 SING OUT WITH STRINGS: KENNY AND MOORE, 2011

Context
Sing Out With Strings was established in 2008 as a regeneration project in a deprived area of Limerick city. The programme is delivered by members of the Irish Chamber Orchestra within three primary schools, reaching approximately 300 children. The project adopts a whole-school immersion approach; classroom teachers, school support staff, and the children learn together, taking part in weekly singing workshops as well as three violin ensemble sessions per week.

Aims
The aims of the evaluation were to explore the extent to which, after three years of ‘Sing Out With Strings’, music played a significant role in individual lives of children and teachers as well as in the life of the school. The researchers also aimed to evaluate change with regard to concentration, self-esteem, behaviour and attendance. Finally, the researchers aimed to identify strengths and weaknesses with regard to the programme delivery and structure.
Methods
Data were collected over a three-week period and included observations of in-school workshops, rehearsals and performances, interviews with three headteachers and 34 survey responses from school staff across the three participating schools.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.2 Family involvement; 4.3 Community; 6.5 The impact of Sistema-inspired programmes upon the wider music curriculum and the wider community of music education programmes.

3.3. ENGLAND

3.3.1 IN HARMONY LAMBETH: LEWIS, DEMIE, AND ROGERS, 2011; HALLAM ET AL., 2010

Context
In Harmony Lambeth is located on one self-contained housing estate that had been identified as having one of the highest levels of deprivation in the UK. The local population is ethnically diverse and characterized by a high rate of English as a second language.

In Harmony Lambeth is one of the Sistema-inspired projects supported under the auspices of In Harmony, funded through Arts Council England by the UK Department for Education and the UK National Lottery. There is no financial cost for participants. The initial pilot project, implemented in 2009, was part of a £332 million package of investment by the UK Government in choirs, orchestras, performances, new instruments, and free music lessons (Burns and Bewick, 2011). At the time of the 2011 evaluation (Lewis et al., 2011), 450 children, from nursery (age 4-5) to Year 3 (age 6-7) were participating in the programme. The programme was managed by the Lambeth Music Service, part of the Lambeth Council Children and Young People’s Service, in collaboration with a number of strategic partners that included a housing association, a major internationally acclaimed symphony orchestra (London Philharmonic Orchestra) and the London Southbank Centre. Two additional partners were both registered charities concerned with promoting opportunities for musical development amongst young people: the Sphinx Organization, founded in the USA in 1996 with the aim of facilitating access to classical music amongst black and Latino groups and Pro Corda, UK, established in 1969 to provide musical training for a wide range of young people through ensemble training.

Aims
The evaluation of the Sistema-inspired In Harmony Lambeth programme aimed to investigate the potential for music to improve the social circumstances and life chances for children living in a low-income/socially disadvantaged area in England. The specific objectives of the 2011 evaluation (Lewis et al., 2011) were to look at the extent to which the programme contributed to enhancing well-being and raising aspirations and achievement amongst the children, to explore the programme’s contribution to improved musical skills and knowledge and improvements in community cohesion. The evaluation team examined processes as well as outcomes, with the objective of identifying factors that were key in bringing about any positive outcomes.

Methods
The evaluation team adopted a ‘pre and post’ design, collecting data before, during, and following implementation of the initial pilot programme that was initiated in 2009. The evaluation focused on two cohorts of nursery and Year 1 pupils who started the programme in April 2009. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected, including focus groups and interviews with teachers (n = 8), parents (n = 32), and community groups (n = 1), as well as pupil (n = 50) surveys for participants in the two core schools, measuring well being, aspirations, attitudes to school and learning, friendship, school experiences, and
support from home. In addition, a representative sample of 40 case study pupils was randomly selected and then tracked over the period of the evaluation, providing in-depth information about the In Harmony experience through contributions to focus group discussions once per term. Data relating to Foundation Stage (age 4-5) profile achievement (n = 51, based on practitioner observations of personal/social education and communication, language and literacy) were analysed and compared with the local and national profile of Foundation Stage pupils. Finally, 54 children were tested at three points in time for progression in musical skills.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.3 Early years personal, social and cognitive development; 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.5 Self-esteem; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.3 Community; 4.7 Musical progression; 5.1 Keeping children engaged in the programme; 5.2 Transition; 5.3 Teacher development.

### 3.3.2 IN HARMONY LIVERPOOL: BURNS AND BERWICK, 2011; 2012; HALLAM ET AL., 2010

**Context**
In Harmony Liverpool, established in 2009 and located in West Everton, Liverpool, is one of the Sistema-inspired projects supported under the auspices of In Harmony, funded through Arts Council England by the UK Department for Education and the UK National Lottery. Liverpool has been identified as being the most deprived Local Authority in England and 98% of the local Everton residents are classified as being amongst the 10% of most deprived households in the country (Burns and Bewick, 2012).

The programme adopts a whole-school approach, involving all of the children in one primary school in Liverpool, including Years reception – 6. In addition, Burns and Bewick (2012) reported that 21 children from seven additional primary schools accessed the after-school programme and 22 secondary school-aged young people continued to be supported in the programme. There is no cost to participants. During school curriculum time the children access up to four and a half hours of music tuition per week. Forty-five percent of the pupils supplement this with participation in after-school provision, increasing the amount of contact time to approximately seven hours per week. Instruments included are strings, brass and percussion, as well as singing, musicianship, and composition.

In Harmony Liverpool has put a high value on developing initiatives to strengthen community engagement. These include open rehearsals, community concerts and demonstrations led by members of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (RLPO), access for families to the RLPO adult learning and family programme, involvement of music students from local higher education institutions, and the involvement of young people from other local youth orchestras and choirs.

**Aims**
The overarching aim of the evaluations carried out by Burns and Bewick (2011; 2012) has been to demonstrate impact, with a view to informing project development, encouraging action learning and reflection, and informing problem-solving.

**Methods**
The evaluations focused on children, school, community, and partner-level data, employing quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were gathered via interviews with 26 ‘case study’ children, observations, focus groups and interviews with parents/care-givers, school staff, In Harmony staff, partners and community members, school attendance and attainment figures, socio-economic data, and pupil and community
well-being surveys. Musical progression was tracked, using a framework of indicators developed by the In Harmony Liverpool team.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.1.2 Health; 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.1.14 School attendance; 4.3 Community; 4.9 Culturally and contextually-specific features of the programmes; 5.3 Teacher development.

### 3.3.3 NATIONAL ORCHESTRA FOR ALL: NPC, 2012; HAY, 2013

**Context**
The National Orchestra for All, established in 2011 and founded on the principles of inclusion and diversity, aims to provide less advantaged young people an opportunity to play in a full orchestra, during school holiday intensive residential courses. Young people are nominated by teachers from challenging schools around the UK, with a particular focus on including young people with Special Educational Needs. In addition to the annual residential course, the orchestra participates in several performance opportunities throughout the year. Coaching is undertaken by a core team of teachers as well as musicians from the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and others.

**Aims**
The aim of the evaluation was to assess the impact of the residential programme on the young people’s self-esteem, emotional well-being, resilience, life satisfaction, satisfaction with friends, and satisfaction with community.

**Methods**
A survey that included a well-being measure comprising subscales for each of the constructs as well as additional questions relating to the overall experience was completed by 35 members of the course, before and after the summer residential course.

**Key Findings:** See section 4.1.1 Wellbeing.

### 3.3.4 SISTEMA NORWICH/IN HARMONY NORWICH: SMITHURST, 2011; HALLAM ET AL., 2010

**Context**
Sistema Norwich had its origins as ‘In Harmony Norwich’, a pilot project started in May 2009, with initial funding from the UK Department for Education for three years. The evaluation report (Smithurst, 2011) covers the period January 2009 to March 2011. In Harmony Norwich was delivered by a community arts organization, Norwich and Norfolk Community Arts, in schools located within three disadvantaged areas of Norfolk. At the time of the evaluation, 600 primary school-aged children from three areas of Norwich had accessed instrumental learning, with a core of 165 children representing Years 1-6 regularly attending an intensive after-school provision.

During school time, In Harmony Norwich worked with children in nursery, reception and Year 1 (Years 1 and 2 at one school), with these year groups receiving 60-90 minutes of music tuition per week. The older children participated through after school clubs. Each school had its own after school club, which ran from Monday to Thursday in two schools and Tuesdays and Thursdays in the third. On Mondays to Wednesdays, these focused on general musicianship and instrumental work, with everybody playing together in the orchestra on Thursdays. The after school clubs offered up to six hours of activities a week. Children from other schools could attend the after school clubs.
Aims
The overarching aims of the In Harmony Norwich evaluation (Smithurst, 2011) were to explore any demonstrable impact of the programme on social, emotional, and educational development of children as well as any impact on families, schools, and the wider community. The evaluation also aimed to identify areas for improvement. Specific objectives were to measure impact in the areas of academic attainment, achievement, raised aspirations, social and emotional development, and well-being.

Methods
The In Harmony Norwich evaluation (Smithurst, 2011) was undertaken using a form of self-reflective enquiry known as emancipatory action research. Specific methods included observations of children engaged in musical activities, questionnaires for children, classroom teachers and In Harmony tutors, interviews with parents (n = 100), children (n = 13), head teachers (n = 3), In Harmony tutors (n = 6), the In Harmony Norwich management team, and stakeholders and community groups. In addition, school attainment data were collected in order to assess the relationship between educational attainment and participation in the programme.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.3 Community; 4.7 Musical progression; 4.8 Inclusivity; 5.4 Partnership working.

3.4 FRANCE
3.4.1 SARROUY, 2011

Aims
Sarrouy has written two documents looking at El Sistema from the lens of socio-cultural mediation. The author outlines his theoretical framework in this his first work: Mediation Socioculturelle: Comprendre et définir ses fonctions en partant d’un cas concret: l’adaptation du modèle d’éducation musicale El Sistema à de nouveaux contextes (Socio-cultural mediation: Understanding and defining its functions starting from a specific case: The adaptation of the music education model of EL Sistema to new contexts, 2011). In contrast, in his second work, he utilizes this framework to support findings from his ethnographic study of Neojibá in Bahia, Brazil (2012).

In his 2011 paper, Sarrouy first situates the emergent field of socio-cultural mediation, going on to define this multidisciplinary area as a tool whose primary objective is to engender sustainable socio-cultural growth and change. The author contends that the process of socio-cultural mediation cannot only remediate existing societal concerns but can also serve as a deterrent for youth delinquency and school attrition.

Methods
After a brief introduction to the philosophical and administrative nature of El Sistema, the author analyzes various aspects of the programme through both a micro and macro socio-cultural lens. This he does by studying the adaptation of five international El Sistema programmes: France’s Projet DEMOS, Portugal’s Orquestra Geração, Scotland’s Big Noise, Bahia Brazil’s Neojibá, and the YOURS Project in Chicago, USA. The author relies extensively on third party materials, rather than data collected on site at the five different locations. Sources include documentaries, conference presentations, and websites with few references accrued from academic journals.

Key Findings: See sections 4.5 Leadership, entrepreneurship, and networking.
3.5 Germany

3.5.1 JeKI (Jedem Kind ein Instrument)

**Context**
JeKi is a widespread programme whose mission is to promote the cultural and musical education of children. The programme started as a contribution to the European Capital of Culture in 2009. It is located within primary schools in the relatively affluent German region of North Rhine-Westphalia and Hamburg. The objectives of the programme are to introduce primary school-aged children to playing an instrument, teaching them the joy of music-making, and providing access to a lifelong interest in cultural life. The programme aims, through instrumental training, to enhance the personal and creative development of the children. The programme shares the ideology of El Sistema and identifies itself as ‘Sistema-inspired’ (and therefore is included in this review) but does not offer a programme with the frequency and intensity of contact that distinguishes many El Sistema programmes. During the first year of participation specialist instrumental teachers work alongside classroom teachers in musicianship classes where instruments are introduced and basic musical concepts are learnt through song and movement. From the second year, children learn instruments in groups of up to five, with weekly lessons of 45 minutes. In the third year a weekly ensemble class is added.

**Aims of the research programme**
A major four-year programme of research (2009-2013) focusing on the wider benefits of participation in JeKi has been undertaken, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The research programme is interdisciplinary, with 13 individual projects covering the disciplines of music education, musicology, psychology of music and education. The projects explore issues such as the development of social skills, transfer effects, musical preferences, emotional and cognitive behaviour. A full list of publications is available at http://www.jeki-forschungsprogramm.de/publikationen/; only those published in English are reviewed here.

3.5.2 Frankenberg and Bongard (2013)

**Aims**
Frankenberg and Bongard (2013) set out the development and psychometric properties of their Frankfurt Acculturation Scale for Children, designed for use in researching acculturation amongst migrant children (predominantly Turkey, Russia, and Poland). The goal was to develop a measure of acculturation that was appropriate for use with children.

**Methods**
A total of 424 German students and 254 students with family histories of migration took part. The age range of the migrant group was 6-11, with a mean age of 8. Following a process of factor analysis, a 14-item, two-factor scale was validated, with the two factors conceptualized as ‘orientation to culture of origin’ and ‘orientation to host culture.’ A second study was carried out in order to improve the psychometric properties of the scale. The scale was tested with a new sample of 289 students with family migrant histories, aged 8-12, with a mean age of 9 and again coming primarily from Turkey, Poland, and Russia. The second study added demographic variables and more detail concerned with language use, generational status, and the degree of similarity or difference between the culture of origin and the German host culture. Factor analysis again revealed a final two-factor model, with six indicators for each factor. Acceptable internal consistency was demonstrated for the entire sample (C-Host = .74; C-Origin = .78) and for subsamples (e.g. Turkish subsample, EU member state subsample). This research is relevant for future research concerned with El Sistema programmes as it demonstrates the development and validation of a robust research tool that could be used, for example, to explore acculturation amongst children for whom western classical music is
relatively unknown or foreign to the local host culture.

**Key Findings:** See section 6.2 Venezuela and local contexts.

3.5.3 Roden, Grube, Bongard, and Kreutz (2013)

**Aims**
Roden, Grube, Bongard, and Kreutz (2013) investigated the influence of group instrumental music training on working memory performance amongst primary school children, over a period of 18 months.

**Methods**
Fifty children took part in the study, with 25 drawn from year 2 of weekly group instrumental lessons of the JeKi instrumental programme. A control group comprising a further 25 children received natural science training. The mean age of the children was 7.5 years, at the start of the research. At baseline, the children were evaluated for IQ, socio-economic background, and musical background. As there were significant differences between the groups with regard to age and IQ, these variables were included as covariates in the analyses, effectively controlling for these factors. Insufficient data were available to assess the importance of individual practice time at home, amongst the music group. The children were tested individually at three points in time over the course of 18 months, using seven subtests from a standardized working memory battery that assessed phonological loop, visuospatial sketchpad, and central executive. It was hypothesized that the music group would outperform the natural science group in auditory processing. The results supported this hypothesis, suggesting that there was a transfer effect from music to the more specific cognitive components of working memory. However, the authors acknowledge that their groups were not randomized and therefore caution that further research employing randomized controlled trials is needed in order to strengthen this evidence.

**Key Findings:** See section 4.1.13 Memory.

3.5.4 Roden, Kreutz, and Bongard (2012)

**Aims**
Roden, Kreutz, and Bongard (2012) examined the effects of participation in the JeKi programme on the development of verbal and visual memory skills.

**Methods**
A quasi-experimental design was adopted, comprising a music group (n = 25) who received a 45-minute group instrumental lesson each week, a comparison group (n = 25) who took part in a natural sciences programme, and a control group (n = 23) who received no additional training. The children were tested at baseline for IQ and socio-economic background. At three points in time, the children completed measures relating to verbal and visual memory skills. Overall, with regard to verbal memory but not for visual memory, the music group showed greater improvement over time than the other groups, controlling for IQ, socio-economic status, and age.

**Key Findings:** See section 4.1.13 Memory.
3.6 ITALY

3.6.1 SISTEMA ITALY (MAJNO, 2012; MAJNO AND FABRIS, 2012; MAJNO, 2013)

Context
Sistema Italia comprises a network of regional programmes. The programmes vary, according to diverse local needs. In some ‘the focus may be directed to widespread in-school training’, while in others there are youth ensembles and projects for disadvantaged children as well as established music schools where the focus is on artistic excellence (Majno, 2012, p. 60).

As in Venezuela, music instruction through Sistema Italia is offered free of charge in a group setting. Students are accepted into the programme range from 4-18 years of age. Developed primarily on an extra-curricular basis in collaboration with the public schools, the programme is a national initiative. Programme implementation began in 2012 when, after rigorous selection, 20 nuclei were approved for development by the newly formed National Committee. Projects from the 20 regions of Italy were accepted based upon their accessibility, collective training, and free offerings so as to promote the national organization. With additional nuclei stated to join throughout 2013, it is anticipated that the number of students involved in the programme will reach 8000.

Majno and Fabris view the Italian El Sistema initiative as both ‘centralized and decentralized’ in nature (2012, p. 149). The programme is organized such that each region has two liaisons or referees, one who serves as an institutional or organizational role and another who serves as a teaching consultant. The referees’ roles are twofold: to coordinate and support operations of local nuclei and to report these activities to the national committee. In this manner, referees promote both local and national growth. Majno herself serves as a referee for the region of Lombardia as well as officer of International Relations for Sistema Italia.

Aims
In addition to her English publications on El Sistema, Majno has also produced two documents in Italian. The first, entitled Il Sistema Italiano delle orchestre giovanili (The Italian system of youth orchestras), co-authored by D. Fabris, appeared in 2012 in Musica salva vita, serie Bianca. Her second work, Educazione Musicale, Integrazione, e Apprendimento Sociale (Music education, integration and social learning) was published in the 2013 Fiologenesi e Ontogenesi della musi. The works cover disparate topics however there is some crossover of historical data in the publications.

