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Designing meaningful learning in music higher education through the integration of socio-political perspectives

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ABSTRACT

Integrating ideological and political education (IPE) into higher education curricula represents a major transformation in China's moral and character education agenda. This study aims to: (1) examine students' learning needs and expectations regarding the integration of IPE into music professional courses at Tongren College; (2) explore teachers' and students' perceptions of this pedagogical integration; and (3) develop and evaluate a pedagogical model that fosters meaningful learning through IPE in music education. The research was conducted in three stages. First, a survey was administered to identify students' expectations toward IPE integration. Second, thematic interviews with educators and students were conducted to obtain more profound qualitative insights. A pedagogical model was created, implemented, and refined through a Design-Based Research (DBR) methodology grounded in educational theory and empirical evidence. The final model consists of seven stages: Pre-Activities, Introduction, Simulation Execution, Critical Discussion, Creative Project-Based Scenarios, Reflection and Assessment, and Post-Activities. The findings demonstrate that this methodology successfully incorporates ideological perspectives into music education, thereby facilitating significant learning outcomes. The integration of artistic practice with socio-political contemplation among students is enhanced through simulation-based exercises, critical discourse, and innovative initiatives. The study indicates that incorporating IPE into music education improves students' social awareness, analytical skills, and character growth, alongside their instrumental abilities.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes by developing and empirically validating a DBR pedagogical model for integrating Ideological and Political Education into higher music education, a relatively underexplored area. It proposes a refined seven-stage model grounded in meaningful learning theory, extending prior research that has largely focused on social sciences and engineering contexts.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, higher education has entered a new phase emphasizing the integration of socialist ideological values into the entire learning process. In this context, curriculum IPE has emerged as a fundamental component, seeking to instill political, moral, and national values across all courses, including vocational and practical subjects (Begum, Liu, Qayum, & Mamdouh, 2022; Ginsburg & Lindsay, 2013; Liu

& He, 2022; Osborne, 2005). This policy is underpinned by strategic documents like the Guidelines for Ideological and Political Construction in College Curricula, which advocate a transition in education's role from solely academic instruction to a means of character development and ideological consciousness among the youth (Liu, Xiantong, & Starkey, 2023). Nonetheless, the application of CIPE has predominantly concentrated on social sciences, economics, and engineering, whereas the arts discipline, particularly music education, has not been systematically considered within the framework of ideological pedagogy (Delis, Hasan, & Iosifidi, 2019; Gao, 2023; Guo, 2025; Li, Li, & Cao, 2019; Liu et al., 2023; Sun & Wang, 2020; Zhao, 2024).

Music education has unique characteristics as a space for aesthetic expression and cultural articulation, strongly influenced by social context, emotions, and collective identity. With its strong symbolic and affective power, music has the potential to be an effective medium for conveying ideological messages implicitly and reflectively (Davis, 2005; Hesmondhalgh, 2014). However, in practice, efforts to integrate IPE values into higher music education often encounter challenges due to the lack of contextual pedagogical models and resistance from students who consider that an ideological approach can interfere with the authenticity of the musical experience (Georgii-Hemming & Westvall, 2010). Therefore, a deep understanding of students' learning needs and expectations about music learning loaded with ideological values is needed, as well as how teachers and institutions pedagogically respond to this integration.

Before designing an effective pedagogical model, it is important to empirically explore how students understand music learning integrated with ideological values and their expectations of an ideal teaching approach. On the other hand, lecturers' opinions and roles in implementing IPE cannot be ignored because the success of value integration is highly dependent on their understanding, readiness, and pedagogical awareness. A model design approach that ignores the dimensions of learners' needs and teachers' perceptions risks producing learning instruments that are not functional in practice or authentic in terms of learning experiences. Therefore, exploring these two aspects is a crucial step that will provide a conceptual and contextual foundation for designing an integrative model that can be implemented effectively in music classes. Furthermore, in a multicultural and non-metropolitan context such as Southwest China, including Tongren College as the case study location, ideological education must bridge the gap between national policy mandates and local socio-cultural realities (Senghor, Partelow, Herrera, & Osemwegie, 2023). Therefore, this study is directed to answer three main questions:

1. What are the students' learning needs and expectations regarding the pedagogical model of incorporating ideological and political education (IPE) within music professional courses at Tongren College?
2. How do teachers and students view the pedagogical model of incorporating ideological and political education (IPE) within music professional courses at Tongren College?
3. How does designing a pedagogical model that incorporates ideological and political education (IPE) within music professional courses at Tongren College foster meaningful learning?