Majno and Fabris’ 2012 document is a brief outline of the history and philosophical underpinnings of El Sistema programmes in Italy. With great reverence, the authors report how Abreu’s achievements in Venezuela served as an inspiration for El Sistema Italy. Noting the assistance of Claudio Abbado, who along with Abreu is an honorary president of Sistema Italia, Majno and Fabris explain how the Italian’s have adapted the administrative structure, philosophy, and methodology of their South American counterpart. Highlights of the Italian initiative include regular visits from Venezuelan teachers and administrators involved with programme development and teacher training.

In her 2013 book chapter, Educazione Musicale, Integrazione, e Apprendimento Sociale, Majno outlines additional historical facts of the Italian system. These however are incidental as the paper’s primary purpose is to discuss El Sistema with respect to issues of the phylogeny of humankind and the ontogeny of the individual. The discussion is of a theoretical nature with reference to both the Italian and Venezuelan programmes.
Majno first discusses phylogeny via a theoretical framework from the fields of anthropology and neuroscience. Citing Mithen, Patel, and Levitin, she posits that findings of the two areas are not in opposition if one views the evolution of music as a product of natural selection or adaptivity. Going on to discuss Vygotsky’s ‘proximal development’ perspective, she states that El Sistema exemplifies his definition of education as ‘an emergent process where higher mental functioning develops as a result of interaction in a social context’ (Majno, 2013, p. 135).

Key Findings: See sections 2.4 Literature relating to El Sistema principles; 4.1.8 Factors underpinning social, emotional, and cognitive well-being; 6.1 Musical standards and social inclusion 6.2 Venezuela and local contexts; 6.6 Assessment and evaluation.

3.7 PORTUGAL

ORQUESTRA GERACÃO: ESTUDO DE AVALIAÇÃO (MALHEIROS, ANDRÉ, REIS, AND COSTA, 2012)

Context
The evaluation project was a joint initiative commissioned by foundations that support the Orquesta Geracão (Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Fundação EDP e Fundação PT) and the National Conservatory. The Project Geracão started in 2005 supported by EQUAL and developed in partnership with the Municipality of Amadora, the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian and the High Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI). It is a social development programme that aims to reduce school dropout in Casal da Boba. Geracão promotes several activities in addition to music, such as workshops, sports, and dance, with the aim of reinforcing confidence and self-esteem. Up to 2012, the number of schools with orchestra núcleos was 16. The Ministry of Education almost entirely pays teacher wages.

Aims
The aims of this evaluation were: (a) to characterize this initiative by identifying the specific strategies and the resources used in the Orquestra Geracão (OG); (b) to examine the results obtained in the programme in different domains (musical, social, etc.) and how it has influenced their families and school communities; (c) to identify strengths and weaknesses, as well as recommendations and project development. This study is focused on understanding the role of the arts, particularly classical music, as an agent for social transformation in situations socially adverse, where different types of disadvantages and restrictions exist (social, financial, environmental).

Methods
The research study followed a mixed-method approach that included individual and group interviews and surveys. In a first phase, a survey was used to collect data related to resources (financial, materials, and spaces), music teachers, and children and young participants in the Orquestra Geracão (gender, age, school level, academic results). Interviews with key stakeholders (national and regional) in the initiative and local agents within schools examined their reasons and modes of involvement, initial and current expectations, intentions regarding future development of the initiative, and significance of Orquestra Geracão within schools.

Surveys were administered amongst students from two different groups, one involving OG students and a second one with students who participated in other extracurricular activities (sports). The survey examined students’ motivation and importance of involvement in extracurricular activities, effects of involvement in terms of discipline, confidence and self-esteem, identification of relationships in extracurricular activities in terms of attendance and academic achievement. A family survey focused on topics identified through the
student survey. After data collection and analysis, two sessions of focus groups were organized in order to debate the findings, provide feedback and criticism, and present recommendations.

The student sample included 873 children and young participants (M = 10.6 years old) that represented 6% of the student population in the schools where the project has been implemented. Ninety-one music teachers participated in the evaluation (who mainly graduated from the School of Music of the National Conservatory), with school principals and local coordinators.

**Key Findings:** See section 4.6 Quality of provision.

### 3.8 SCOTLAND


**Context**

Big Noise is a Sistema-inspired social transformation project, operating under the auspices of Sistema Scotland (GEN, 2011a). Big Noise is located in Raploch, a socially and economically disadvantaged area of Stirling, in the heart of Scotland. The area has been characterized by multiple factors of deprivation and community decline. To illustrate, there are higher rates of unemployment, crime, and drug and alcohol abuse in Raploch than the overall rates for Stirling or Scotland as a whole. Big Noise is within three primary schools and one nursery school. At the time of the evaluation (GEN, 2011a) 169 nursery children, Primary 1 children and children with special educational needs participated during school curriculum time. One hundred and forty-three children from Years 2-7 took part voluntarily in an after-school orchestra programme on three afternoons per week during term time and four days per week during holidays. The children also receive one short individual lesson per week. Pastoral care is provided, including healthy snacks and meals, and help with travel.

**Aims**

The aims of the evaluation of Big Noise (GEN, 2011a) were to explore the programme’s impact with regard to children, their families, the wider community, and Sistema Scotland partners, to develop an understanding of the processes that underpinned any impact and to identify opportunities for improvement. The evaluation team was also asked to support the development of a self-evaluation framework that would facilitate ongoing monitoring of performance.

**Methods**

The evaluation team adopted a mixed-method approach, including qualitative consultations with stakeholders, partners, parents, volunteers, staff and community representatives, workshops and observations with children, quantitative measures of personal and social development, and ‘value for money’ calculations.

Alongside the evaluation of Big Noise, a series of knowledge exchange activities took place, aimed at giving a voice to multiple stakeholders in the programme. Discussions focused on social, educational, personal, and musical facets of Sistema Scotland (Allan, 2010; Allan et al., 2010). Open dialogue was encouraged, whereby participants set their own agenda and diverging views were privileged.

**Key Findings:** See sections: 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.1.14 School attendance; 4.2 Family involvement; 4.3 Community; 4.8 Inclusivity; 5.2 Transition; 5.4 Partnership working; 6 Critical Debates.
3.9 SPAIN

3.9.1 CASTAÑÓN RODRÍGUEZ, AND VALLES DEL POZO, 2012

Context
The authors present two Spanish educational projects ‘In crescendo’ and ‘Training competencies in primary education through learning-service and emotional education’. The In Crescendo programme aimed to reduce poverty, illiteracy, and risk conditions. The overarching objective of the programme was that, through arts education, students became protagonists of social change with support from teachers, families, peers, and university professors. The latter (training competencies) programme intended to connect initial teacher training with teaching in contexts of social risk. The programmes took place as an extra-curricular activity within schools with high numbers of gypsy and immigrant students (5-8 years old) with special needs of social integration. The programme In crescendo started in 2010, and was delivered in partnership with the Symphony Orchestra of Castilla y León (OSCyl), inspired by El Sistema and by the programme In Harmony from Liverpool, linked to the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic.

Aims
The aim of this paper was to reflect on the role of the arts as an enhancer of social change.

Methods
Although a research methodology is not clearly described, Castañón-Rodríguez and Valles del Pozo stated having questioned university students about the type of arts or music teacher adequate to work in unfavourable conditions. According to the authors, university students were not necessarily knowledgeable about the existence of arts-based educational projects and even about the profound implications of the arts in general education.

Key Findings: See section 5.3 Teacher development

3.9.2 PETERSON, 2010

Context
Seven orchestras participated in this study, two from Barcelona, one in New York, and four from Mexico. The author justifies the need of examining formal and informal learning processes through which students’ technical and interpretive skills because orchestra teachers tend to have a larger expertise in performance and theoretical knowledge, and less pedagogical expertise.

Aims
The aim of this Master’s thesis was to understand the processes by which children acquired technical and interpretive skills, as well as personal development, through participation in children’s and youth orchestras based on the philosophy of El Sistema.

The general objective was to analyze each participating orchestra with reference to the pedagogical theory/approach that was in place. Specific objectives were centred on (a) examining to what extent constructivist principles were implemented in practice by teachers and conductors; (b) contrasting teachers’ perceptions about their practice with students’ learning experiences; (c) examining to what extent the participating orchestras followed the foundations of El Sistema; and (d) determining the feasibility of implementing El Sistema in Barcelona or other cities in Catalunya.
Methods
The theoretical framework used by Peterson is based on a constructivist approach to contextualize this study as a pedagogical study. For this descriptive–explanatory study, the author followed a qualitative methodology. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews, student and teacher questionnaires, document analysis (personal and official), and observations of orchestra rehearsals. The author was interested in the perceptions and meaning that participants (students, teachers, conductors, parents) attributed to their experience of the musical activity.

Key Findings: See section 4.4 Pedagogy.

4. LATIN AMERICA

4.1 ARGENTINA

4.1.1 FERNÁNDEZ-CALVO, N.D.

Context
According to Fernández Calvo (n.d.), the programme of youth orchestras in Buenos Aires is immersed in the programme ZAP (Zone of Priority Action). This programme emerged in order to provide a policy to strengthen cultural and educational institutions in sectors with higher social vulnerability in the city. ZAP aims to work in two main areas: (a) to diminish school drop out by generating pedagogical interventions; and (b) to strengthen educational community work out of school, in which this music programme is involved.

Aims
The aim of this Monograph is to discuss social inclusion and the project of youth orchestras in Latin America, and in Argentina specifically.

Methods
The author describes the creation and development of youth orchestras in Latin America as a model for social inclusion and analyses the lack of access for students in Argentina based on the literature. Fernández-Calvo also emphasizes factors that are not considered in other national and private programmes, such as social and personal development through music. No research evidence is provided, although the author comments on some cases of students who were in risk conditions or showed improvements in behaviour, social skills, and resilience.

Key Findings: See section 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships.

4.1.2 VILLALBA, 2010

Context
This study analyzes the practices of orchestras within the Orquestas Infanto-Juveniles (POIJ, Children’s and Youth Orchestra Project) and the Proyecto de Orquesta Escuela (POE, School Orchestra Project), Argentina. Based on El Sistema, Venezuela, both projects have promoted the creation of diverse orchestras in zones of impoverishment.

POIJ was developed within the ZAP Programme (Zones of Priory Action) which was 1996 and aimed to foster ‘policies for equal educational opportunities and quality improvement, in the educational districts and/or regions in Buenos Aires with population in higher social vulnerability. In 1998, within the ZAP
structure, POIJ was developed and aimed to address music education from a social, educational, and artistic approach. At the time of this publication, POIJ consisted of 13 orchestras located in nine schools and in nine neighbourhoods.

The School-Orchestra Programme (POE) was initiated in 2005, as the Provincial Programme of Youth Orchestras. Similarly to POIJ, it proposes to involve children and young people from all socio-cultural levels, particularly those at risk, in order to develop social skills, to promote continuous education, and employment. It is constituted by 21 orchestras. The study focused on orchestras located in villages or settlements around the city and province of Buenos Aires.

Aims
The aim of the article was to review and analyse children’s and youth orchestra projects in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 1998 to 2010. It was written at a time when public policy was being developed to foster social inclusion of children and young people in conditions of impoverishment. The research questions addressed the public policy of children’s and youth orchestras and whether these were applied within the foundations of each programme. As stated by the author, ‘Is it a cultural, educational or social policy? Does the orchestra project achieve the articulation of this triad?’

Methods
The study was based on participant observations, informal conversations and open-ended interviews with students and programme administrators from both institutions (POIJ and POE).

Key Findings: See section 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships.

4.1.3 WALD, 2011A

Context
The study was conducted with two El Sistema-inspired orchestras in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the Orquesta Juvenil del Sur and Orquesta Juvenil de Villa Lugano. These two cases are also documented in Wald (2011b). Both orchestras share similar music teacher profiles, they play almost identical repertoire and have similar pedagogical approach. Both orchestras lend instruments to participants. They differ in the weight given to the social and musical aspects. Like other orchestras in the ZAP Programme (Programme for Zones of Priority Action), the Orquesta Juvenil de Villa Lugano emphasizes a formative experience within a musical dimension in which the objectives address musical development. The Orquesta Juvenil del Sur, as part of the Programme of Youth Orchestras of the Department of Cultural Promotion, emphasizes the social component of the programme, by providing financial and psychological support to participants.

Aims
The aim of this article is to present preliminary results from two case studies of youth orchestras, the similarities and differences between the formal aims of each project and the overall perceptions of their effects in the participants, particularly with regard to the effect of mass media on their overall perceptions. It is argued that a critical distance exists between the ‘official discourse’ of the programme, perpetuated by the mass media, and what is valued by the main actors (students, parents, and teachers).

Wald argues that the youth orchestras democratize and extend access to cultural assets, but at the same time can also reproduce processes of domination since these projects only value ‘high-culture’ products and do not necessarily value the culture and knowledge from those students to whom they are directed. It
is also argued that people are not passive recipients of what cultural policies offer. Instead, individuals may react differently from what policies intend. To support this notion, the researcher presents the results of this ethnographic study, and discusses the possible benefits and risks of youth orchestra practices.

**Methods**
This was an ethnographic study, with data collected via interviews and observations.

**Key Findings:** See section 4.3 Community engagement and impact.

4.1.4 WALD, 2011b

**Context**
The youth orchestras examined in this study were Orquesta Juvenil del Sur (examined in 2008) and the Orquesta Juvenil de Villa Lugano (in 2009), in Argentina. Both orchestras have been inspired by El Sistema, Venezuela.

The Orquesta Juvenil del Sur has two rehearsals per week and its music teachers are professional musicians in the prestigious orchestras (Orquesta Filarmónica del Teatro Colón, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional) and conservatory music professors. Students are accepted by the age of 13 years old. Students receive an economical incentive of $150 Argentine pesos for participating and are offered transportation. Most participants (95%) live in ‘popular sectors’ (marginalized neighbourhoods) and parents mainly hold primary studies and low-skilled jobs.

The Orquesta Juvenil de Villa Lugano was created as part of the ZAP Programme (Programme for Zones of Priority Action). Student age range is 6 to 12 years old. Unlike the Orquesta Juvenil del Sur, this orchestra does not provide any kind of subside or financial support to students and participants came from heterogeneous socio-economic backgrounds.

**Aims**
The research project reported in this article aimed to determine individual and collective changes in overall health as a result of participating in two youth orchestras and to compare the processes and results from both cases.

**Methods**
This exploratory study followed an interpretive-epistemological approach based on two case studies. The student sample in Orquesta Juvenil de Villa Lugano was 60, but the sample size for the Orquesta Juvenil del Sur was not provided. Five months of participant and non-participant observations took place in class, rehearsals, before and during concerts, and trips. After two months of observations, focus groups with participants in each orchestra (13 students in Orquesta del Sur and 19 in Orquesta de Lugano) served to discuss their general opinions toward the project. Interviews were conducted from the third month.

It was assumed that art could promote health and wellbeing among children and young people who live in contexts of social vulnerability and poverty in Argentina.

Health was understood as a collective and integral process influenced by social, economical, environmental, and cultural factors, and not as the absence of decease.
Key Findings: See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.3.2 Impact within the community.

4.2 BRAZIL

4.2.1 BOZETTO, 2012

Context
Brazilian El Sistema-inspired programmes have been funded by State Governments and private sponsors. The children, who are between 10-14 years old, are selected through a five-stage process. The participants benefit from free tuition in the first stage of the programme. In stages 4 and 5, 45 and 25 students are selected and the participants receive scholarships for $130 and $190 Brazilian reais respectively.

Aims
The aim of this dissertation was to investigate families’ expectations and conceptions about children’s musical development in a Brazilian orchestral educational project for children and youth. The orchestra involved in the study was inspired in El Sistema with the aim to promote social insertion and future job opportunities. This educational project, initiated in 2010, is thought as a construction, dedication, legitimization, planning, and investment that parents and children make in their musical formation within an orchestra. The study proposes a discussion of family projects as lifelong projects, involving both individual and familial desires.

Methods
There were 27 families and 28 orchestra students included in the sample. Using a qualitative approach, the following research questions were investigated: What are the family’s expectations and conceptions about their child’s musical development in an orchestra (a project that emphasizes the training of professional musicians)? (i.e., lifelong projects, family, and individual desires involved in music learning); In what ways does the family operate as an interlocutor of the musical project in which their students participate; and What educational strategies are promoted within the family for the child to continue learning music in this project? What has changed in the family routine?

Key Findings: See section 4.2 Family involvement.

4.2.2 SARROUY, 2012

Context
This research includes fieldwork collected on site at the Noyaux d’Etat d’Orchestres de Jeunes et d’Enfants de Bahia (Neojiba) in Bahia Brazil. In operation since 2007, Neojibá was initiated by the Governor of the state of Bahia in collaboration with local pianist Ricard Casto. From the onset, the programme has been state-sponsored and in its infancy was administered by two state institutions. In 2009, a third association, the l’AOJIN (Association des Amis des Orchestres Juvéniles et Infantiles de Neojibá) was added to the administrative team.

Because AOJIN is a Social Organization of the State of Bahia, the programme is both secure and sustainable as this qualification allows for continued use of public monies. AOJIN is responsible for the daily administration of the programme including goals, objectives, scheduling, pedagogy, teacher training, etc. Because the programme is overseen by the governor, all objectives must be clearly delineated and reported as failure to achieve stated goals will result in a loss of funding.
Since the formation of AOJIN, the programme has grown exponentially and is currently oversubscribed with applications exceeding openings. Open to participants between the ages of 8 and 25, over 80% of the population is black, reflecting the demographic of the area. Currently Neojibá encompasses two professional teacher-training ensembles, two children’s touring orchestras and numerous other choirs and orchestras that feed into these higher level groups. Programs are rigorous and lengthy, with instruction offered five days per week at up to four hours per day. To be accepted into the programme, students must pass an audition. They are also questioned on their personal motivation.

Of note is the professional teacher-training programme. Participants in this sector receive a bursary for basic living costs as well as a transportation allowance. In addition, they are taught how to manage their bursary money and receive social support from Neojibá staff. All participants must sign the programme manual, agreeing to abide by its mission statement and rules of comportment. The programme is well received in Bahia, known for high levels of juvenile delinquency, poverty, and drug usage, and a historically low level of durable insertion of disenfranchised youth into the society (Sarrouy, 2012).

Aims
The purpose of the research is to form a theoretical and practical basis for the analysis of socio-cultural mediation. Sarrouy proposes to deepen his theoretical understanding of the subject via a critical analyzes of the Noyaux d’Etat d’Orchestres de Jeunes et d’Enfants de Bahia or Neojibá.

Methods
Sarrouy employs the traditional tools of ethnography however he does not clearly state his methodology. He states that data were collected in Bahia between July-September 2010 when he was an intern with Neojibá. Methods include participant observation and semi-structured interviews however specifics as to the interviewees, questions asked, or the length and location of the interviews are absent. Neither are there details as to what, where, and how he observed the organization.

Sarrouy (2012) expands his theoretical platform of socio-cultural mediation (proposed in Sarrouy, 2011) via primary sources through field studies in Bahia Brazil. To develop his theoretical understanding, Sarrouy devotes 50 pages to a critical reflection of Dewey’s pragmatic philosophy. This analysis further references Rorty and Shusterman’s concepts of democratic education and the aesthetic experience. Together, Sarrouy believes these to be the ideal theoretical framework in which to situate socio-cultural mediation.

The author contends that Neojibá clearly follows the principles of El Sistema’s Venezuelan roots as displayed by its emphasis on social programming, group instruction, musical excellence, inclusiveness, extended contact hours, community development, and modelling. It is important to note that many of the author’s references are rigorous with well-reputed print sources, mainly books, used to outline his theoretical platform. There is however a distinct lack of materials from referred journals with few references to related field such as music education or anthropology. Source materials are often DVD’s and web pages with some government publications.

Key Findings: See sections 4.5 Leadership, entrepreneurship, and networking ; 4.8 Inclusivity.
4.3 CHILE

4.3.1 CARLSON, 2008; 2013

Aims
Carlson (2008) offers a historical perspective on the political context and ideology underpinning the Latin American youth orchestra movement, focusing on the philosophy and work of Chilean musician and educator Jorge Peña Hen. A paper derived from this research (Carlson, 2013) focuses specifically on the link between the Chilean music educators and El Sistema, highlighting early collaborations and Abreu and ‘almost identical philosophical ideas and pedagogical methods’ (p. 3).

Methods
Carlson’s study (2008; 2013, p. 4) ‘employs a combination of oral history and historiography.’ The author carried out in-depth interviews with key informants from the Chilean and Venezuelan youth orchestra contexts, as well as analyzing archives that included newspaper reports, video recordings, and transcripts of speeches.

Key Findings: See section 2.3 History.

3.3.2 EGAÑA DE SOL, 2008

Context
This study was conducted with the Orquestra Juvenil de Curanilahue, Chile, created in 1996 and that remained until 2004 when most of the participants graduated from the Liceo. The legacy from this original orchestra was the creation of two projects, the Orquesta Semillero, that was later merged with the second project, the Orquesta Bicentenario de Curanilahue. 70% of the participants’ parents were miners, labourers, pensioners, taxi drivers and small traders, while the remaining 30% worked in public administration (health, education and other public services). It was inferred that participants were from low and medium-low socio-economic status.

Aims
Egaña de Sol (2008) aimed to examine the impact of playing an instrument and participating in an orchestra on academic achievement and permanence based on mean score of standardized test, and other non-cognitive abilities (social skills, self-esteem, teamwork). Additional aspects considered in the study included parental expectations on academic level met by students.

Methods
Data collection was done through data mining, identifying the students for whom the information was available through academic records. In order to evaluate the impact of the Orquesta Infantil y Juvenil de Curanilahue on academic achievement, mean scores of math and verbal skills between the SIMCE test (Education Quality Measurement System) administered in 2001 and the PSU test (Test for University Selection) administered in 2003 were quantitatively compared. Using the technique of Matching-Propensity Score, analysis involved an experimental group (participants in the orchestra) and a control group (a matched group of non-participants in the programme). The selection of the model was also conditioned to the parents’ education, household income, number of books in the house, and gender.

The hypothesis was that studying a musical instrument and participation in an orchestra improves academic achievement, self-esteem, social intelligence, and discipline, among others. A propensity score was used with the 2001 cohort to examine student permanence at university. Qualitative analysis was used to
explore the impact on non-cognitive abilities. The sample was considerably small (n = 7) and only included participants who remained in the programme and who had been administered the tests during their studies at the Liceo Polivalente Mariano Latorre.

Key Findings: See section 4.1.12 Academic attainment.

4.3.3 EVALUACIÓN DE IMPACTO PROGRAMMAEA ORQUESTAS JUVENILES E INFANTILES: INFORME DE RESULTADOS, CHILE (2010)

Context
The national system of orchestras in Chile is developed by the Foundation of Youth and Children Orchestras (FOJI). FOJI aims to benefit people in conditions of risk and poverty by enhancing social development. It offers diverse benefits such as scholarships, music workshops and competitions, music materials, and support in project management.

The orchestras receive funding from local government, private sponsors, arts institutions, universities, orchestras, and religious institutions. Until 2009, a total of 5857 students participated in an orchestra, with an age range of around 6-20 years old, with a mean of 13 years old; 55% female and 45% male.

Aims
The aim of this evaluation was to identify and quantify the impact of the national programme of youth orchestras in Chile on students’ academic achievement.

Methods
In a first stage of the evaluation (2009), the characteristics of the beneficiaries of the programme were identified and a student sample was selected. Two control groups were selected for the academic period of 2002-2008: one that consisted of students who were matched with FOJI students and who participated in an alternative music programme during the same period of time, and a second group who lived in similar communes but did not participate in music. These control groups were compared with the intervention group of FOJI students (n = 1,915 participants that had joined FOJI since 2004). Using a quasi-experimental methodology, the evaluators used the propensity score matching technique, which attempts to estimate the effect of the intervention by accounting for covariates. The cohorts were evaluated considering one and two years of intervention.

Key Findings: See section 4.1.12 Academic attainment.

4.4 COLOMBIA

4.4.1 CASTAÑEDA-CASTAÑEDA, 2009

Context
The music programme took place in a youth detention centre in Pereira, Colombia, called Marceliano Ossa Lázaro Nicholls ‘CREEME’ and supported by governmental funds. Participants received guitar lessons twice a week, 3.5 hours per day.

Aims
The aim of this undergraduate thesis was to identify benefits of music education in a youth detention centre. The researcher explored the young people’s perceptions of musical activities (needs, benefits, acquired
competencies and sensitization through music learning and practice) that were undertaken as part of a process of social inclusion, re-education and development. The educational programme aimed to foster abilities and attitudes, such as self-discipline and self-confidence, creativity, teamwork, volition, amongst others.

Methods
The research project followed a qualitative ethnographic approach. The sample included four participants (one female, three males) with an age range of 13-18 years. The participants participated in 40 hours of guitar workshop.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.7 Self-concept; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.7 Musical progression.

4.4.2 GÓMEZ, 2011

Context
According to Gómez, the National System of Children’s and Youth Orchestras in Colombia is no stranger to the processes of political restructuring, nor to the increasing social dynamics of impoverishment, exclusion, war, and injustice, that had negatively influenced Colombia in recent years. Batuta aimed to generate processes for civic education that helped to reconfigure the social system. It fulfils a socializing function by teaching its members to share experiences, assume roles, and acquire a sense of belonging to a group. ‘It promotes equity among citizens that are considered equals in terms of freedom, abilities, and rights’ (p. 476).

Aims
The aim of this research study was to examine how Fundación Batuta Caldas and its orchestra music programme fosters citizenship through the generation of spaces for political socialization, in which students develop skills for living in difference and for joining others to create, nurture, and extend life in and through music.

Methods
This research study was conducted from 2005 to 2009 with children and young participants of the Fundación Batuta Caldas in the City of Manizales, Colombia. Following a qualitative methodology, Gómez systematically examined the ways in which Batuta Caldas fosters civic education. Data collection included student and parent semi-structured interviews (six families and nine students, ages 5-18), interviews with a representative group of four music teachers who have also served in administrative positions, revisions of documents, and observations (behaviours in class and public presentations).

Key Findings: See section 4.4 Pedagogy.

4.4.3 MATIJASEVIC, BUÍTRAGO, RAMÍREZ, AND VILLADA, 2008

Context
The project ‘Educación musical para niños y jóvenes: Déjate tocar por la música’ initiated activities in 2001 as a result of an agreement between the Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation (Agencia para la Acción Social y la Cooperación Internacional) and the National Batuta Foundation (Fundación Nacional Batuta). The project has been implemented in 78 Colombian cities and 182 orchestras and currently serves 36,000 participants. For every 30 participants, a pre-orchestra is formed and students rehearse three hours
per week. The ensemble includes sistra, xylophones, metallophones, recorders and percussion, performing a predominantly Colombian and Latin American repertoire.

Aims
This evaluation aimed to identify the possible emotional effects amongst children and youth involved in the Batuta programme, as well as the process of socialization generated at the individual, familial, academic, and community levels.

Methods
The evaluation followed a qualitative approach that aimed to examine meanings and values that participants attributed to participating in the Batuta programme project. Data collection included interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations. The study examined three components: (a) characterization of communities, orchestras and interviewees; (b) perceptions about the results of the project in relation to children’s psychosocial development (self-concept, interpersonal abilities) and motivation to participate; and (c) perceptions of the functioning of the project. Complementarily, a quantitative approach was used in order to identify trends in the projects results.

The sample was selected from eight orchestras from different cities across Colombia, characterized by a high participation of students in displacement conditions. The sample included current and past students (n = 95 children), parents (n = 89), community leaders, coordinators, teachers and administrative assistants of the orchestral programmes, as well as university professors and representatives from local agencies (n = 812). The research project was focused on the pre-orchestra stage that aims to provide basic musical knowledge, music theory, and practice through ensembles. This stage lasts for five semesters (levels) and it is divided according to age level: children (7-11 years old) and youth (12-17 years old).

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.7 Self-concept; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.8 Inclusivity.

4.4.4 RINCÓN PRAT, 2013

Context
The Batuta National Foundation, created in 1991 by the Colombian Government is supported through alliances with private sponsors. The Foundation reports that more than 200,000 children and youth have had access to opportunities for personal development and social integration through music. The alliance between the National Batuta Foundation and five more Batuta organizations in Amazonas, Caldas, Huila, Meta and Risaralda, provides music instruction to more than 47000 students from 112 municipalities across the 32 departments in the Colombia. Batuta conducts activities that aim to strengthen the Colombian System of Children and Youth Symphony Orchestras.

Aims
Rincón Prat (2013) aimed to assess the personal, social, and musical impact of the National System of Youth Symphonic Orchestras of Colombia, or Batuta, in the city of Bogotá. The specific research questions addressed were: ‘1) In what ways can the concepts of personhood and personal development ... be related to active participation in music by young people?; 2) How can active participation in music become a tool for social construction and personal growth; and 3) How might the central themes of music education, social justice, and development of the self ... be extrapolated to other contexts and music programs around the world?’
Methods
The research methodology comprised a qualitative approach. The researcher spent a total of 10 weeks in Bogatá, divided into three visits over the course of one year. Eight Colombian núcleos were visited, with three located in 'Stratum 1', areas identified as being of the greatest economic disadvantage. Seven of the eight sites were located within the lowest 3 'Strata' (within a framework of six Strata, with Stratum 6 being the highest income level). The majority of time was spent visiting the largest orchestral site located in Stratum 1. The researcher carried out non-participant observations of instrumental classes (6), rehearsals (7), workshops (2) and one concert. Unstructured and semi-structured interviews were carried out with teachers (n=18), parents (n=5), current students aged 6-24 (n=43) and former students (n=5), administrative staff (n=4), one conductor, and one national director.

Key Findings: See section: 4.1.7 Self-concept; 4.3 Community

4.4.4 EVALUACIÓN DEL PROCESO DE FORMACIÓN MUSICAL Y EL IMPACTO SOBRE EL DESEMPEÑO ACADÉMICO DEL PROYECTO PRE-ORQUESTAL DE BATUTA (UNIÓN TEMPORAL SEI S. A.- ECONOMÍA URBANA, 2010)

Context
The Batuta Pre-Orchestral Programme in Colombia is characterized by an inclusive approach, a confluence of various levels within the ensembles (multi-level ensembles), rotation within instrumental sections, and the automatic promotion among levels.

Aims
The aim of this evaluation was to examine the effect of participating in the Batuta Pre-Orchestral Training Programme (Colombia) on the beneficiaries’ academic achievement, cognitive development, and socio-economic conditions. It was measured in several dimensions: time management, allotted time for school and musical activities, discipline and engagement, motivation, self-efficacy and self-determination, and volition, among others.

Methods
The study included standardized measurements of academic achievement and cognitive development in a control group (students in level 1 of the Batuta programme) and an intervention group (pre-orchestra members in levels 4 and 5). Participants were 9 to 12 years old. Four tests were developed: test of musical abilities, continuous monitoring scale, ensemble scale, and music self-concept survey. 31 variables measured musical results within nine areas. Most variables were similar in both the experimental and the control group, except in music reading and music theory.

The evaluation also examined on socio-economic conditions of the participants, including home, environmental conditions, displacement, music at home, school attended, parents’ educational level, citizenship, and community participation. In addition, it examined students’ motivation to participate (difficulties, interest, previous musical experiences).

A statistical model (no detailed statistics provided) was used to measure the impact of the Batuta Pre-Orchestral Programme in relation to the degree of confidence in all the studied aspects of academic achievement, resilience, and leadership. In order to evaluate the impact of the programme on participants’ overall development in the educational context, the ENI test (Evaluación Neuropsicológica Infantil) was used to examine neuropsychological characteristics, cognitive and behavioural abilities. For this test, the sample involved a total of 558 participants, 174 in the control group and 384 in the treatment group.
Key Findings: See sections 4.1.7 Self-concept; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.7 Musical progression.

### 4.5 COSTA RICA

#### 4.5.1 BRENES VILLALOBOS, BRENES MONTOYA, AND ABARCA MOLINA, 2012

**Context**
This research formed part of the project ‘Strengthening and Evaluation of the National System of Music Education (SINEM)’ (Fortalecimiento y Evaluación del Sistema Nacional de Educación Musical, SINEM), funded by the Inter-American Development Bank. For the purpose of the project, the Orchestra La Esperanza de León XIII was created and continued for one year, during which time the young orchestra members participated in the study.

**Aims**
The aim of this research project was evaluate the impact of participation in a children’s orchestra on quality of life and psychosocial benefits amongst the participants, their families and the community of León XIII, Tibás, Costa Rica. It also aimed to deepen understanding of challenges and strengths of the programme, at the individual, family, teacher, and community levels.

**Methods**
In this qualitative study, the researchers aimed to explore the social and cultural realities of the orchestra members, as well as exploring the perceptions of persons involved in the process, such as parents and other family members, SINEM music teachers, and other community members. The research methods used for each group were:

- **a.** Community: Previous literature and primary sources (census); interviews with community members, observations (special activities and home visits);
- **b.** Parents and other family members: Survey, interviews, informal conversations, observations, home visits, group workshop;
- **c.** Children and young participants: Free drawing, incomplete sentence test, observation in class and in other spaces, musical abilities test, music workshops;
- **d.** Teachers: Interview, class observation, informal conversations;
- **e.** Institutions: Coordination meetings, research meetings.

Fieldwork took place from August 2011 to June 2012 and involved collecting data through interviews with parents and teachers, informal conversations, observations, drawings, incomplete sentence test, workshops with children and mothers, musical tests.

The Inter-American Development Bank conducted the quantitative evaluation by exchanging measurements and information with the research group.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.6 Quality of provision.
4.6 VENEZUELA

4.6.1 CHANG, 2007

**Aims**
Chang investigated the ways in which FMsB used music education to address specific socio-cultural needs of impoverished Venezuelan children. Her study was based on the premise that poverty could and should be tackled by addressing its psychological-cultural effects. Specifically, she was interested in the notion that raising self-esteem could help disadvantaged children to achieve success, and that this could be achieved through a music education programme such as FMsB.

**Methods**
The research is described as ‘ethnographic’ (p. 9), with the findings based on three weeks of immersion in the El Sistema Venezuelan context in June 2006. Although it is stated that several núcleos were included in the study it is not clear how many were visited, or the extent to which the researcher had open access to rehearsals and classes. Data were collected through interviews with ‘several key members’ (p. 10) of the administrative and education staff. Surveys completed by 46 members of the Simón Bolívar B Orchestra and the research carried out participant observations, for example playing in the viola section at the Barquisimeto núcleo.

Survey responses collected from 46 members of the Simón Bolívar B Orchestra (Chang, 2007) revealed that the orchestra members came from diverse regions up to 407 miles away from Caracas, interpreted as evidence that FMSB’s núcleos ‘teach music at comparably high levels regardless of their locations’ (p. 60). Survey responses suggested that amongst the orchestra members the most highly valued aspects of the programme were ranked in order as music, education, society, and companionship.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.8 Factors underpinning social, emotional, and cognitive well-being; 4.2 Family involvement; 6.2.4 Diversity of musical genres.

4.6.2 CUESTA, 2008

**Aims**
This study provides an estimate of the social benefits associated with El Sistema in Venezuela. While other studies have shown the individual benefits of participation in music programmes, this study attempted to use a cost-benefit framework to demonstrate the social gains to be derived from participation in El Sistema.