With an empirical and context-based approach, this study aims to design a pedagogical model of IPE in music education that aligns with national policies and responds to the characteristics of institutions, students, and local cultural diversity.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Ideological and Political Education (IPE) in Higher Education in China

Ideological and Political Education (IPE) has become a primary focus in China's higher education system, aiming to develop students who are not only academically excellent but also possess ideological awareness aligned with socialism with Chinese characteristics (Shek, Peng, & Zhou, 2022). The government, through policies such as the Opinions on Strengthening and Improving Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities under the New Situation (Gao, 2017), encourages integrating ideological values into all courses via the curriculum IPE approach. However, the implementation of CIPE has mainly concentrated on the exact sciences, engineering, and

social sciences, while arts and humanities, especially music education, have not been systematically addressed (He, 2021; Lu, 2021; Su, 2006; Wang & Yang, 2021). Implementation barriers also arise because art students often perceive the IPE approach as too normative and limiting creative expression (Chen & Zhang, 2024; Chen & Wang, 2023; Shao & Yu, 2026), indicating the need for a more contextual and sensitive pedagogical approach tailored to the characteristics of the art discipline.

Furthermore, the pedagogical approach in IPE has tended to be top-down, oriented towards a one-way transfer of values that does not align with the dialogic and participatory principles required in arts education (Cho, 2010; Henry, Lingard, Rizvi, & Taylor, 2013). This condition impacts students' low critical involvement and limited space for reflection on values in their artistic practice. Alternative pedagogical approaches, such as social constructivism and experiential learning, have been shown to encourage a more reflective, contextual, and participatory understanding of values (Brookfield, 2017). This pedagogical approach becomes increasingly important in music, where meaning is formed through aesthetic interpretation and emotional interaction (He et al., 2024; Tan, Anyanwu, Liu, & Suryanti, 2025). However, few studies have specifically explored how ideological values can be meaningfully integrated into the music classroom through learning models tailored to students' needs and dynamics.

In addition, empirical studies on the effectiveness of IPE in music education, especially in regions with complex cultural characteristics such as Southwest China, are still minimal. This region has diverse ethnicities, languages, and cultural values that influence how students interpret ideological content in learning (Wanxue & Hanwei, 2004). This complexity requires a deeper understanding of students' learning needs and their perceptions of the IPE approach in music classes. Before designing a relevant pedagogical model, it is important to critically explore the perceptions and expectations of key stakeholders, students, and teachers toward integrating IPE in the context of music education. This study aims to fill this gap by providing empirical data from local institutions and developing a context-based, evidence-based pedagogical model that is more applicable and adaptive to the needs of higher arts education amid the current era of ideological transformation.

2.2. Integration of Ideological Values in Music Education

Music has transformative potential as a medium for forming cultural identity, moral values, and collective consciousness, making it a strategic vehicle for conveying ideological messages aesthetically and effectively (Liu & He, 2022). In higher education, especially in China, this potential has not been optimally utilized because there is no systematic pedagogical framework for integrating political and ideological values into music learning. Onsrud and Kvinge's (2023) study found that most music lecturers still struggle to link musical content with ideological values in an organic and non-instructive manner. Local initiatives, such as inserting patriotism themes in traditional Chinese music studies, are still sporadic and lack consistent curriculum design or evaluation guidelines (Zhang & Ma, 2023). Especially in a region like Southwest China, where ethnic diversity and cultural values influence classroom dynamics, a learning model that is not only ideological but also inclusive and contextual is needed (Wanxue & Hanwei, 2004).

Several contemporary theoretical approaches, such as critical pedagogy (West, 2023) and culturally responsive teaching (Salvador & Culp, 2022), have strong potential to serve as foundations for designing music learning that integrates ideological values without losing artistic meaning. Both approaches promote dialogue, critical reflection, and the empowerment of students as active participants in the learning process. In the context of IPE, this enables students to passively receive values and construct them through musical experiences relevant to their identities and social environments. Unfortunately, applying these approaches in Chinese higher education remains limited due to a lack of local adaptation and institutional pressures favoring normative methods. This situation underscores the need for pedagogical design based on progressive theory and informed by empirical data from complex local contexts.