**Methods**
A baseline survey was carried out within 15 communities, representing six states and 12% of communities served by the El Sistema network. A total of 840 children aged 3-17 years and 500 parents or caregivers took part in the survey. The sample comprised two groups of approximately equal size, defined by whether or not the children were enrolled in El Sistema. Data were collected in respect of academic achievement, employability, conflict management and social capital, family relations, and socio-economic profile. Information is not provided with regard to how well matched the groups were for socioeconomic background. Furthermore, no information is supplied with regard to length of time spent participating in El Sistema (for the ‘treatment group’) or whether the ‘control group’ participated in any other activities. The researchers used the indicators to calculate socio-economic benefits of the programme. The analysis focused on the monetary benefits associated with reduced school dropout and reductions in victimization rates.
Key Findings: See sections 2.2 Programme organization; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.7 Self-concept; 4.3 Community engagement and impact.

4.6.3 ESQUEDA TORRES, 2001

Aims
Esqueda Torres (2001) investigated the socio-economic and educational characteristics of participants in the Venezuelan El Sistema, looking specifically at motivation and personality types.

Methods
Data were collected from a convenience sample that included teachers, parents, and students (n = 265), the majority (all but 4%) being from disadvantaged backgrounds. Seventeen variables were categorised as demographic, SES, educational, musical, and psychological. Information was collected about the quality of musical activity, student self-efficacy and the motivation to achieve.

Research tools focusing on self-concept were used. The first used a simple yes/no scale, targeted at children 8-12 years old. The second targeted young people over the age of 12 and comprised a six point Likert scale. Four further questionnaires included measures relating to socio-economic and socio-cultural variables, musical, and academic attainment.

Key Findings: See section 2.2 Programme organization; 4.1.5 Self-esteem.

4.6.4 ESQUEDA TORRES, 2004

Context
The first evaluation report was published in 2000 and served as baseline for the following two following reports. It included all freshmen students from the cohort 1999 (n = 265), who were compared to students not enrolled in El Sistema. Results from the first survey showed that students from El Sistema came from disadvantaged communities and that their academic achievement was significantly better than the comparison group. This difference between the two groups at the time of enrolment was problematic, as it would have been too early to be able to conclude that the difference could be attributable to participation in the orchestra.

In 2002, a second survey was administered to 177 students from the same 1999 cohort. It is argued that the results showed a direct influence of FMSB, its structure and its music-centred methodology, the main agent of personal change. Results from the first to the second phase showed improvements in self-esteem and internal control and a decrease in ‘disturbing dimensions of growth’ (p. 6), power motivation and ‘externality’ (this concept is not defined).

Aims
This report presents the results of phase 3 of the Monitoring Plan and Evaluation of Impact of the National System of Orchestras in Venezuela.

Methods
This third report concludes this longitudinal study, and presents the results of the third survey (phase 3). The main hypothesis was based on two questions: ‘Are the children and young participants who are attracted by music characterized by an achievement-oriented personality, optimism, etc.? Or is it the influence of the National System of Orchestras that ‘produces’ these social and personal characteristics in students that make
them responsible, work-oriented, and respectful?’ (p. 2).

The student sample included two groups; the first group was randomly selected from students who were enrolled in El Sistema since 1999 (n = 145) and the second group with freshmen students enrolled in El Sistema in 2003 (n = 157).

The survey, the same used in phases 1 and 2, was developed combining scales validated in previous studies, addressing social motives (achievement – MLP, affiliation – MAFI, and power – MPS, Romero García and Salom de Bustamante, 1992), general expectation of control (internality-externality, Nowicki-Strickland scale 1988), hope/confidence (ESCADES I, Escalante, 1997), self-esteem (Aesti-GE, Escalante 1991), emotional control (MAEMONE, Esqueda Torres, 1998), self-acceptance (AUTOACEP, Escalante, 1995), expectancies for success (ExGEN-EX, Escalante, 1994). All scales included dichotomous questions (yes/no) and 6-point Likert scales measuring the extent to which the trait was perceived.

The survey included demographical items (age, gender, school level, parents’ educational level) socio-cultural items (socio-economic status, influence of the programme on student behaviour), educational items (academic achievement, class attendance, class participation), musical items (musical activities, music performance, music development), and motivational/personal items (achievement, affiliation, power, internal and external, expectancies for success, optimism, self-esteem, self-acceptance, anxiety, and emotional control).

Teachers were surveyed in relation to students’ musical performance, discipline, class attendance, mastery of the musical instrument, responsibility, punctuality, socialization.

Students reported their extra-curricular activities.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.12 Academic attainment.

4.6.5 GUEVARA, 2006

Context
This evaluation was requested by FMSB. Guevara reports that in the last two decades, Venezuela has suffered a sustained increase in school dropout in public education. In relation to criminality (homicides, thefts, injuries), rates in the last 25 years in Venezuela have also increased.

Aims
The aim of this report is to present a quantitative evaluation on the effect of El Sistema on social and academic indicators (school dropout, criminality, employment) and to calculate cost-benefits of the programme.

Methods
A quantitative approach was used, three indicators to determine the cost-benefit ratio. The first indicator focused on the impact of FMSB on dropout rates. It was hypothesized that El Sistema could generate a positive effect in controlling and decreasing factors that influence dropout rates; the cost to maintain FMSB should be lower than the cost caused by student dropouts. Previous studies showed that each school grade represents a gain of 7% in working capacity.
The second indicator measured the impact of the programme on crime rates. For this indicator, it was hypothesized that communities with presence of FMSB registered lower crime rates than comparable communities without it. In order to measure this, the following criteria were considered: núcleos per inhabitants; equivalent towns for comparisons (based on location; homogenous gender distribution, education and level of unemployment). The third indicator was the impact of public expenditure on employment, at a national level. Here, the hypothesis was that the net public expenditure in the creation of formal jobs within FMSB was lower than that required in the creation of a mean formal job. To evaluate this, a 10-year period was taken into consideration (1991-2001). Data required for precise calculations were not facilitated by official means and some adjustments with available information were necessary.

As a cross-sectional study, dropout rates were examined from five school grades (basic education, grades 7-9);

**Key Findings:** See section 4.3.2 Impact within the community.

4.6.6 Hollinger, 2006

**Aims**
Hollinger examined the relationship between social justice, social reform, and music education, in the context of the Venezuelan El Sistema programme. Specifically, she set out to investigate the extent to which FMSB had crossed social barriers, broken restraints of poverty, and achieved enhanced opportunity for participants. She also explored the extent to which El Sistema was valued in the community, reasons why young people wanted to become involved, and the progression routes that were in place for those who went through El Sistema programmes. Hollinger (2006) defines ‘social justice’ as a condition in which all members of society have equal access to protections, opportunities, and benefits, yet also have equal obligations. ‘Social reform’, according to Hollinger, refers to the processes by which greater social justice is achieved through, for example, the reorganization of institutional structures and the elimination of corruption.  

**Methods**
An ethnographic case study approach was adopted, with the ‘case’ being a sample of six FMSB orchestras, selected in consultation with the FMSB administration. Data were collected during two visits to FMSB, lasting two weeks each. During her visits Hollinger shadowed three orchestra or music school directors, the director of a special education programme at one of the núcleos, and the president of the Venezuelan State Orchestra Association. Methods included observations, interviews, and document analysis. Interviews were carried out with administrative and music staff, community members, current and past students, and parents.

Although Hollinger claims to have taken an ethnographic approach, she also acknowledges that her two visits were just two weeks in duration on each occasion and that the first was orchestrated by Abreu himself who ‘personally arranged and rearranged’ Hollinger’s schedule (Hollinger, 2006, p. 127). Moreover, on the first visit she was accompanied and assisted with translations by a FMSB guide, although on the second visit she travelled alone. Hollinger’s case study could thus not be said to be representative of the whole network and there could have been biases in the selection of sites to visit.

**Key Findings:** See sections 2 Background; 4.1.5 Self-esteem; 4.3 Community; 4.4 Pedagogy.
4.6.7 LÓPEZ, 2008

Context
This study is based on a content analysis of three documentaries. ‘Obra Maestra’ (Betancour, 2002) from Colombia is the first documentary and narrates a synthesis of the work of the Colombian System of Youth Bands and Schools. The second, ‘Antes que todo’ (González and Quiroga, 2005) from Chile, was an independent production that focused on two young boys, a trumpet player and a violinist, and the conductors of their respective orchestras. It describes the conflicts that the boys had to face in order to meet their goals. ‘Tocar y Luchar’ (Arvelo, 2005), from El Sistema, Venezuela, presents several testimonies from internationally recognized musicians (Plácido Domingo, Claudio Abbado, Simon Rattle, among others) who praise El Sistema. Students also provide their testimonies showing a rural or marginal environment.

Aims
The author aims to deepen the knowledge about the programmes of musical training for children and young people in Colombia, Chile, and Venezuela, focusing on the conflicts and successes and taking into consideration their strategies for social inclusion.

Methods
The project is based on the content analysis of three documentaries. The author provides a detailed description for each documentary, discusses the similarities and differences of the music programmes depicted in the videos, as well as their strengths, weaknesses, and challenges.

Key Findings: See section 4.8 Inclusivity.

4.6.8 LÓPEZ AND BERRÍOS, 2007

Context
The study was requested by the Foundation of Youth and Children’s Orchestras about the impact of El Sistema. The Foundation supports a total of 235 orchestras with 7,803 students. The collective work within the orchestras is characterised by intense and systematic work, in which previous theoretical knowledge is provided. The students rehearse two or three times a week outside of regular school hours.

Aims
The aim of this study was to investigate the possible effects of participating in an orchestra from three different types of relationships: the participant and his/her personal conditions, the relationships within the orchestra, and relationship between the orchestra and its context (family, school, and community).

Methods
In this exploratory and descriptive study, the authors used a mixed-methods approach to examine participants’ self-concept (Piers-Harries test) and academic achievement (school grades in language and math in the cohort 2006). Additional aspects investigated in the study included family context; cultural consumption; students’, parents’, and teachers’ perceptions of the influence of their music participation; and relationship with the community. Interviews and focus groups with students, orchestra conductors, and teachers were used for data collection. A questionnaire of family characteristics was sent to parents. Quantitative data were collected through a test of self-concept and average academic scores of the participants. A sample of 10 orchestras was selected according to the socio-economic context (medium-low), territorial representativeness, and years since the creation of each orchestra (3 to 11 years). The student sample size was 382 with and age range of 7-20 years old. For the self-concept test, the sample comprised
only 285 children for whom school report cards were available. The test included six dimensions: behaviour, appearance and body image, anxiety, popularity, intellectual and academic status, and happiness

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.7 Self-concept; 4.1.15 Cultural consumption; 4.2 Family involvement; 4.3.

4.6.9 ROJAS (2010)

**Aims**
The aim of this Master’s thesis was to examine the management style of El Sistema (FMSB), using as theoretical framework the idea of Organizational Learning (Senge) and Multiple Intelligences (Gardner).

**Context**
In this research project, El Sistema is an object of study from the lenses of the management and administrative sciences. It is argued that within FMSB a process of organizational learning is underpinned by the development of abilities, talents and multiple intelligences of children and young people, which are then transferred to new generations of musicians to their families and communities.

**Methods**
Based on the Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Gardner) and Organizational Learning (Senge), the author used a qualitative methodology to examine the management style of El Sistema. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and direct observations that took place during concerts and rehearsals. A convenience sample was selected from núcleos in the State of Lara, in Venezuela, and included people with relevant positions within FMSB.

**Key Findings:** See section 4.5.1 Leadership.

4.6.10 SANJÚNÁN, 2007

**Context**
In this document, it is acknowledged that previous evaluation reports of El Sistema presented methodological flaws that had impeded rigorous examination of its impact, particularly the lack of comparisons between intervention and control groups (El Sistema vs. non-El Sistema participants). It is suggested that results may have undervalued the impact of the programme. For this reason, it is proposed a new research baseline to evaluate the impact of El Sistema.

**Aims**
This document presents a proposal to El Sistema, Venezuela (FMSB) in order to develop a research baseline and to consolidate a portfolio of indicators that show the impact of the programme, with an improved methodological approach for data collection. The pre-identified indicators were improvements in academic achievement, crime prevention, employment of beneficiaries, and social inclusion.

**Methods**
The pilot study followed experimental a quasi-experimental design, including collection of quantitative and qualitative information that allowed for a general characterization of the general condition of El Sistema.

For the pilot study, a convenience sample (not representative) involved 50% of the regions (four) in which the programme operated, and 12% of the núcleos (n =15). The student sample (n= 840) was divided in two
groups, an intervention group with El-Sistema students and a control group with students out of El Sistema. Other information sources included reports from parents, teachers, school administrators, programme coordinators, and other representatives (n = 500). Secondary sources also considered include class assistance, academic and discipline records, and other official data.

Six dimensions were considered in the 26-item research instrument: academic achievement, family relations, equity and social integrity, employment, conflict response/social capital, and stimuli exposition. Four questionnaires were developed, one for each student group, one for parents or representatives related to the intervention group, and the last one for the control group parents. Qualitative data was gathered through interviews and observations.

For each dimension and indicator, Sanjuán provides a conceptual and operative definition, components, algorithm for its calculation, measurement, and the quantitative values for the intervention and control group of the respective indicator according to the pilot study.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.3.2 Impact within the community.

4.6.11 UY, 2010; 2012

**Aims**
Uy (2012) carried out a qualitative study of El Sistema, focusing on the relationship between the programme, individual, families, and the community. His aim was to explore the El Sistema pedagogy and administrative structures, with a view to interpreting the programme outcomes within a framework of research findings concerned with the wider cognitive, personal, and social benefits of participation in after-school music programmes.

The 2010 paper by Uy presents a qualitative cross-cultural analysis of the pro-social behavioural improvements of participants in El Sistema programmes, using as case study examples the Harmony Project in the United States and the El Sistema, Venezuela.

**Methods**
An ethnographic approach was adopted, whereby Uy spent three months as a teacher working for two to three weeks at a time within four different núcleos. A further two months were devoted to fieldwork that included in-depth interviews lasting up to 30 minutes with administrators, núcleo coordinators, and teachers, as well as parents (18) and students (14).

The 2010 paper draws upon further data collected in Los Angeles where Uy spent three months carrying out administrative work in the central offices of the Harmony Project. An additional three months were spent teaching at the Beyond the Bell site. Interviews lasting between 10 and 30 minutes were carried out with students (30) and parents (24) at the Hollywood and EXPO Centre sites.

**Key Findings:** See sections 2 Background; 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.2 Family involvement; 5.3 Teacher development; 5.4 Partnership working.
5. OCEANIA

5.1 SISTEMA AOTEAROA

5.1.1 WILSON, MCKEGG ET AL., 2012

Context
Sistema Aotearoa accepted its first cohort in April 2011 operating out of seven schools located in the Otara area (Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Piripono, Bairds Mainfreight Primary School, East Tamaki Primary School, Rongomai Primary School, Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate, St Johns the Evangelist School, and Wymondley Primary). In its inaugural year, the first of two trial years, the programme offered free music education in violin and cello to 106 children between the ages of 5 and 8 primarily on an after-school basis. Funded initially by the New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Sistema Aotearoa now is under the auspices of Creative New Zealand with support for the Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra.

The goals of Sistema Aotearoa are directly related to those of its Venezuelan counterpart: ‘(to) address social outcomes of deprivation; (to) transform the lives of children, families and communities through sustained involvement in a music development programme; (to) create a core of competent young citizens to be role models and leaders in low socio-economic areas where there is growth potential in social cohesion and employment; (to) identify and leverage resources in the Arts to benefit children, families, and communities with inequitable access to those resources; and (to) add to the trained talent pool in New Zealand’s cultural industries, particularly music’ (Wilson, McKegg et al., 2012, p. 20). With a focus on inclusiveness, most participants are from ‘Māori, Samoan, Tongan, Niuean or Cook Island families’ (Wilson, McKegg et al., 2012, p. 22).

The programme has a strong emphasis upon pedagogy and curriculum. Students are taught in large group sectional or orchestra settings using a curriculum and lesson plans designed by the Programme Director. Unlike many other El Sistema programs, the organization has a well-defined methodology that all teachers must employ. Tutors are also trained in behavioural management with well-monitored professional support.

Aims
The goal of the evaluation was to determine the efficacy of the programme in terms of implementation and delivery (process evaluation). In addition, the research also served as an outcome evaluation at the early stages of its development so as to determine whether or not the programme was beginning to contribute to its long-term outcomes. Specifically, the evaluation sought to answer the following research questions: ‘a) to what extent is Sistema Aotearoa’s design, content and delivery high quality (process evaluation)? b) to what extent, and in what ways, is Sistema Aotearoa contributing to outcomes of value for the children, families and the local community of Otara (outcome evaluation)? c) what, if any, other impacts does the programme have?’ (Wilson, McKegg et al., 2012, p. 7).

Methods
Evaluative criteria were determined in consultation with major stakeholders (i.e., funding agencies, schools, community members) through interviews and focus groups. A performance rubric was then formulated to answer the research questions. This rubric was later reviewed by stakeholders for its appropriateness. Data were then collected over a 4-month period between May and August 2012. A mixed-methods approach was incorporated including an extensive review of literature; field observations of participants; and interviews/focus groups with Sistema Aotearoa tutors (n=12), participants (n=15), family members (n=12), school principals (n=2) and teachers (n=6), community members, and funding agencies. In addition, the researchers completed a review and analysis of Sistema Aotearoa documents and programme data. Participants were
primarily members of the first cohort of students.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.1.14 School attendance; 4.2 Family involvement; 4.3 Community; 4.6 Quality of provision.

5.1.2 TRINICK AND MCNAUGHTON, 2013

**Context**
Inherently smaller in nature than its 2012 evaluation counterpart (Wilson, McKegg et al., 2012), this second evaluation of the two-year trial Sistema Aotearoa programme focused specifically on the musical learning outcomes and factors affecting these outcomes. The evaluation was commissioned by the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra and involved both the first and second year cohorts.

**Aims**
The evaluation sought to answer the following two research questions: ‘What patterns of musical development do students in the Sistema Aotearoa trial programme show? What are the specific features of the Sistema Aotearoa trial programme that contribute to learning in music?’ (Trinick and McNaughton, 2013, p. 9).

**Methods**
The research involved a formative evaluation approach and involved five data collection tools: student and tutor observations, programme documentation analysis, performance observation, and tutor questionnaires. Students from each of the two cohorts were observed in situ on 10 occasions with researchers collecting anecdotal notes. In addition, a performance rubric, generated by a string expert, was employed to observe individual students participating in the group lessons. Tutors were observed in order to determine any patterns in content or delivery whereas two performances (November 2012) were viewed and recorded. These were later analyzed via anecdotal notes. Documents studied included student workbooks, planning, and programme notes. The Tutor Questionnaire, formulated in consultation with the Sistema Aotearoa Programme Director, consisted of six open-ended questions. Unlike the 2012 evaluation of the programme, which was extensive and comprehensive, this research involved few participants. These included 10 students in their second year of the programme and three first year students. Five tutors were observed whereas only three completed the Tutor Questionnaire.

**Key Findings:** See section 4.7 Musical progression

6. USA

6.1 RESEARCH

6.1.1 CAMPE AND KAUFMAN, 2013

**Context**
This study took place in the context of the Conservatory Lab Charter School in the USA. This elementary (primary) school serves as a site for an integrated El Sistema programme that is aligned with the school’s mission ‘to provide an opportunity for inner city children to achieve the highest standards of academic achievement in the context of continuous and comprehensive study of music (Conservatory Lab Charter School Annual Report, 2012, p. 6).
Aims
The aims of this project were to explore perceptions of social and behavioural changes in students participating in the Sistema-inspired programme at the Conservatory Lab Charter School students.

Methods
Qualitative tools as well as quantitative measure of musical performance were used. Administrators, classroom teachers, music teachers, and parents completed questionnaires that focused on their perceptions of change in students with regard to self-regulation skills, motivation, peer-respect, and responsibility. A sample of students from upper grades took part in interviews about their experience of the Sistema-inspired programme. Finally, a music performance skills and literacy test was administered to all students in the programme.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.1.12 Academic attainment.

6.1.2 CLINE, 2012

Context
Six American Sistema-inspired programmes, chosen with guidance from leaders within the El Sistema USA movement, contributed to the research. The six geographically and culturally diverse programmes were: B Sharp Youth Music Programme, Fort Worth, TX; YOURS Project, Chicago, IL; OrchKids, Baltimore, MD; The Harmony Programme, New York, NY; Conservatory Lab Charter School, Boston, MA; and Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles (YOLA), Los Angeles, CA. Five of the six programmes operated as after-school partnerships between a public elementary school and a local arts organization. One programme functioned as an in-school partnership at a public charter school.

Aims
Cline investigated the intersection between after-school music education partnerships and Sistema-inspired programmes in the United States of America. She was particularly interested in whether common practices and principles could be identified, with a central research question being focused on the degree to which programmes could be said to be united in a common mission, set of values, and pedagogical approach. Six Sistema-inspired programmes representing culturally and geographically diverse areas of the USA took part in the research. Cline explored commonality and differences with regard to administrative structures, instructional principles and repertoire, mission, objectives and goals, as well as stakeholder and community needs.

Methods
Cline adopted a mixed-method approach that comprised participant observation, interviews, and questionnaires from teachers, parents, and staff. The number of individual participants in the research is not reported. The data were collected during visits to each of the sites that took place during periods of between one and three weeks at each site. In addition to qualitative open questions, the questionnaires included a five-point Likert scale that included indicators of the relative importance of various goals and attitudes about success factors in the Sistema-inspired programmes.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.4 Pedagogy; 4.9 Culturally and contextually-specific features of the programmes; 5.4 Partnership working.
6.1.3 FLENAUGH, 2012

**Context**
The Youth Orchestras of Los Angeles (YOLA) is part of the greater Los Angeles El Sistema initiative. With two locations, one at the South Los Angeles’ EXPO Centre, and the other in the Rampart District (Heart of Los Angeles or YOLA at HOLA) YOLA is operated by the Harmony Project in partnership with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Park. The programme offers instruction on an after-school basis five days a week for up to nine hours for students ranging from 2-17 years of age. YOLA’s extensive offerings include classes in musicianship, singing, solfège, orchestra, sectionals, semi-private lessons, and academic tutoring. There is also a strong research component associated with the initiative.

YOLA has additional support from the Los Angeles Philharmonic via its conductor Bruce Kiesling and Music Director Gustavo Dudamel, a graduate of the Venezuela programme. This partnership has resulted in many high profile performances for YOLA members including Walt Disney Hall and the Hollywood Bowl. The Harmony Project envisions operating youth orchestras in each Los Angeles neighborhoods. As a result, all of its projects, including YOLA, are inclusive in nature with an emphasis on serving students of color, especially the large Black and Latino populations.

**Aims**
Flenaugh’s DMUS dissertation investigates the practices of the Los Angeles Philharmonic’s Sistema-based Youth Orchestras Los Angeles (YOLA). Specifically, the research asks what pedagogical, philosophical, and community engagement practices have contributed to YOLA’s success in providing quality music education for historically underserved populations such as Blacks and Latinos. The study investigates several facets of the programme including repertoire choices, behavioural expectations, teacher-student interactions, goals and objectives, and community involvement.

**Methods**
Data collection involved three components: ‘(1) interviews with programme administrators, teachers, and other community members, (2) focus groups with parents, and (3) observations of the classrooms, rehearsals, other learning environments’ (Flenaugh, 2012, p. 22). Efforts were made to ensure that participant demographics matched that of the community (72% Latino, 20% Asian, 5% African-American and 2% Filipino). Data were collected over a period of six months at the YOLA Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA) Rampart District location. YOLA at HOLA, established in 2010, is part of an over 20 year old project in this district which offers free programmes to children ages 6-19 in academics, athletics, and arts, as well as the recent Youth Orchestra initiative.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.3 Community; 4.4 Pedagogy; 4.6 Quality of provision.

6.1.4 HULTING-COHEN, 2012

**Context**
This case study research was carried out in the context of Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, at Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA), an El Sistema-inspired partnership between the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Heart of Los Angeles, Inc., a community organization that features academic, musical, and athletic programmes. Of the 180 students, 70% are Latino and most come from low-income households.
Aims
Hulting-Cohen explored the adaptation of El Sistema to the United States, focusing on partnerships and exploring the value of El Sistema programmes to the organizations that adopt them.

Methods
Hulting-Cohen used a case study approach, basing his analysis on a three-week immersion visit to Youth Orchestra Los Angeles. During this visit, Hulting-Cohen took notes on daily activities, carried out formal and informal interviews with parents, students, teachers, and administrators, taught music lessons and music appreciation classes to students and parents, and designed a curriculum for the parent class.

Key Findings: See sections 5.4 Partnership working; 6.2 Venezuela and local contexts; 6.6 Assessment and evaluation.

6.1.5 ISRAEL, 2012

Aims
This study investigated the profile of teachers working within USA Sistema-inspired programmes. The aim was also to explore teacher perceptions of student engagement, student self-actualization, parental involvement, instructor motivation, instructor standards, and practices, including attitudes and practices relating to the value of individual lessons and feedback. The study also investigated the extent to which teachers were aware of the social development aims of the programmes in which they taught.

Methods
Through an electronic, online survey, Israel collected data from 59 Sistema-based instructors from six different programmes. The survey comprised multiple choice questions as well as statements that teachers responded to using a seven-point rating scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Participants were also given the opportunity to contribute qualitative comments. Specifically, the survey questions and statements focused on teacher perceptions of: new experiences and opportunities, musical retention, peer perception, growth in music discipline and focus, behavioural discipline, self-esteem, self-worth, creativity, pride of instrument or section, awareness of Sistema-based mission to enact social change, future musical participation, and likelihood of high school graduation.

Respondents were fairly evenly split between males and females, and approximately two thirds were from teachers whose ethnicity was described as Caucasian, with the remainder representing Latino, Asian Pacific and Black African Americans. The majority of teacher respondents were between the ages of 23 and 40 (78%). Teaching experience ranged from less than one year to over 20 years of experience, with 40% reporting that they had taught for less than 5 years.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.5 Self-esteem; 4.1.15 Cultural consumption; 4.2 Family involvement; 4.4 Pedagogy 5.3 Teacher development.

6.1.6 MAUSKAPF, 2012

Context
Mauskapf (2012) explores the challenges faced by twenty-first century orchestras, through the interdisciplinary lens of historical musicology and organizational theory. One chapter of this work analyzes three case study Sistema-inspired programmes in the USA: Youth Orchestra LA, OrchKids and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Tune Up Philly.
Aims
This chapter aims to problematize the use of classical music as a vehicle for social action, as well as exploring how partnerships between El Sistema programmes and symphony orchestras in the USA have, alongside their social development goals, served the needs of the orchestras themselves.

Methods
Although the methods are not explicitly set out, Mauskapf refers to several in-depth interviews with key informants within the three case study sites, as well as leaders within the El Sistema community in the USA.

Key Findings: See section 5.4 Partnership working

6.1.7 ROSSI, 2011

Context
Rossi conducted a survey of the business communities in Fitchburg, Leominster, and Lunenburg. She was interested in uncovering local businesses’ perspectives about the impact that the arts had on their businesses. She also investigated their potential interest in offering contributions and other types of support to arts endeavors and organizations.

Aims
The survey was designed to investigate further the idea of a creative economy (as theorized by Florida), and to delve into the potency of the concept in relation to the perspectives about the arts held by local businesses in Fitchburg, Leominster, and Lunenburg. The aim of the evaluation was to ascertain whether financial and other types of contributory support existed in the area for an El Sistema núcleo to be established with the cooperation and backing of local businesses.

Methods
Rossi constructed surveys consisting of both structured and open-ended questions that were distributed to local businesses as well as to local schools. She collected data concerning the businesses’ perspective on the arts. The survey was distributed to 150 businesses, and there was a 10% rate of return with 15 businesses responding. She used this information to advocate for the value that introducing an El Sistema núcleo into the Fitchburg community would add to it, in terms of its impact on schools and the arts community, but also for the benefits it could potentially bring to the business community as well. She used Florida’s theorization of a creative economy as a theoretical underpinning to support her proposal.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.3 Early years personal, social and cognitive development; 4.2 Family involvement; 5.4 Partnership working.

6.1.8 SHOEMAKER, 2012

Context:
OrchKids was started in 2008 by Marin Alsop, music director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Daniel Trahey, the orchestra’s music education and community engagement specialist. After visiting Venezuela in 2007 to view whether or not the pedagogical and administrative components of the programme were transferable to a North American urban setting, Trahey and Alsop decided to model OrchKids directly after its South American counterpart.
In its initial states, Alsop, a MacArthur Foundation Fellow, donated $100,000.00 of her prize money to fund the programme. Now partnered with the Baltimore City Public Schools, OrchKids makes use of the board’s facilities, staff, and guidance. The programme also ‘maintains partnerships with the Peabody Institute of Music, the Baltimore School for the Arts, Arts Every Day, The Family League of Baltimore City, and the Lyric Opera House of Baltimore’ (Shoemaker, 2012, p. 10). Each partner provides resources such as music, guidance, mentorship, and performance experiences.

Today, OrchKids encompasses four West Baltimore locations that offer instruction to 420 elementary school children. Weekly, children receive two in-school music classes, taught by music specialists, as well as three out of school activities. These extra-curricular activities include free meals, academic tutoring, and musical training. OrchKids students are some of the poorest in the city: 99% of the students are of African American heritage, 83% receive free meals.

First year training consists of a bucket band while students select their orchestra instruments beginning in their second year in the programme. With a highly developed curriculum, the ‘administrators of OrchKids have created multiple rubrics and plans that outline their goals for their participants’ (Shoemaker, 2012, p. 29). ‘Social outcomes are also outlined and include such topics as academics, behaviour, communication/social awareness, family, leadership, and mentorship’ (Shoemaker, 2012, p. 29). The initiative has been evaluated and regularly incorporates these findings into the programme.

**Aims**
Shoemaker’s case study of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra’s OrchKids programme is intended to serve as a reference document for administrators ‘seeking the tools to model El Sistema effectively’ (Shoemaker, 2012, p. 4). The study focuses specifically on how OrchKids’ methodology and administration has influenced participants’ identity formation and the building of community. Comparing and contrasting OrchKids with the Venezuelan model, the paper has a wealth of informative qualitative data related to organizational structure, philosophical goals, fiscal organization, and pedagogical techniques.

**Methods**
Using the traditional tools of ethnographic research, Shoemaker collected data by means of participant observation, field notes, document study, and interviews. Although specific accounts of the length and number of observations, interviews, etc. are not noted, the quality of the data is due to its detail and range. The author lists interviews with administrators and participants from numerous Venezuelan locations as well as administrator interviews in Baltimore. Concert attendance and rehearsal observations are also noted in both locations. Documents studied include programme overviews, long-range planning documents, evaluation reviews, fiscal records, and promotional materials.

An extensive list of appendices include a daily schedule; staffing lists; evaluation documents; musical and social outcome grids; promotional materials; detailed financial reports and funding strategies for the Baltimore programme.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.9 Culturally and contextually-specific features of the programmes; 6.5 The impact of Sistema-inspired programmes upon the wider music curriculum and the wider community of music education programmes.
6.1.9 SILBERMAN, 2013

**Aims**
Silberman (2013, pp. 19-20) investigated the characteristics of the international El Sistema movement, aiming to define ‘who comprises El Sistema internationally and what additional structures are needed to encourage continued international growth of the El Sistema network.’ Her specific objectives were to identify ‘the key elements’ of El Sistema-inspired programmes, provide an account of how and where El Sistema was ‘being duplicated around the world’, identify the ‘resources and organizations that promote the international growth of the Sistema field’ and finally, to identify ‘strengths and challenge’s inherent in the global El Sistema movement.’

**Methods**
A web-based qualitative survey of international El Sistema inspired programmes was undertaken. Silberman received 18 questionnaire responses, including three from Latin America and the Caribbean, seven from North America, three from Europe, two from Asia, and three from programmes in the Oceania region. Questionnaire respondents were asked to provide operational information about the organizations and programmes, including data relating to funding, numbers of students and staff, and programme delivery. In addition several open questions were asked that explored the perceived needs of the programme, the role of the programme within the immediate and wider communities, training needs, and relationships with Sistema Global and the Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar.

In addition, in order to explore the same issues in more depth, Silberman carried out 10 semi-structured interviews lasting one hour each with leaders of the global Sistema movement; these were primarily from the USA (7) with the addition of one Canadian and two British interviewees. Silberman acknowledges the limitations of her study, in particular the self-selected sample, the reliance on self-reports, and the potential North American bias in the findings. Nonetheless, her study presents valuable insight gathered through key informants who collectively had made significant strategic contributions to the global Sistema network.

**Key Findings:** See sections 2.3 History; 6.2 Venezuela and local contexts; 6.3 Programme needs and community needs; 6.6 Assessment and evaluation.

6.1.10 SNOW, 2012

**Context**
Snow’s 2012 dissertation on music and entrepreneurship does not deal exclusively with El Sistema and El Sistema inspired programmes. Rather, this work investigates the entrepreneurial aspects of the Sistema Fellows Programme of El Sistema USA (see section 2.3: History), Musical Futures in the United Kingdom, and the Music-in-Education concentration at New England Conservatory. The author states however that her research of the Sistema Fellows Programme, including its curriculum, administration, and participant feedback, was the focus of her data collection.

**Aims**
The goal of this dissertation was to provide a ‘conceptual framework of how principles of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial thinking might be used to improve music teacher preparation practices in post-secondary education’ (Snow, 2012, p. 18). By examining current entrepreneurial models, combined with theoretical and philosophical foundations, the dissertation attempts to answer the often-expressed call for more relevant and inclusive music teacher education. Snow ambitiously aims to develop ‘ways to more
effectively address the varied career needs and interests of music educators and create value for the individuals and communities they serve’ (Snow, 2012, p. 18) via new entrepreneurial training and models. She proposes innovative models to reform post-secondary music education programmes as a result of her research findings.

**Methods**

To develop her conceptual framework, the author completed an extensive literature review of entrepreneurship from both within and outside of the music education paradigm. Topics studied include philosophical foundations of American pragmatism, democracy in education, categories and concepts of entrepreneurship, and connections and disconnections between music education, music teacher education, and entrepreneurship. Following this, Snow presents data collected from the three programmes included in the study, analyzing them with the assistance of her philosophical and theoretical framework. Themes studied include ‘connecting to and contributing to society; democratic principles and practices; the role of the marketplace; individual and societal relevance of educational endeavors; creativity; interdisciplinary connections and experiential and constructivist approaches to learning’ (Snow, 2012, p. 21).

For the Sistema Fellows Programme portion of the study data were procured via interviews with seven Fellows and one administrator. Three of the Fellows came from 2009-2010 graduating class with the remaining four completing their studies in the following year. Interview questions focused on experiences and interpretations of the programme with attention paid to value creation, risk taking, problem posing, problem solving, creativity, and transformation. Participant responses ‘were analyzed to determine whether and how entrepreneurship education, which involves these elements, was a part of their preparation as future music education entrepreneurs’ (Snow, 2012, p. 22).

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.5 Leadership, entrepreneurship, and networking; 6.2.4 Diversity of musical genres; 6.5 The impact of Sistema-inspired programmes upon the wider music curriculum and the wider community of music education programmes.

6.2 EVALUATIONS

6.2.1 ADVOCATES FOR COMMUNITY THROUGH MUSICAL EXCELLENCE (ACME) – MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA (BERGERSON AND MOTTO, 2013)

**Context**

The Advocates for Community through Musical Excellence (ACME) programme enjoyed its inaugural year of operation during the 2012-2013 academic year. The programme focuses on advocating for and enacting social justice principles, and its implementation took place with one class of first-grade primary school children at an urban public school with an extremely high truancy rate. The programme utilized an extracurricular, after-school structure that involved two hours of instruction for four days each week. The programme’s instructional offerings included general music, orchestra, and choir.