Moreover, another challenge that has not been widely discussed in the literature is the absence of evaluation instruments that can measure the effectiveness of IPE integration in music learning. Most current evaluation systems only focus on cognitive aspects or compliance with curriculum content without considering the affective, reflective,

and performative dimensions that are very important in arts education (Huang, Liu, & Rutten, 2026). Music learning as an aesthetic experience should activate students' emotional involvement and encourage conscious internalization of values. Therefore, developing the pedagogical model in this study also includes a holistic evaluation framework that combines cognitive, affective, and socio-cultural aspects. This model is expected to bridge national policies and local practices while facilitating meaningful and relevant learning for music students in China.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This research comprises three sub-studies (refer to Table 1), each leading to the development of a pedagogical model for IPE in music education. This chapter thoroughly describes the research design, including design-based research, participants, research settings, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques.

Table 1. Summary of research design.

Research Questions	Research methods, data collection methods, and research data	Data analysis methods
RQ1. What are the students' learning needs and expectations regarding the pedagogical model of incorporating ideological and political education (IPE) within music professional courses at Tongren College?	Completed questionnaire by students (n=115)	Quantitative analysis with SPSS 32.0 software: reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha), Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, means, and standard deviation. Qualitative examination of open-ended survey responses
RQ2. How do teachers and students view the pedagogical model of incorporating ideological and political education (IPE) within music professional courses at Tongren College?	Thematic interview with teacher (n=9) and students (n=15)	Qualitative content analysis
RQ3. How does designing a pedagogical model incorporating ideological and political education (IPE) within music professional courses at Tongren College foster meaningful learning?	Design-based research (DBR)	Qualitative content analysis

3.2. Design-based Research Approach

The current study employed the design-based research (DBR) methodology adopted by Reimann (2010). DBR enhances educational practices and develops pedagogical frameworks (Fowler & Leonard, 2024). Consequently, the author deemed it a suitable approach for understanding the instructional dynamics of integrating IPE into music education and formulating the pedagogical model applicable to these contexts. DBR encompasses several data collection and analysis techniques that improve the study's quality. It aligns with socio-cultural theory since it emphasizes collecting data from individuals within complex social contexts where interaction and learning occur.

This study employed the DBR approach as a strategy; nevertheless, its implementation was limited due to the absence of valuable co-design activities and the real refinement of educational practices. Reimann (2010) characterizes Design-Based Research (DBR) as a collection of approaches rather than a rigid methodology. The initial two sub-studies (I and II) sought to acquire insights for formulating the pedagogical model. At the same time, Sub-study III involved the preliminary design, followed by an evaluation of the model grounded in the principles of meaningful learning.

The principal aim of the DBR technique is to improve instructional theory, classroom pedagogy, and the instructional design process (Crompton & Sykora, 2021; McKenney & Reeves, 2025). The DBR approach investigates subjects within authentic contexts via collaboration among scholars, educators, learners, and other actors. The researcher transitions from a passive observer to an active designer, involving others as collaborators in the design

process. The DBR procedure typically encompasses the iterative phases of development, execution, analysis, and modification (McKenney & Reeves, 2025).

The DBR approach commenced with constructing the instructional model informed by prior studies (Sub-studies I and II) and instructional theories. The recruitment and data collection period for this study was conducted from 01/12/2024 to 30/03/2025, during which qualitative and quantitative data were gathered. The model was subsequently implemented and evaluated at Tongren College within this period. Rather than constructing sessions at the outset of the DBR process, the author gathered qualitative and quantitative data and developed the model based on these study findings and learning theories. The model was critically evaluated alongside two music instructors, two IPE experts, and two developmental model specialists. The model underwent validation in this session. This furnished essential insights for the formulation of the pedagogical model.

3.3. Participants

This part offers a concise overview of the research and its participants (Table 2).

Table 2. Participants.

Study	Participants
Questionnaire study of students (Sub-study I)	Students (n=115)
Interview study with teacher and learners (Sub-study II)	Teacher (n=9) and Students (n=15)
Design-Based Research (DBR) (Sub-study III)	Teacher (n = 4) and learners (n = 25)

To ascertain the present phase of pedagogical practice, the author employed questionnaires to investigate students' expectations (n = 115, 92 females and 23 males) for the pedagogical model that integrates ideological and political education (IPE) into music professional courses. This study aims to understand and incorporate students' expectations into the design process. The participants were first-year students from Tongren College. Data collection occurred in August 2024. The participants had a mean age of 20, ranging from 19 to 23. The students possessed minimal or negligible prior experience with ideological and political education. The rationale for their selection was to mitigate the likelihood that their experiences might influence their expectations.