**Aims**

The Breck School’s Advanced Mathematics Research spent a year serving as consultants for ACME. They wished to accomplish three specific objectives: to understand the mission of ACME and how the programme realized this mission; to develop methods with which to assess ACME’s impact; and to articulate the assessment’s results to ACME and potential supporters, including recommendations for further research.
Methods
The Breck School’s Advanced Mathematics Research had previous experience in some of the insurmountable challenges which could occur in using traditional pen-and-paper assessments with arts-integration programs and their students. They therefore developed an interest in alternative assessments.

Initially, Advanced Mathematics Research designed an assessment plan which incorporated personal interviews, video recordings, and classroom behavioural observations. However, this plan proved problematic, as the plan was designed during the summer prior to ACME’s implementation. Thus, the researchers were working with an as-yet-undetermined programme structure. In addition, when they attempted to use this plan after the programme was actually implemented, the students’ overwhelmingly positive responses produced a lack of a baseline to serve as a point of comparison (and against which to track any marked improvement). The other two procedures for gathering data also proved unfeasible because of a lack of a video camera (nor funds with which to procure one), and also because the teachers needed to instruct students and were therefore unavailable to conduct observations.

Therefore, Advanced Mathematics Research – with the advantage of numerous months of experience spending time in the ACME classroom after the programme’s actual implementation – redesigned their assessment plan. This revised outline revolved around three primary areas: socialization skills, academic achievement, and musical knowledge. The team used observations to document socialization skills, standardized test scores to record academic achievement (although this dimension of the study had to be postponed due to a passed deadline), and standardized test scores from the Music and Language Literacy Skills Test produced by the Music-In-Education National Consortium to measure musical knowledge. However, this third dimension of the assessment was also sidelined due to a lack of available time in the music classroom with which to administer the test. Therefore, socialization skill improvement became the primary focus of the assessment.

Ultimately, the researchers developed two socialization assessment instruments which were comprised of an ‘identity, interest, and empathy’ assessment and a ‘test of divergent thinking’: the goal was to measure the empathy and creativity of ACME’s students. The tests were administered in February and March of 2013; ideally, students would have been given a pre-test in September and a post-test in the spring, but the operational challenges of the assessment prevented this administration of the tests according to this schedule.

The ‘test of divergent thinking’ measured students’ creativity: this concept is frequently associated with creativity. The test consisted of two oral prompts that asked for students to list as many answers as possible to two statements (Q1) ‘Tell me all the ways that you can use a shoebox,’ and (Q2) ‘I want you to name all of the things you can think of that have wheels’). The personal interview dimension of the test was based on multiple students being English Language Learners. Twelve ACME students were tested, as well as 17 students in another after-school programme (these students served as a control group). This test was scored along the bases of fluency (number of relevant answers), originality (comparison of how many other students offered a similar answer), flexibility (number of categories a person’s answer call fall into), and elaboration (amount of detail in answers).

To measure empathy, the ‘identity, interest, and empathy’ assessment was designed to investigate further whether students were more likely to empathize with other children/students who physically resembled them, or whether they were more likely to empathize with students who shared their interest. The researchers constructed an assessment in which ACME children would first view twelve standardized photos of randomly selected first-graders from a different school were depicted, and then see the same randomized
twelve first-graders, but in this case, the students depicted in the photos were also holding a violin, a cello, or a basketball. The ACME children would respond with ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to the question: ‘Is this person like you?’ The ACME student participants were asked to self-identify their own race, and whether they played violin, cello, basketball, sports in general, or some combination thereof. This assessment was constructed to respond to the research question of whether students were more likely to empathize with others of their race, or others who shared their own interests: this question emerged from some racial conflicts that arose within the programme, and also, to test the hypothesis that, when students play together in an orchestra, the students’ shared love of music could transcend identity-related boundaries.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.1.3 Early years personal, social and cognitive development.

### 6.2.2 Austin Soundwaves (Austin Soundwaves, 2011-2012)

**Context**

Austin Soundwaves was started in October of 2011, and during the 2011-2012 academic year, it served 65 students in grades 6-8 who self-selected into the programme, as well as an additional 21 students in grades 5-9 during a summer programme. The programme offers music instruction for the violin, viola, cello, bass, percussion, flute, clarinet, trumpet, French horn, trombone, and euphonium to students, 95% of whom are economically disadvantaged, and 27% of whom were English Language Learners. Supplementary instructional areas include music theory, choir, music history, composition, and improvisation. Students receive approximately 10 hours of music instruction per week, or two hours a day for five days a week. Participants pay $15 a year to cover instrument insurance. The programme put on 15 performances during its first year, and 2,600 people attended performances and events that year.

The programme is offered during the school day at East Austin College Prep school, a tuition-free public charter school that was inaugurated in August of 2009. The school itself served 343 students in grades six to eight during 2011-2012; during the 2012-2013 academic year, it planned to serve over 600 students in grades 4 through 9. The school is located in a neighborhood known for its severe distress, due in large part to the challenges it faces from high poverty, criminal activity, teen pregnancy, school dropouts, and academic underachievement. In the community, 28% have earned less than a ninth grade education whereas 52% do not have a high school diploma. Less than 3% of residents have graduated from college.

**Aims**

The aim of the evaluation was to record changes in academic achievement, personal development and attitudes to school, over the time period when children were involved in the music programme.

**Methods**

General information concerning student absenteeism rates was collected, and a pre- and post-survey was administered to all Austin Soundwave participants (both students and parents). The survey enquired about the participants’ knowledge about the programme, possible changes in student characteristics and dispositions, and family background, experience, and practices concerning music. In addition, students were asked about their attitude towards school, success in school, perceived motivation, and family practices concerning music.

In addition to these pre- and post-surveys, baseline academic data were collected. Follow-up data about student participant reading and math scores were recorded, and students received the opportunity to respond to open-ended questions concerning their attitude towards and enjoyment of the programme.
Key Findings: See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.1.5 Self-esteem; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.1.14 School attendance; 4.1.15 Cultural consumption; 5.1 Keeping children engaged in the programme.

6.2.3 B SHARP YOUTH MUSIC PROGRAMME INFORMATION (SCHURGIN, 2012; B SHARP, 2010-2011; B SHARP, 2012-2013)

Context
The Goff Family Foundation established the B Sharp Youth Music Programme in August of 2010 as an initiative that could have a long-term effect on Como Elementary School students as well as the Como community. By the spring of 2013, the programme had come to provide free after-school music instruction and homework assistance to 62 students in grades 1-6. The students self-select the instruments they play in the orchestra (possible choices include the violin, viola, cello, bass, trumpet, euphonium, horn, flute, clarinet, or bassoon). They receive 10 hours of music instruction as well as four hours of homework assistance: their instructors are professional musicians with college degrees, and students in the programme have outpaced their counterparts in reading, science, and math.

The programme’s focus centers not only on developing students’ musicianship capacities, but also, it strongly encourages them to value themselves, as well as to be responsible for their own actions, both to themselves and to other people. B Sharp is the only programme of its kind in North Texas, and its presence has created the only public elementary school orchestra in the county. The Goff Family Foundation fully funds the programme, and the programme offers students the opportunity to perform in multiple concerts during the school year, as well as to take part in field trips.

In the fall of 2013, B Sharp plans to operate with 100 students (and an additional 17 on a waiting list) as a Gold Seal Programme of Choice at Como Elementary School; this expansion serves as the first step in the process of integrating the programme into the school day. The extracurricular component will remain in operation as well. The programme’s overall goals revolve around B Sharp’s mission of harmonizing communities through music. The teaching artists who lead the programme model interactions defined by dignity and respect, and they strive to provide a safe, fun, and joyful learning environment for the students which integrates spontaneity and flexibility into its dynamic. They emphasize leadership and passion over precision, support parent participation, and show how well-informed decisions can establish a path for success.

Aims
The goal of the evaluation was to record the views that B Sharp parents had about the programme at the conclusion of its first year of operation (2010-2011).

Methods
The research involved a summative evaluation (for the 2010-2011 academic year) and involved one data collection tool: parent questionnaires. Surveys with eleven open-ended questions were administered to 27 B Sharp parents. The questions’ content included the following topics: how the parents liked the programme, how they had learned of the programme’s existence, reasons why they participated, their expectations of the programme, what they might change about it, how the programme had served their children and in what ways, whether they would recommend the programme to others, and how they thought the programme could better serve the children and involve the parents.
**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.1.7 Self-concept; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.1.14 School attendance; 4.2 Family involvement.

### 6.2.4 BALTIMORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: ORCHKIDS (POTTER, 2013)

**Context**

The ORCHKids programme was launched in 2008 by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and during the inaugural year, 30 pilot students at a West Baltimore elementary school participated in the programme. Since its inception, the programme has expanded to include 4 Title-1 public schools with two ‘hub’ site locations (in the Sandtown-Winchester/West Baltimore and Highlandtown/East Baltimore regions). Over 550 students aged pre-Kindergarten through seventh grade participate in the programme, and they perform for audiences of more than 100,000 on a yearly basis, including concert performances with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Students meet up to four hours per day, six days a week, for a span of over 30 weeks per year (including a summer session). The programme demands a strong commitment from its participants; stresses the importance of taking personal responsibility and establishing a clearly defined sense of discipline.

Children can take part as early as age three, and each student is encouraged to achieve musical excellence. All children are granted admission, no matter what their background characteristics or ability levels. The programme encourages parents to participate by volunteering and taking part in parent ensembles. The programme also gives its student participants opportunities to attend bi-monthly field trips to cultural institutions and events, and older students are encouraged to demonstrate leadership in their communities by participating in and organizing service projects.

**Aims**

The overall evaluation programme undertaken by ORCHKids has been to investigate any impact the programme has had on participants’ academic achievement and test scores, their attendance records, academic aspirations and long-term visions and goals, eating habits, sense of self-efficacy, and enhanced relationship with classmates and in school in general, as well as their abilities to function in social situations.

**Methods**

The assessment instrument used for evaluating students socially consists of thirteen main statements that the evaluator uses to rank the student on a four-point scale (from ‘Needs Development’ to ‘Outstanding’). Each of the thirteen statements has between two and four sub-statements that delineate which student behaviours and/or practices represent the overarching statement.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.1.3 Early years personal, social and cognitive development; 4.1.5 Self-esteem; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.1.14 School attendance; 4.1.15 Cultural consumption; 5.1 Keeping children engaged in the programme.

### 6.2.5 CONSERVATORY LAB CHARTER SCHOOL (CONSERVATORY LAB CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT, 2012)

**Context**

The Conservatory Lab Charter School located in Brighton, Massachusetts is the only Boston elementary school which offers a project-based, music-infused, interdisciplinary academic curriculum which allows students to engage in creation and performance while simultaneously achieving scholastic benchmarks. The school is the first USA public school to serve as an El Sistema site; the school’s focus allows students to deepen their appreciation of the role that music plays in the world.
The school was founded in 1999, and during the 2012-2013 school year 172 students were enrolled in pre-kindergarten through the sixth grade. Students gain admittance to the school via lottery, and no entrance tests, fees, or auditions are required to attend. The school utilizes a three-pronged approach to ensure that students develop as informed listeners, cultivate their skills as orchestral musicians, and become complex thinkers who can draw associations between music and academic learning. The performance component of this approach can be linked directly to the El Sistema philosophy of having students pursue musical excellence through the experiences of playing in an orchestra. This model balances individual progress with group achievement.

The school integrates thematic studies utilizing music into its teaching of content areas, and El Sistema resident artists work with students to implement the Listening Project and the Learning Through Music components of the school’s music-focused curriculum. Students not only become thoroughly immersed in learning about content in a way that is complemented by music, but they also engage in creative collaborations with professional musicians as well as their classroom teachers.

Aims
The general aims of the school’s overall evaluation process are to assess student learning through an action research learning approach; that is, students’ progress is assessed comprehensively as an inherent part of the school’s curricular and instructional structure and approach. The school’s leaders meet frequently with teachers and an outside evaluation group to revise and strengthen the curriculum and performance rubrics which serve as evaluative measures of student progress. Teachers receive continuous feedback via informal and formal meetings and observations. The evaluation measures are developed with strong input from teachers. In addition, the school partners with an external evaluation non-profit organization that offers coaching and input to assist teachers in utilizing data to close learning gaps.

Methods

General School Evaluation
The school conducts evaluations by establishing strong learning targets, utilizing teacher observation rubrics, student self-assessment rubrics, and exhibiting documentation panels, exhibitions, and polished student creative products. The school’s leaders, teachers, and school curriculum designers (the Expeditionary Learning designers) work together to further develop and improve the interdisciplinary thematic units through which the students receive content area instruction, so as to ensure their rigour. This collaborative team also ensures that learning assessments prove developmentally appropriate.

Achievement Network Evaluation and Assessment Measures
Students at the Conservatory Lab Charter School are assessed across multiple dimensions. In addition to presenting a multidisciplinary project, the students are assessed via five interim examinations that assess English Language Achievement and math skills in students: this assessment process is implemented by the Achievement Network, an educational non-profit organization that provides effective data-driven strategies to identify and close student learning gaps. This organization couples these assessments with educator coaching to assist teachers in analyzing assessment results, identifying gaps in student learning, and creating action plans to address the gaps. Teachers and administrators meet regularly to scrutinize student achievement data, as well as to target effective, individualized interventions and enrichments. The school also participates in peer school networks that collaborate to improve their use of this collected data.

Assessment and Evaluation Instruments
The school uses numerous assessment tools to ascertain student achievement and growth in literacy and
Concerning literacy growth, the school uses the following instruments: Fountas and Pinnell Running Records, FUNdations, Writing 6+1 Traits, interim assessments (of K-6th grades) based on Common Core Standards, data collected from student observations, and Achievement Network interim assessments. For mathematics, the school uses the following instruments: interim assessments (of K-6th grades) based on Common Core Standards, data collected from student observations, and Achievement Network interim assessments.

In 2012, a revised teacher performance assessment rubric was developed by the school’s Professional Development Committee: the document was created with the active participation of teachers, who had a strong level of input into the evaluation process. Teachers receive verbal and written feedback from frequent and formal drop-in evaluations about once a calendar month, or around 10 to twelve times per academic year. Teacher evaluations are used as a basis for suggesting additional areas in which professional development could be improved, including how to structure professional development sessions with coaches and the school’s administration. In addition, the Professional Development Committee also constructed a system in which teacher pay determinations are dependent upon student achievement, and teacher evaluations serve as instruments in making non-renewal decisions and designating a teacher’s pay scale level.

In addition, as a whole, the school undergoes in-house assessments, as well as other assessments of learning/assessments for learning tools: these instruments are used on both a day-to-day and long-term basis to plan lessons to best reach individual students. The administrative team and teachers reflect on professional and student goals through weekly professional development discussions with the school principal. The administration also works closely with teachers to provide feedback on testing, lesson, and programme plans.

**Board of Trustees Survey**
In 2012, the School administered a survey to all Board members. The questions were based on a set of board governance principles entitled ‘Twelve Principles of Governance that Power Exceptional Boards.’ The principles and questions derived from their content addressed whether the board was in alignment with the Conservatory Lab Mission, whether the Board sustains a constructive partnership with the Head of School, and whether the Board shapes, upholds, and makes decisions which are in alignment with the school’s vision and mission.

**Family Engagement Survey**
During the spring of 2012, all Conservatory Lab families were asked to participate in a school climate survey. K-12 Insight collected the data. The questions enquired about the families’ views of whether the school was a good place to learn, if the families felt their child’s teacher was doing a good job, if the families felt like the school principal knew and cared about their child, if they felt that the principal responded quickly to any concerns, if their child felt safe in the school, if they felt that the school did a good job in preventing bullying and discrimination, if they felt that the school placed valued on the diversity of families, and if they felt the school communicated with them in a language they could understand. They also enquired about parents’ participation in school-based activities (e.g., Parent Advisory Council meetings).

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.14 School attendance; 4.6 Quality of provision; 4.7 Musical progression; 4.1.5 Self-esteem; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.2 Family involvement; 4.4 Pedagogy; 4.6 Quality of provision; 5.3 Teacher development; 6.6 Assessment and evaluation.
6.2.6 EL SISTEMA COLORADO (BRENNAN, 2013; EL SISTEMA COLORADO, 2013)

Context
El Sistema Colorado (ESC) was founded in 2011 so that the benefits of El Sistema could be brought to Denver for impoverished youth. The first site was established in January of 2012 at Garden Place Elementary School in the Globeville neighborhood. One hundred students participated in this programme. In the intervening period, the programme’s size has doubled, and as of June, 2013, it was serving 102 Early Childhood Education four-year olds and kindergarteners during the school day, and 103 first through fourth-graders through after-school and summer programmes. The early childhood education programme offers two and a half hours of ensemble-based music education per week for the four-year old students and the participating kindergarteners. The first, third, and fourth-graders who take part in the after-school programme receive 10 hours of music instruction per week, and 30 hours per week during two summer sessions. This programme thus fills an important instructional gap that had existing previously for students, families, and the community.

The programme is situated in the Children’s Corridor, a location where 61% of students are English Language Learners and 98% qualify for free or reduced lunches. The programme provides low-income children the opportunity to acquire academic and socio-emotional development, as well as offer them access to music instruction. In turn, the presence of the programme serves as a tool for unifying and building links between families, schools, and underserved urban neighborhoods. The programme helps children in their individual development, but it has an overarching focus on the success of the group, and by extension, the neighborhood and community.

In addition to the actual instructional time, families can also attend parent meetings, programme workshops and activities, family potlucks, and student performances at the school and in the community. Students’ families can also receive free classical music tickets as well as tickets to other arts events and institutions, complete a parent evaluation survey, and acquire student progress reports. The programme also has a parent representative. In addition, students can attend Saturday workshops on a regular basis. Parents can contribute to the programme by volunteering and/or attending performances and workshops.