The second sub-study involved thematic interviews with nine music lecturers from Tongren College, conducted in September 2024. The study examined teachers' perceptions and methodologies regarding the integration of IPE into music instruction (Sub-study II). Their average employment experience was 18 years. Teaching experience ranged from interim positions to 16 years, mostly between one and three years. The educators received pedagogical training and completed brief courses on the pedagogical application of ideological and political education (IPE).

Informed by the findings of these two investigations and relevant learning theories, the initial pedagogical model was conceptualized and assessed at Tongren College in October 2024. The educational methodology and the course were assessed through data collection and analysis over four weeks. The participants comprised 25 second-year students (17 females, eight males) and four teachers (3 females, one male), all specializing in music education.

3.4. Data Collection and Analysis

This study aims to comprehend the ideological and political education (IPE) in music courses and develop an instructional framework for using these settings in an educationally suitable manner. The investigations have yielded a substantial volume of data, characteristic of design-based research, encompassing learner and instructor surveys and theme interviews. The study's data is predominantly qualitative, although some quantitative information has also been gathered. To address the established research issues, the author has gathered data from the viewpoints of both teachers and pupils. The primary data indicate that the author acquired them independently (Sub-studies I and II) or collaboratively with collaborators (Sub-studies III). Table 3 presents an overview of data collection and analysis methodologies employed in these sub-studies.

Table 3. Data collection and analysis method.

Study	Subjects	Research situation	Data Collection	Sources	Data Analysis Methods
Sub-Study I	Students (n=115)	Learners completed surveys.	Questionnaires completed by students	Questionnaires	The reliability evaluation (Cronbach's alpha), Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, statistical description, and qualitative study of open-ended responses
Sub-study II	Teacher (n=9) and Students (n=15)	Each educator was questioned separately.	The Author recorded thematic interviews with the teacher.	Transcripts of personal interviews	Qualitative content analysis method
Sub-Study III	Teacher (n = 4, one teacher as a model, and others as an observer) and students (n = 25)	Learners engaged in scenarios pertinent to the lesson's subject while their educators were the teachers of the classes.	Data were gathered through one instruction-based class.	Transcriptions of individual interviews, group interviews, field notes, and open-ended survey responses.	Qualitative content analysis method

4. RESULTS

4.1. Sub-Study I: Students' Expectations of the Learning Process in Music Courses with Integrating Ideological and Political Education (IPE)

Sub-Study 1 aims to answer the first research question: What are the students' learning aims and expectations regarding the PED? How is ideological and political education (IPE) incorporated into music professional courses at Tongren College?

This sub-study represents the first step in designing the etiquette of integrating IPE into music education. Here, the author reports on students' expectations of the learning process in integrating IPE into music education. By better understanding these expectations, we can design the educational environment to better meet students' needs and expectations. The following research questions were set at the beginning of the study: What are the students' learning needs and expectations regarding the pedagogical model of incorporating ideological and political education (IPE) within music professional courses at Tongren College?

The author gathered empirical data from Tongren College between June and October through a survey, in which 115 first-year music students engaged. Data analysis identified nine factors reflecting students' expectations.

1. Personal, social development, and academic self-perceptions.
2. Student international mobility.
3. Political engagement and citizenship.
4. Social pressure.
5. Social interaction.
6. Training for employment.
7. Students' perception of teaching.
8. Students' perceptions of teachers.
9. Students' perceptions of the atmosphere.

Inspirational and personalized instruction reflects students' expectations of integrating interprofessional education into the music course. Students typically anticipated that instruction would enhance their abilities, provide stimulation, and consider their needs. Anticipations regarding academic pursuits were also elevated.

Personalized and competency-based learning suggests that learners anticipate utilizing their past knowledge, establishing their academic goals, and becoming acquainted with the equipment necessary for their future careers. Learners anticipated transferability from studying, as the variable Transferable learning outcome shows. Analysis of the individual items indicated that learners predominantly anticipated acquiring practical knowledge and that such learning would enhance their comprehension. Upon completing the class, students anticipated proficiency in utilizing the equipment and possessing advanced skills. Students' expectations for the teacher were elevated: 33% anticipated considerable support, whereas 26.8% expected substantial assistance from their lecturers. The students anticipated that the teacher would demonstrate competence, be thoroughly prepared for instruction, and provide clear examples. Consequently, the author designated the variable as the total, skilled and adequately equipped teachers.

This research additionally assessed learners' expectations for their educational self-perception and environment. The author designated the sum variable that quantified students' intellectual self-perception. Students exhibited confidence and competence, as they were remarkably assured of their ability to handle various activities and complete the course. Students anticipated a friendly and welcoming atmosphere in the integrated IPE music course, expecting assistance from those who felt uncertain. The author subsequently designated the variable as the sum: laid-back and cozy ambiance. The students appeared to have elevated expectations regarding integrating interprofessional education into the music course activities. In all instances, more than half of the students anticipated a significant amount from the learning process in incorporating IPE into the music course. Students' biggest aspirations predominantly pertained to learning and educators.

This research involved 115 first-year music learners in college. The questionnaires were administered by learners with limited experience integrating IPE into music courses. The objective was to ensure that learners' experiences would not influence their expectations. The data were examined through factor analysis and reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha). The Cronbach's alpha for the study's subscales ranged from 0.825 to 0.897, indicating acceptable internal consistency and the suitability of the variables for describing students' expectations. Nonetheless, the disproportionate distribution of females was the reason for refraining from exploring disparities in expectancies between them.

4.2. Sub-Study II: Examining Educators' and Learners' Perspectives on the Integration of IPE in Music Instruction and Learning

Sub-Study II answers the second research question: How do teachers and students view the pedagogical model of incorporating ideological and second research questions in music professional courses at Tongren College?

Sub-study II aimed to investigate teachers' (n=9) and students' (n=15) conceptions of teaching and learning. The research question was: How do music teachers and student teachers integrate students' music teaching and learning? Data were gathered from Tongren and multiple teachers, including individual and group interviews.

Following the qualitative analysis, three distinct theory-driven areas of perceptions related to teaching and learning were established, along with two classifications outlining the integration of IPE in music education. The classifications of teaching concepts are: 1) Teaching as the transmission of knowledge and skills to students, 2) Teaching as the enhancement of students' skills and understanding, and 3) Teaching as a support mechanism for learners' learning processes. The primary focus in the first category was on educators and the knowledge they sought to convey to students. Students in this field were regarded as relatively compliant. The teacher engaged with pupils to improve their understanding of the material through modeling and explanation.

Nevertheless, the teacher remained the primary figure guiding the learning process and determining the curriculum content. In the third category, teaching was viewed as promoting student learning. The focus was on learners and their learning, while instructors were primarily considered resources to benefit learners.

Examination of the assertions on incorporating IPE in music instruction unveiled two overarching classifications of teaching perceptions: 1) instruction in an IPE context as the transmission of information and skills, and 2) instruction in an IPE context as the support of students' learning. In the initial category, the instructor was responsible for guiding the learning process and demonstrating the appropriate methods for skill practice. The instructor notably favored this group. In the teacher group, teaching was perceived to support students' learning and was more prevalent among the participants. In this category, the teacher is portrayed as a facilitator who generates learning opportunities and recedes into the background, allowing students the autonomy to apply their skills and knowledge while concluding with the assistance of other students and their instructor.

Through iterative data evaluation, the author identified three different types of views of learning: 1) learning as the acquisition and reproduction of expertise and abilities, 2) learning as the advancement and application of expertise and abilities, and 3) learning as a changing process. The primary emphasis of the initial category was on acquiring content through various study approaches. Upon completing their studies, students possess increased knowledge and the ability to execute specific tasks; however, they cannot often effectively apply this knowledge in practical contexts. The second category was the most prevalent. This category emphasized students and the enhancement of their competencies. Acquiring expertise and abilities served a distinct purpose, specifically in addressing complex musical challenges. A third, more uncommon category was identified. The process of instruction prioritized expertise and critical thinking. Learning in this context is an essential lifelong process, aligning with socio-constructivist learning theories.

4.3. Sub-Study III: Designing and Implementing of the Pedagogical Model of Integrating IPE in Music Courses

Substudy III answers the third research question: How does designing a pedagogical model that incorporates ideological and political education (IPE) within music professional courses at Tongren College foster meaningful learning?

At this stage, Sub-study III aims to address the educational research question: How has it been developed and implemented in music classroom learning? The researcher at Tongren College conducts observations using guidelines to examine how the pedagogical model of incorporating ideological and political education (IPE) within the Music Professional Course fosters meaningful learning.