Aims
The programme’s evaluations are intended to establish evidence concerning possible changes in student characteristics as a result of their participation in the programme.

Methods
The programme engages in evaluation through a number of channels. It utilizes a data tracking system at the Garden Place site: data collected include the students’ TCAP Reading, Writing, and Math scores, STARS scores (a developmental reading assessment), CELA scores (an English language learners assessment), grades, attendance records, and behavioral referrals. Tracking systems are used for student participants, programme hours, and event attendance, as well as Student Progress Reports from teaching artists. The results of surveys completed by Garden Place staff and parents is recorded, as well as anecdotal stories and family interview tapes so as to better document the programme’s story and impact.

Students are initially evaluated to obtain a baseline comparison value, so that evaluation data can demonstrate trends over time and in comparison with non-programme students.

In addition, parents completed a bilingual survey in January of 2013 concerning the after-school programme and its impact. Parents were asked about changes in their children (including improved academic
performance, group interaction, confidence, and pride). This survey also enquired about students’ pastime practices, and potential transformations in attitudes towards school, learning, and music. Parents reported about student characteristics like focus and patience; the survey also gathered information about parent participation and event attendance.

The programme’s teaching artists have completed pre- and post-ratings of students on the dimensions of self-control and self-discipline.

Teachers at Garden Place Elementary School completed a survey in January of 2013. The survey enquired about teachers’ observations of programme participant students. The questions enquired about potential positive changes in student characteristics like academic performance, self-control, demonstrated sense of responsibility, demonstration of respect, and possession of higher self-esteem.

The programme utilizes weekly teacher meetings as an ongoing source of evaluation which complements regular meetings with the elementary school’s principals and staff. In addition, the programme receives professional development opportunities and mentoring from more long-lived El Sistema programmes around the USA.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.1.5; Self-esteem; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.2 Family involvement; 4.1.12 Academic attainment.

### 6.2.7 EL SISTEMA IN ST LOUIS: ORCHESTRATING DIVERSITY (ORCHESTRATING DIVERSITY, 2013)

**Context**

Orchestrating Diversity launched its programme in 2009 with 18 students, and it operates as a dimension of the Lemp Neighborhood Arts Center in St. Louis, Missouri. The original students all graduated from high school and continued their education. The programme currently serves students ages 4-18, and it strives to continue this opportunity by beginning to work with children as young as age four, and then supporting their musical education, free-of-charge, through to high school graduation. The programme offers students instruction five times per week during the academic year, and it includes an eight week intensive summer institute that meets daily for nine hours. Students have the opportunity to participate in a piano literacy class on Saturdays. The staff consists of a wide array of volunteers from a broad spectrum of society, including St. Louis Public School teachers, U.S. Military Band members, college professors, local university students, parents, and community members. In addition to violin instruction, students receive access to movement and basic music classes. After the fourth-grade, students can also expand their musical horizons to play other string and wind instruments.

**Aims**

The programme utilizes a comprehensive approach to assessment. It adopts Performance Standards as well as the National Standards for Music Education framework, established by the U.S. National Association for Music Education. Orchestrating Diversity also utilizes the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Educations Music Graduate Level Expectations to ascertain whether music education programme is effective and appropriate for the student participants.

**Methods**

The programme conducts an internal assessment at the conclusion of each academic semester that is implemented through a series of evaluative tests. The programme constructs and selects the test based on
their adherence to established guidelines as connected with the standards specified above.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.1.3 Early years personal, social and cognitive development; 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.3.1 Community engagement.

### 6.2.8 HARMONY STOCKTON (HARMONY STOCKTON, 2013)

**Context**
Harmony Stockton was launched in August of 2012 at Marshall Elementary in the Stockton Unified School District in California in the USA. The programme is offered to third through fifth graders, and it is an integrated component of STEP-UP, a federally funded afterschool programme. The programme meets daily for two hours, and no prerequisites exist in terms of students' prior musical training or knowledge. The students meet 5 days a week for two hours during the academic year.

The programme is the result of a collaborative partnership between the University of the Pacific's Bernerd School of Education, the University of the Pacific's Conservatory of Music, the Stockton Symphony Association and the Stockton Unified School District. The programme strives to help students improve their academic performance through their engagement with and immersion in music. It helps participants cultivate the quality of discipline through the students' experiences gained by performing publicly. The programme strongly encourages its students to improve their oral communication skills through class and performance-based opportunities. It also strives to engage families with the school and other community activities.

**Aims**
The summative evaluation at the conclusion of the first year sought to investigate the potential impact of the overall programme on students' academic performance, classroom citizenship, attendance rates, engagement with performances, and level of parental involvement.

**Methods**
The programme conducted a summative evaluation at the conclusion of its inaugural year. The evaluation enquired about students' academic performance, the manner in which they had conducted themselves in the regular classroom, their attendance and tardiness records, their involvement with programme performances, and the level of parental involvement in place. During the 2012-2013 academic year, the programme planned to conduct formative assessments in addition to administering a summative end-year evaluation. This second stage of evaluation would include parent, teacher, and student surveys, interviews, and portfolio assessments which investigated the programme's capacity of fostering the students' knowledge of music education standards, aesthetic valuing, and connections, relationships, and applications.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.3 Early years personal, social and cognitive development; 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.1.14 School attendance; 4.2 Family involvement.

### 6.2.9 KALAMAZOO KIDS IN TUNE (KALAMAZOO KIDS IN TUNE, 2013)

**Context**
The Kalamazoo Kids in Tune programme was launched in September of 2011, serving around 30 first and second-graders at Woods Lake Elementary School, a magnet school for arts-based learning within the
Kalamazoo Public School District. During the 2012-2013 academic year, 85 first through fifth-grade students were taking part in the programme, 93% of which qualified for free or reduced lunches. The programme projects 100 student participants by the 2013-2014 academic year. A large percentage of places are reserved for students who demonstrate need according to their academic records and test scores).

Students participate in an after-school programme and receive access to intensive, ensemble-based music instruction. They also receive a daily nutritious meal, instrumental music instruction in an ensemble setting, small group music lessons, choir, bucket band, musicianship (including auditory training, recorder, sustained attention skills, and connections to math and literacy), weekly dance classes, daily homework help, and one-on-one tutoring with volunteers for students identified as having academic needs. Students perform frequently through their participation in the programme, and they interact with guest performers. They also go on field trips, and their families interact in a community setting through other related events, including ‘meet-and-greet’ sessions.

In addition to the instruction they receive during the school year, students participate in a six-week summer session and receive 6 hours a day of instruction four days a week. These sessions include both academic and musical experiences, and students receive group lessons and ensemble rehearsals. They are also provided access to exploratory sessions in which they try a variety of instruments. During these sessions, students can participate in small chamber music groups. Graduating fifth-graders will be given the opportunity to continue participating in the orchestra after the conclusion of their middle school day.

Aims
The aims of the evaluation were to record the responses of programme staff and volunteers, school faculty, and parents/guardians of the students about their knowledge and views of the programme, their perspectives of how the programme had impacted its student participants, and any recommendations or suggestions they might have concerning the programme’s implementation.

Methods
During the 2011-2012 school year (the programme’s inaugural year), the programme administered surveys amongst many groups of stakeholders.

Staff and Volunteer Survey
The staff and volunteers completed six surveys (out of eight surveys distributed). This instrument enquired about potential changes in student characteristics like attention span, enhanced social and emotional skills, improved self-confidence, and a strengthened sense of identity. The survey also enquired about staff and volunteers’ views of how the programme’s presence had impacted the community. Completed responses indicated concerns relating to the challenge of behaviour management, the need for a more uniform curriculum, and greater communication amongst the staff.

Woods Lake Faculty Survey
Sixteen faculty members returned their surveys (out of 50 distributed). The survey recorded the faculty’s views of the student performances and the availability of music instruction that had not previously been present in the school environment. The faculty also recorded their impressions of the programme’s impact on their students’ social development, as well as its influence on their musical development, academic skills, and homework habits. Responses indicated a desire for more information about the programme, especially specific guidelines about which students could participate (with some expressing that view that higher performing academic students should be permitted to participate as well).
**Parent/Guardian Survey**

Three parents/guardians returned their surveys (out of thirty distributed). This low rate of return was ameliorated by the implementation of a parental focus group in the fall of 2012. Parents recorded their impressions of the programme’s potential impact on their children in terms of social and academic support. They also recorded their impressions of their children’s attitudes towards the programme, and described possible changes that had taken place in their children as a result of their participation in the programme.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.1.3 Early years personal, social and cognitive development; 4.1.5 Self-esteem; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.1.14 School attendance.

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**6.2.10 KIDZNOTES – EL SISTEMA IN DURHAM (DIDZNOTES, 2012)**

**Context**

Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, KidZNotes has served four elementary schools in Durham, North Carolina. All of these schools face considerable challenges, including struggling with being able to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (according to the terms set forth in the No Child Left Behind educational act). In addition, the schools frequently experience higher crime levels and violence than the North Carolina state averages, and more students qualify for free/reduced lunch, and also, receive short-term suspensions than at other schools. The programme involves children from pre-kindergarten through the fourth-grade. The programme served around 200 students in these four schools plus one additional school during the 2012-2013 academic year. All student participants in the programme must be eligible for free or reduced lunches. All the students participate in the programme free of charge, and the programme itself takes place five-six days a week for 50 weeks, and students receive at least 10 hours of music instruction on a weekly basis. In addition, students receive 24 hours of instruction for three weeks during a summer session.

In addition to receiving free, high-quality, and intensive music education and instruction, KidZNotes student participants have increased their extracurricular participation time, and they are more likely to have structured activities to attend on Saturdays. Eighty-six percent of KidZNotes participants enjoy coming to school, 100% are considered ‘generally obedient’, 83% are ‘A’ or ‘B’ students (as opposed to only 34% of non-KidZNotes students), 71% were reported as good problem solvers, and 86% were willing to ask for help when they needed it. They have demonstrated good attendance. They are more likely to stay on task, and to exhibit determination and persistence. Parents of KidZNotes students also are very satisfied with the programme’s services.

**Aims**

The evaluation was conducted to assess the potential impact of students’ participation in the KidZNotes programme during the 2011-2012 academic year. The evaluation was primarily designed to answer two major questions: ‘Is the programme working?’ and ‘Is the programme making a difference?’ To answer these questions, teachers and parents filled out surveys about both KidZNotes participants and non-KidZNotes students. A small sample of test scores and attendance records was also analyzed.

**Methods**

KidZNotes administers annual parent and teacher surveys to record data on KidZNotes students and their parents. For the 2011-2012 academic year, KidZNotes parents (40) and teachers (8) participated in the survey. Comparison data from non-KidZNotes children and their families were also collected. The survey was expected to be administered during the 2012-2013 academic year, which would expand the sample size that could be analyzed.
Parental self-report data about their children was collected from both KidZNotes parents and non-KidZNotes parents (around 40 parents from each group completed the surveys). Parents responded to numerous questions on a four point Likert scale (from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree', with an 'I Don’t Know' option). The parents in both groups responded to statements about their child’s characteristics and tendencies (e.g., 'my child is a good problem solver'). The results were analyzed by tabulating how many responses for each point on the Likert scale were entered for each question. A similar approach was used with the survey for the non-KidZNotes parents. The two groups’ results were compared.

For the teacher surveys, the teachers either agreed or disagreed with statements about KidZNotes students (e.g., 'the student... likes coming to school', 'the student...is a good problem solver'). Teachers were given the surveys for KidZNotes students and non-KidZNotes students, and the results of the two groups were compared. In addition, the test scores and attendance records of 21 KidZNotes students were analyzed. C-scores of seven KidZNotes students were also analyzed: these scores assess students’ change over time.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.1.5 Self-esteem; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.1.14 School attendance; 4.1.15 Cultural consumption; 4.2 Family involvement.

**6.2.11 MIAMI MUSIC PROJECT (COMPOSING BETTER LIVES, 2012; MIAMI MUSIC PROJECT, 2013)**

**Context**
The Miami Music Project was founded in 2008 by Maestro James Judd, and it has benefitted greatly from being the recipient of a $1 million seed grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The programme began at one location with 12 students and it has grown exponentially since its inception into the programme it is in the spring of 2013, with 300 students participating at two locations (in Doral and Little Haiti). Each child receives around 200 hours of instruction each year. The programme seeks to expand programming to five sites with 1000 students participating. The programme plans to add a third site for the 2013-2014 academic year at a Liberty City location.

Children ages 5 to 18 participate in the ESMIA Children’s Orchestra, the ESMIA Youth Orchestra, and the ESMIA Residency. Older students mentor their younger peers and students participate free of charge and spend up to three times a week in orchestra and small group rehearsals, individual lessons, and music theory classes. Students audition to participate in the ESMIA Youth Orchestra. Participants of the ESMIA Residency learn a curriculum and materials that align with the District, State, and National Standards for Music Education.

**Aims**
The overall evaluation components of the Miami Music Project are designed to explore three specific dimensions of the programme: community reach of the programme, artistic excellence embodied by the programme, and social transformation of the students participating in the programme.

**Methods**
The programme currently uses a number of evaluations that evaluate multiple dimensions of the overall programme.

**Community reach evaluation:**

- The Children’s Trust Out-of-School Programs Parent Satisfaction Survey
• Confidential surveys of the families of participants
  – These surveys include demographic information, including household income, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. It also enquires about the types of activities the student participates in, the amount of practising the student completes, and factors related to the parent's knowledge of and decisions concerning the child's initial decision to participate in the programme. The survey also enquires about the programme's immediate family members, language spoken at home, parents' employment and education status, and country of origin.
• Interviews with parents to evaluate programme success and promote continuous improvement as well as identify benchmarks achieved
• Feedback surveys from audience members, and tracking of audience attendance at public performances
• Tracking of programme participant retention rates

Artistic excellence evaluations:

• Musical performance evaluations which consist of auditions that are adjudicated by the programme director and teaching artists
  – Students are evaluated on intonation, musicality and dynamics, rhythm and tempo, technical facility, and attendance and conduct
• In-classroom testing which measures musical knowledge, including music theory, music history, and ear training
• Programme commitment evaluation which consists of a point system that tracks students' behaviour, their class attendance, and their peer-teaching involvement

Social transformation evaluations:

• Students complete pre- and post-assessments, including the YouthARTS and Science Pre- and Post-Programme Skills Assessment
  – Programme administrators uses this skills assessment to rate participants on characteristics like adherence to a task, capacity to communicate with adults and peers, capacity for cooperation, active participation in activities, capacity for conflict resolution, and capacity to develop and sustain peer relationships. The pre- and post-tests are identical for ease of comparability of scores.
• The Children's Trust Out-of-School Programs Child Satisfaction Survey
  – This survey asked questions of a student's age and gender, and had them answer according to a 4-point Likert scale demarcated by smiley (and frowny) faces. Eight of the 10 questions used this scale; the other two questions were open-ended. The Likert-scale questions enquired as to whether the students felt safe, whether adults treated them fairly and made the programme exciting, and if being the programme assisted the students in doing better in school and staying active and healthy. The Likert-scale questions also enquired if the students got along with other kids, and if they enjoyed coming to the programme. The open-ended questions asked what students liked best about the programme, and what they might change about it.
• The FIU Center for Children and Families: they conduct ongoing observations, provide feedback, and planned studies
• A research project entitled 'Enhancing Resilience Among At-Risk Minority Youth Through Music Education: An Evaluation of ESMIA.'
• Student testimonials, surveys, and interviews.
**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.1.3 Early years personal, social and cognitive development; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.1.12 Academic attainment.

6.2.12 RENAISSANCE ARTS ACADEMY – CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA (RENAISSANCE ARTS ACADEMY, 2012; 2013A; 2013B)

**Context**
The Renaissance Arts Academy was started in the fall of 2003. The Co-Directors believe that arts achievement and academic excellence go hand in hand. The Renaissance Arts Academy is a distinguished charter school operating in a large renovated storefront. The school has 350 students in grades 6-12; all students are admitted by lottery and 95% of students enter the school with no prior arts or musical training.

The school provides high-level performing arts training for students at every level of development. Students participate in daily group music instruction as well as daily rehearsals in four orchestras, two choirs, 10 dance companies, and three percussion ensembles. Students can also participate in an after-school conservatory programme which operates five days a week and during the summer; all activities as well as enrollment in the school are offered tuition-free to students. Students choose an arts specialization area: either Music Performance: Orchestral Strings (violin, viola, cello, or bass) or Theater Arts: Dance (classical/contemporary).

The school’s structure is based on the educational philosophies of Paulo Freire, and it inherently encourages students to question so as to cultivate their capacities to reason critically. They are also assisted in developing their capacities to communicate through explicit, context-independent language. All students participate in an identical curricular model, and students are assigned to small instructional groups consisting of 10 to 12 students. Older students attend classes with younger students as the school utilizes a mixed-age academic group instructional model. The instructional groups are organized by student experience, learning style, social maturation, and independence. The school brings together an ethnically, culturally, and socio-economically diverse public school population that collaborates creatively in a small, alternative education setting.

The school’s philosophy is for students to achieve powerful literacy in all subjects, so all students participate in accelerated academics, mixed-age instructional groups, an integrated curriculum, and disciplined arts training. All students study math, science, history, English, and Latin every year. The arts curriculum includes a music or dance focus, music theory, sight singing, percussion, movement lab, and visual aesthetics every year for every student. Students have unrestricted use of school-purchased instruments and daily group lessons.

**Aims**
The school’s internal evaluation process focuses on four specific domains: technique, knowledge of repertoire, interpretation, and musicianship. The primary goal of all training is ensemble performance, and the school itself is engaged in evaluation about academic and arts-based coursework, as well as overall programme cohesiveness.