In the first stage, the researcher ensured that the pedagogical model of incorporating ideological and political education (IPE) within music professionals was valid. Next, the model's effectiveness in fostering meaningful learning at each learning stage was examined. Effective pedagogical models are essential for optimizing simulation-based educational settings. The instructional model provided here is notable for several reasons: (1) it situates ideological and political education (IPE) within the learning framework, highlighting the complexities of learning and expertise development; (2) it incorporates the key phases of simulation-based learning, including preactivities, introduction, simulation execution, critical discussion, creative project-based scenarios, reflection and assessment, and postactivities; (3) it addresses both pre- and postactivities for teachers and students; (4) it integrates fourteen characteristics of meaningful learning, selected based on theoretical and empirical foundations; and (5) it builds upon the findings from previous research conducted in this study (Sub-studies I–II). Furthermore, we have developed the model with a particular context, specifically integrating IPE in music education. Figure 1 illustrates the pedagogical model.

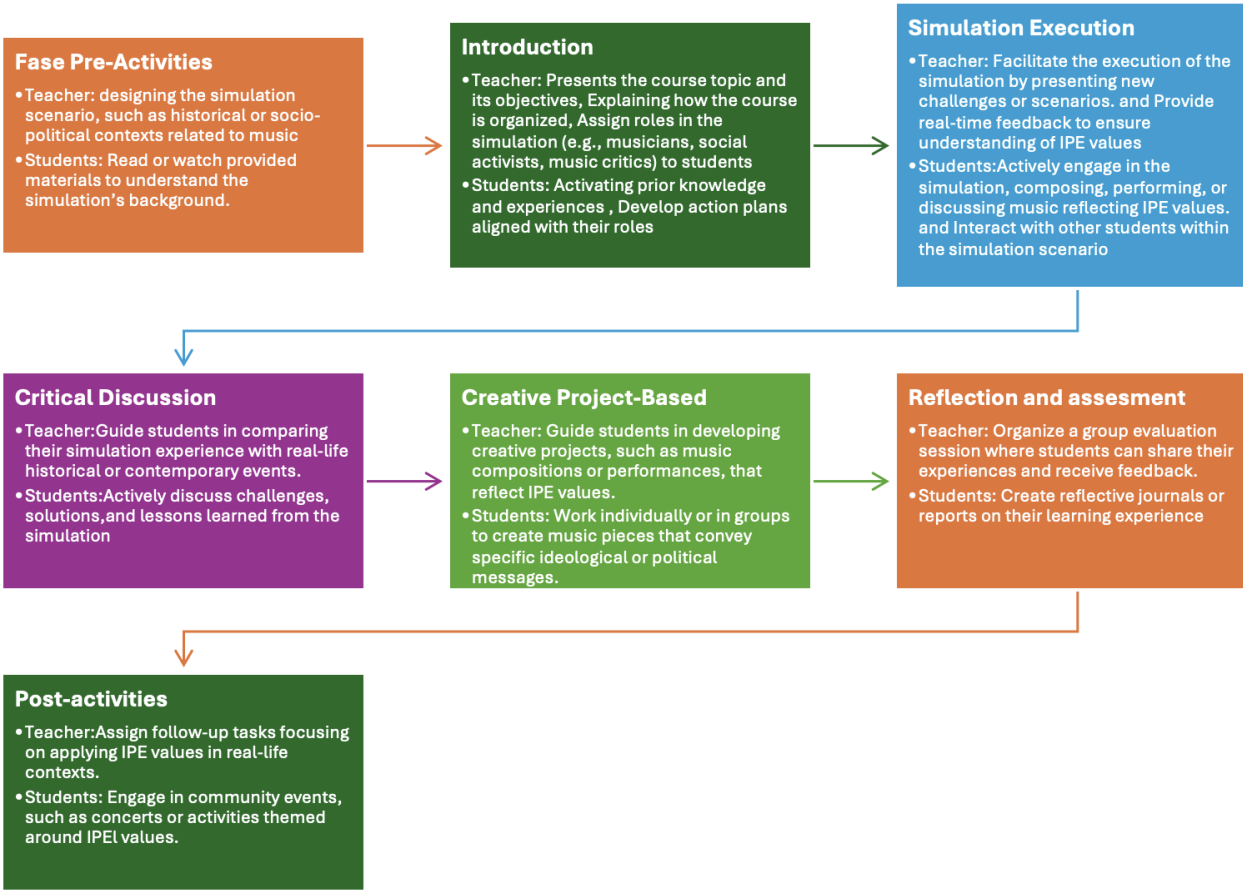

Figure 1. The pedagogical model for integrating IPE in music education.

The pedagogical model indicates the necessity of situating learning within a broader socio-cultural framework. Learning occurs within a context characterized by ongoing interactions between individual and social variables. This perspective allows for understanding the complexity inherent in learning and development and the transformation of instruments, practices, and organizations within this dynamic interplay.

Meaningful learning characteristics constitute the fundamental theoretical aspect of pedagogy and serve as optimal objectives for designing educational experiences. The fourteen characteristics outlined can assist educators in effectively integrating interprofessional education (IPE) into music courses, promoting meaningful instruction and highlighting considerations facilitators may overlook. Considering these theoretical perspectives, facilitators should approach facilitation and training procedures from a broader point of view to cultivate more innovative pedagogical practices.

The pedagogical designs delineate the learning process into distinct phases: pre-activities, introduction, simulation execution, critical discussion, creative project-based scenarios, reflection and assessment, and post-activities, as indicated by prior pedagogical frameworks. These phases assist educators in structuring learning events. The pedagogical model emphasizes the essential responsibilities of both teachers and students before and after the simulation activity. This section elaborates on the primary phases of the pedagogical model.

- Pre-activities: Marcos et al. (2015) categorize instructional activities into three phases: the pre-active phase, the interaction phase, and the post-interactive phase. This indicates that activities occur both before and after the actual instruction. In the pedagogical model (see Figure 1), the teacher's responsibilities during the pre-active phase encompass tasks such as designing the simulation scenario, which may involve historical or socio-political contexts pertinent to music. We recommend that the teacher consider the characteristics of meaningful learning during the planning, implementation, and evaluation of student activities. In the pre-

active phase, students engage in activities to familiarize themselves with the subject matter. These activities typically involve reading or viewing provided resources to comprehend the background of the modeling.

- Introduction: During the initial phase of the simulation-based instruction, the teacher introduces the course topic and its objectives. Designate roles for students, such as musicians, social activists, and music critics, within the simulation. Merrill, Barclay, and van Schaak (2008) assert that learning objectives are typically expressed as statements of abstract goals. To enhance orientation in the simulation-based learning process and assist learners in developing a mental representation of the desired behavior, it is advisable to demonstrate the capabilities they will acquire post-instruction. This may be achieved, for instance, through behavior modeling or by presenting a video pertinent to the learning objectives (Zhang, Zhou, Briggs, & Nunamaker Jr, 2006). The introductory phase must include explanations regarding the organization of the course, along with the pedagogical models and methods employed. The initial phase aims to engage students' prior knowledge and experiences, serving as a foundation for new learning under socio-constructivist and experiential learning principles. Activating prior knowledge is essential for formulating learning goals. When students lack the necessary knowledge and skills, the teacher must provide adequate knowledge. In the current study, students typically engaged in prior reading. Consequently, activating prior knowledge and skills is crucial in simulation-based learning environments. Activating prior knowledge can be achieved through various methods, including writing, posing questions, documenting inquiries related to the topic, engaging in discussions, sharing personal experiences, creating analogies, developing a concept map, and refining it subsequently, among other activities (Merrill et al., 2008). A range of methods and tools can be employed for this purpose. After the introductory phase, students are expected to have reflected on their prior knowledge and experiences and to be acquainted with 1) the topic, 2) the learning objectives, 3) simulation-based learning in general, and 4) pedagogical models and methods, along with the established ground rules, such as confidentiality issues.
- Simulation execution: In the second phase, participants commence their entry into the simulation. This stage involves the teacher facilitating the simulation's execution by introducing new challenges or scenarios and providing real-time feedback to guarantee comprehension of IPE values. Respondents should be aware of and critically assess the distinctions between the simulator and an actual environment, as not all aspects can be effectively simulated. This stage should include a demonstration and practical exercises (Dieckmann, Molin Friis, Lippert, & Østergaard, 2009). The educator may introduce the scenario by utilizing problems or actual scenarios that involve composing, performing, or discussing music in alignment with IPE values. This facilitates participants' engagement with the exercise and clarifies the rationale for training on this specific topic and methodology (Dieckmann, Sharara-Chami, & Ersdal, 2023). This additionally facilitates learning transfer. This phase must encompass the articulation of the simulation exercise's objectives, the delineation of participants' roles, and the establishment of rules governing the exercise. Regulations and decisions required of participants must be presented at a general level to preserve the element of surprise and enhance the simulation experience. Students must experience both challenge and motivation during rehearsals (Zhang & Laurillard, 2015). After this phase, students must understand the expectations placed upon them to facilitate their adaptation to roles and participation in the scenario. Students need to have acquired proficiency in using the system. In this stage, learners are encouraged to establish their learning goals (Kostiainen et al., 2018), or the learning objectives may be determined collaboratively. This is essential for developing individual, goal-oriented, and self-directed aspects of meaningful learning.
- Critical Discussion: In this phase, the teacher guides students in comparing their simulation experience with real-life historical or contemporary events. These activities facilitate students' reflection on their simulation experience and how IPE values are integrated into music.