**Methods**
The Renaissance Arts Academy conducts an ongoing internal self-evaluation concerning their coursework/curricular offerings in both the arts and academics; they also administer self-evaluation in terms of the programme’s overall cohesiveness. The professional development measures utilized by the school involve faculty peer evaluation of the programme’s effectiveness at multiple levels. The levels at which the school’s programmes are analyzed include class performance, instructional group performance, and individual
student assessments. Faculty engage in peer evaluation of programme effectiveness. The school also strives to maintain rigorous teacher quality and effectiveness through the faculty and staff’s ongoing professional development efforts. The overarching focus of this internal evaluation process concentrates on how the school is achieving a mastery of academic and arts disciplines through its cohesive curricular design and implementation of consistent instructional strategies.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.1 Wellbeing; 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.1.14 School attendance; 4.1.15 Cultural consumption; 4.3.1 Community engagement; 4.5.3 Networking; 4.4 Pedagogy; 4.6 Quality of provision; 4.7 Musical progression; 4.8 Inclusivity; 5.1 Keeping children engaged in the programme; 5.3 Teacher development; 5.4 Partnership working; 6.6 Assessment and evaluation.

### 6.2.12 SAN DIEGO YOUTH SYMPHONY COMMUNITY OPUS PROJECT: SIMPHONY: STUDYING THE INFLUENCE MUSIC PRACTICE HAS ON NEURODEVELOPMENT IN YOUTH (IVERSEN, 2012)

#### Context
In October of 2010, the San Diego Youth Symphony and Conservatory launched the Community Opus Project, as a way of realizing its goal of ‘Making Music Education Affordable and Accessible for All Students.’ To this end, it partnered with the Chula Vista Elementary School District and Chula Vista Community Collaborative to provide free after-school, on-school-site string instrument instruction for 6 third grade students three times a week; the programme was offered at two schools that had a majority of students (70%) qualify for free or reduced lunch. The pilot year resulted in an expansion of the programme to six more schools, so that more than 200 students could participate; the school district also contributed $40,000 to contribute to the costs of this expansion.

During its second year of operation, the programme also began to include woodwind and brass instruction. The programme was asked to design an in-school music component and it also offered a pilot programme in kindergarten music at an additional school site. At the conclusion of this year, the District began contributing $45,000 to the after-school music programs for the following year; it also launched plans for reintroducing music into the school day curriculum. All third graders at the six programme schools would begin receiving this education halfway through the 2012-2013 academic year (the programme’s third year). Regular music instruction had been cut during the prior decade, and no full-time music teachers remained.

The third year of operation witnessed the reintroduction of music in the school day curriculum, and the District funded the costs of the teachers. Five hundred third graders began receiving music for 90 minutes each week during the spring semester of 2013. The District then announced a commitment to return music to the school day at all schools, by using full-time music teachers, over a 10-15 year period.

#### Aims
The SIMPHONY project is designed to assess on a long-term basis whether children who receive intensive musical training experience distinctive neural and cognitive development from children who receive no training, or who receive intensive training in martial arts. The main aim of this evaluation is to understand how musical training affects children’s brains and the development of general cognitive skills (e.g., language and attention).

#### Methods
The SIMPHONY project consists of a multi-year study (likely around 5 years) in which a targeted treatment group of 30 music learners and 30 control non-music learners will be studied. An additional control group
of students who engage in intensive martial arts study will also be included in the study. As of September of 2012, 14 music learners and 47 control non-music learners have been included in the study. The primary research question driving the study is: does musical education accelerate neural and cognitive developmental trajectories? The study will involve participants between ages five and 10 who were drawn from low socio-economic schools in the San Diego area; the music group participants are participants of the San Diego Youth Symphony’s Community Opus programme.

The participants will all undergo a battery of tests in areas including behaviour, cognitive development, language, working memory, attention, cognitive control, and music cognition (the latter of which will be measured by tests developed by the principal investigator). Structural MRI imaging will be used in the study, as will a test of auditory brain function.

The hypotheses tested will be focused on uncovering potential linkages between the individual development of brain structure and function, and behavioral patterns and cognitive development. The study proposes to explore in great depth the importance that music can have on development, how experience in intensive music training can impact brain and cognitive development, and how the presence of programmes like the Community Opus project in underserved schools can impact its students and participants.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.3 Early years personal, social and cognitive development; 4.1.4 Personal development.


**Context**
As above, for Iversen, 2012

**Aims**
The surveys addressed the objectives of obtaining greater information about parent and student practices and satisfaction with the programme, and also investigated the possible impact of the students’ participation on some other dimensions of their school experiences (including their behavioural patterns, academic achievement, and attitude towards school).

**Methods**
The evaluation involved multiple summative self-report surveys: these were offered to students (for self-evaluation), parents, and teachers. There was also a survey for parents of participants of the pilot kindergarten programme.

**Student Survey**
The summative, self-report student survey involved five structured questions that asked the student to respond with ‘Yes’, ‘Sometimes’, or ‘No’ to questions like ‘I practised my instrument at home’ and ‘I felt comfortable in class.’ There were also three open-ended questions which asked students about their favorite parts of the programme, what they might change, and what they learned during the year.

**Parent Survey**
The summative, self-report parent survey also included both structured and open-ended questions. The survey focused on five primary areas of focus (performance, communication, teachers, programme, and
change in the child), with most of the categories being evaluated with one question (only the ‘performance’ section had more than one question). Each of the other four categories asked a structured question (e.g., how would you rate your teacher?) which indicated the parents should respond on a five-point scale (e.g., 1 = not satisfied; 5 = completely satisfied). The last category (performance) asked parents to rate the child’s performance, experiences in the programme, and the parent’s view of the events and concerts. The open-ended dimension of the questions involved asking for further comments.

**Teacher Survey**
The summative, self-report teacher survey asked students to rank each Community Opus student participant on a five-point scale in response to six questions that enquired about the student’s potential positive behavioral changes, potential positive homework performance, potential increased school attendance, potential increase in the student’s parents’ participation, and the potential positive increase in the student’s attitude. The survey then provided a space for teachers to add additional comments.

**Kindergarten Parent Survey**
The kindergarten parents’ survey asked a series of five questions, and enquired more about the family's background and the parents' preferences. The five questions asked if the parents listened to music at home, if anyone in the family played an instrument, if the family attended concerts together, how great a priority the parents considered music education to be, and the parents’ level of interest in participating in a class with the child. The parents also had the option of entering further comments for each question.

The surveys are administered annually. During the 2011-2012 academic year, 85 teacher surveys were completed (representing four schools) and 21 parent surveys.

**Key Findings:** See sections 4.1.3 Early years personal, social and cognitive development; 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.1.12 Academic attainment; 4.1.14 School attendance.

**6.2.15 TUNE UP PHILLY (DUCKWORTH AND QUINN, 2009; DUCKWORTH, 2013)**

**Context**
Tune Up Philly was inaugurated in 2010, and is a programme associated with the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra. The programme advocates for music's capacity to serve as a transformational experience and skill that can allow underprivileged children to achieve success as well as acquire important skills and capacities like cooperative learning and teamwork. The programme also strives to instill in its participants the importance of striving for academic success and increased self-esteem.

The programme offers sessions for five days a week, and it serves children in the first through eighth grades. Students can participate in string, woodwind, percussion, and choral training. The programme conducts three concerts a year, and also gives students access to various field trips and other enrichment opportunities. Older students mentor others in their communities via musical collaborations.

**Aims**
The evaluation was designed to measure the intensity of a student’s ‘grittiness’ on a point scale.

**Methods**
The survey consists of eight statements that students provide a self-report response to. The students
indicate on a five point indicator response scale how much the statement resembles them. The statements cover characteristics like focus, perseverance, work ethic, and discipline.

The scale was developed from previous work published by Duckworth concerning the construct of 'grit', which could also be related to perseverance and passion for achieving long-term goals.

Key Findings: See section 4.1.4 Personal development

6.2.16 VALLEY VIBES ORCHESTRA (CASE, 2013)

Context
Valley Vibes Orchestra was founded in early 2013, as a programme which help youth develop by giving them access to music instruction, providing them with skills they cultivate as individuals and within a group, and by exposing them to a learning context in which people share a common goal of pursuing artistic, community, and individual excellence.

The programme currently serves 28 students, and its overarching objectives include expansion to serve children from the time they are very young, to their graduation from high school. The programme takes place at El Verano Elementary School in El Verano, California where it meets five times weekly and offers string instruction.

Aims
The teacher questionnaire was designed to record the potential impact that programme participation had on students.

Methods
The survey utilized around 30 structured response questions that consisted of 'Yes', 'No', or 'Not Applicable' responses. Teachers were asked if students in the programme displayed increased or improved characteristics like empathy, confidence, emotional regulation, and similar types of behaviours. The survey asked if the students' academic achievement and/or test scores had improved (and enquired specifically which subjects might have improved). The survey also included several general open-ended questions which enquired about the reasons behind the teacher's responses to the structured questions, and asked about the student's strengths and characteristics in general, as well as providing teachers with the opportunity to record their impressions of the programme in general.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.1.12 Academic attainment.


Context
The Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA) programme emerged from the collaborative efforts of a network of public and private stakeholders all committed towards providing underserved children with quality instrumental music education. The invested stakeholders include the city and county of Los Angeles, various universities, the Los Angeles United School District (as well as other school districts in Los Angeles County), community music schools, non-profit music organizations, individual music educators, and after-school
programmes as well as fund providers.

YOLA operates two El Sistema-inspired sites in Los Angeles: YOLA at Expo in south Los Angeles (with around 300 student participants between the ages of 7 and 18) and YOLA at HOLA in the Rampart District (with around 250 student participants between the ages of 5 and 15). Students at both sites receive after-school orchestral instruction five days per week, and the curriculum includes classes on music creativity, singing, solfège, and ensemble rehearsals in addition to an hour of academic tutoring each day.

In addition to these opportunities, parents of YOLA participants can take part in parent ensembles, and the programmes perform numerous concerts, including a joint performance of over 1000 students from the YOLA programme playing with other students from partner schools.

**Aims**

Overall, YOLA conducts a number of evaluations. The various dimensions that YOLA evaluates are as follows:

- Community impact
  - Local community impact
  - Music education community impact
- Student impact
- Family impact
- Instructional quality impact
- Institutional learning impact

**Methods**

*Community Impact*
The local community impact of YOLA is evaluated through a tabulation of attendance numbers at performances, the amount of participation of local community leaders, and through the distribution of community awareness surveys.

The music education community impact of YOLA is evaluated by analyzing participation in YOLA/Take A Stand Professional Development workshops and symposia, the number and type of enquiries into YOLA programming, and by collecting data which outlines information about visitors to YOLA programming.

*Student impact*
Student impact is measured by investigating students’ musical knowledge and social well-being. Instruments used include self-reports, written music exercises, and teacher reports.

*Family impact*
Family impact is measured through parent surveys and focus groups.

*Instructional quality impact*
Instructional quality is measured through periodic classroom observations.
Institutional learning impact
Institutional learning impact is measured using a Co-Arts Assessment protocol based on the Co-Arts Assessment Wheel developed by researchers at Harvard University’s Project Zero. Specific qualitative and quantitative approaches include site observations, focus groups, interviews, surveys, and student assessments. Participants submit their report cards, so academic grades of participants are used as an external measure of academic growth and achievement. Student practice logs are also a key tool used to measure student musical development. Students’ performance capacities are also assessed using individual jury scores and youth orchestra performance rating protocols. In addition students’ behavioural patterns are rated, mostly through observations. Surveys are administered amongst student, parent, and community leaders. Parents participate in focus groups, and programme site data is collected through visits. The evaluation structure utilizes both summative and formative data, which inform the programme design and implementation.

Key Findings: See sections 4.1.4 Personal development; 4.1.6 Raised aspirations; 4.1.9 Social skills and relationships; 4.2 Family involvement; 4.3.1 Community engagement; 4.4 Pedagogy; 4.6 Quality of provision; 4.7 Musical progression; 4.8 Inclusivity; 4.9 Culturally and contextually-specific features of the programmes; 5.1 Keeping children engaged in the programme; 5.3 Teacher development; 5.4 Partnership working; 5.5 Sustaining family and community engagement;

6.2.18 THE YOURS PROGRAMME IN THE PEOPLE’S MUSIC SCHOOL (THE PEOPLE’S MUSIC SCHOOL YOUTH ORCHESTRAS - EL SISTEMA CHICAGO, 2012-2013)

Context
The People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago was founded in 2008, although the People’s Music school had been in existence since 1976. At the school, almost 1000 students receive free music education, including private lessons, theory instruction, and chamber ensembles. El Sistema Chicago was designed to help empower youth at Hibbard Elementary School in the Albany Park area of Chicago, Illinois. Through the establishment and maintenance of the programme, the hope was that families would become more connected, and that the whole community could become uplifted. Since the programme’s opening, a second site at Logan Square has also been launched. The project wishes to serve students ages five through to secondary school.

The primary focus of the People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago is community, especially as it is created through ensembles, including orchestra, string orchestras, bands, percussion ensembles, bucket bands, choir, and chamber music groups. The emphasis is on joy and creating this sensation as a result of hard work and accomplishment.

Aims
The aims of the evaluation and assessment are to record musical development in students, students’ progress in music theory, students’ musical preferences, a student self-report of social behaviour, and students’ self-reports of their own self-regulation capacities and skills. In addition, teachers receive feedback from classroom observation evaluations, which are conducted with the use of a performance rubric. The majority of student assessments are also conducted using performance rubrics, which are also described below.

Methods
The People’s Music School Youth Orchestras - El Sistema Chicago evaluation instruments:
**Student Evaluation**

A social behavioural assessment was administered to students in the project. The students were asked about their musical style preferences, with responses that resembled a Likert scale but which used smiley and frowny faces as indicators. Two open ended questions asked students about their career aspirations and how they spent their free time. Other structured questions enquired how many of the student’s friends played in orchestra, and also, how students spent their time doing homework, chores, playing video games, practising, doing nothing, watching television, or talking/texting with friends. Students responded to the questions concerning amount of time spent in these activities using a three point indicator scale.

Students were also assessed on curriculum content via multiple measures, including conventional mid-term tests, summative aural tests, performance evaluations, quizzes, and instructor assessment. The content areas included melody and harmony, ear training and sight singing, rhythm, and music appreciation (or history, literature, observation, ethnomusicology, and listening skills).

In addition, students completed a self-report survey which asked them about their responses in repertory class (where they are asked to provide constructive criticism to their classmates’ performances). The five open-ended questions enquired about students’ wish to respond to comments, students’ analysis of other students’ comments, students’ capacity to connect class comments with previous observations and experiences, students’ capacity to connect class comments with their own self-evaluative abilities, and students’ capacity to shift their own behaviours and playing in response to class comments. The overall focus of this survey seemed to measure students’ self-regulation and executive function capacities through a qualitative instrument.

The project a further student survey consisting of 17 statements concerned with motivation. Students were asked to respond, using a four-point indicator scale. The survey was structured so that the students’ responses would reveal which of the four types of motivation included as part of self-regulation theory was serving as the students’ main motivation.

Students were also given a survey that recorded student attitudes towards school, their instrument and their teachers (private music teacher, theory teacher), comprising eight open-ended questions as well as structured questions with five-point indicator scales using a smiley face/frowny face choices.

Student music attitude assessments consisted of 10 questions that focused on attitudes towards classical music, their musical genre preferences (e.g., Latin and salsa, rap, pop, country, classical, and R&B and hip-hop). They were also asked about their musical playing experience prior to joining their orchestra and their enjoyment of playing and learning about music. The assessment also asked them to identify instruments and classical composers, and if their family preferred classical music.

Finally, students were assessed on their theoretical musical knowledge (e.g. symbols, note names, time signatures) and musical development using a six-point scale, with 1 representing no musical development, and 6 representing exceptional musical development.

**Teacher Evaluation**

School teachers were asked to complete a student participation questionnaire. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale that focused on student behaviour, including actions like paying attention, completing homework, interacting well with others, concentration tendencies, attitudinal tendencies, dedication, initiative, resourcefulness, and interest in school and related activities. The survey consisted of
29 such questions, as well as two questions covering general academic performance and special education enrollment status.

Teachers were evaluated via classroom observation, according to the precepts delineated on a performance rubric. Teachers were ranked on a four-point indicator performance scale (ranging from ‘does not meet expectations’ to ‘exceeds expectations’) that focused on the demonstrated quality of their content knowledge, preparation, instructional delivery, classroom management, and knowledge/appreciation of student development and diversity.

SUMMARY OF STUDIES INCLUDED IN THE REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

In this Appendix we provided an overview of the programmes which have been the context for research and evaluation included in this review. In total, we reviewed 277 programmes representing 58 countries. Of those, we found 69 research and evaluation papers, representing 44 Sistema or Sistema-inspired programmes in 19 countries.

We then set out specific details of each of the studies, including contextual information, aims and methods adopted. Amongst the research designs there were:

- Cross-sectional surveys;
- Longitudinal designs with pre and post measures;
- Quasi-experimental designs;
- Case study designs;
- Ethnographies.

Research methods included:

- In-depth interviews with children, parents, teachers, leaders, stakeholders;
- Non-participant and participant observations;
- Document analysis;
- Children’s drawings;
- Sentence completion tasks;
- Rating scales;
- Value-for-money calculations;
- Qualitative and quantitative surveys.

Overall, many of the studies have been relatively small-scale and many have relied on qualitative methods, focusing on a small number of case study sites. Sample sizes ranged from just two to nearly 2000, with most studies comprising samples of between 50 and 300. This is understandable, as there has been little funded research concerned with Sistema-inspired programmes and many studies cited here represent self-funded student dissertations or theses. Research questions have addressed a range of issues, including questions relating to best practice, organizational principles, leadership, community engagement as well as outcomes relating to individuals and families. A wide range of measures have been used in addressing these questions, including qualitative interview schedules as well as validated and non-validated quantitative measures.