- Creative project-based Scenarios: This phase forms the core of the simulation-based learning experience during which students participate in the simulation. During this phase, the students work individually or in groups to create music pieces that convey specific ideological or political messages. At the same time, the teacher guides students in developing creative projects, such as music compositions or performances, that reflect IPE values. In this phase, the teacher must explicitly state when the project starts and ends. The participants are usually quite engaged in hands-on experience, but at the same time, they may be afraid that the exercise will expose their lack of personal competence (Dieckmann et al., 2023). Therefore, establishing an emotionally safe environment early on is crucial.
- Reflection and assessment: In this phase, learners are responsible for reflecting on their learning journey, identifying knowledge gaps, and establishing new learning goals. Meanwhile, the teacher's role is to prompt students to analyze the entire experience to improve their learning and future practices by posing questions like: a. What were you thinking and feeling? b. What challenges did you face, and what were the underlying reasons? c. What was the nature of the learning process? d. Did you achieve the learning objectives? e. What insights have you gained, and what is the rationale behind them?
- Post-activities: During this phase, educators motivate learners to participate in community-related initiatives that align with IPE themes, as students immerse themselves in community events, including concerts or activities centered on ideological values.

Nonetheless, given the inherent flexibility of the pedagogical model, not all of the aforementioned phases (pre-activities, introduction, simulation execution, critical discussion, creative project-based scenarios, reflection and assessment, and post-activities) are required in every simulation-based course, and there may also be additional phases present. Certain phases hold lesser significance, particularly if the participants possess prior knowledge of the environment. Dieckmann et al. (2009) observe frequent critical discussion, reflection, and assessment, indicating that certain phases may occur only once. The features of significant learning may be highlighted in various ways, contingent upon the learning goals and the individuals involved. The adaptable model can be tailored to suit particular contexts and participant groups. The pedagogical model is a valuable tool for making informed decisions about simulation-based education while highlighting specific areas of knowledge and skills that require further development. The pedagogical model promotes a comprehensive and meaningful approach to teaching and learning. The model enables educators and learners to acknowledge their roles and understand that contemporary educational theories guide teaching. Throughout the investigation, a pedagogical model was developed for educators who currently employ or plan to incorporate IPE in their music instruction, aiming to provide new ideas and insights into teaching practices. Nonetheless, the model is also suitable for sharing with students and environmental designers. The model will enhance students' understanding of instructional foundations, preparing them for upcoming learning experiences.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Students' Needs and Expectations Tend to Teachers' Competence

The study's results suggest that students' learning experiences are substantially influenced by their expectations and requirements regarding their lecturers' competence. Students anticipate that lecturers will possess practical classroom management skills, a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, and proficient teaching abilities. Additionally, students seek instructors capable of providing constructive feedback and fostering their critical thinking skills. Låg and Sæle (2019) demonstrate that lecturers' pedagogical qualities significantly increase student satisfaction with learning, including proficient classroom management, appropriate technology utilization, and excellent communication skills. In contrast, research by Ong and Quek (2023) emphasizes the importance of lecturer engagement in meaningful social interactions with students, ensuring that students feel acknowledged and appreciated in the educational process.

Consistent with prior findings, students expect professors to possess academic and pedagogical competence, inclusivity, and an understanding of individual needs. This aligns with the findings of Rafaila (2015) and Dolev and Leshem (2017), which indicate that lecturers' emotional competence, including the capacity to comprehend students' feelings and emotional requirements, significantly contributes to fostering a positive learning environment. Consequently, alongside technical and pedagogical skills, the emotional dimensions of lecturer interactions must be a primary focus in enhancing educational quality.

5.2. The Importance of Teachers' Post-Activities and Contextual Simulation

This research underscores that post-learning activities conducted by teachers significantly enhance students' comprehension and engagement with the subject matter acquired. Group discussions, reflections, and additional tasks facilitate the integration of new knowledge with students' experiences. Yohannes and Chen (2024) demonstrate that post-learning exercises can enhance students' comprehension through reflexology-based learning, enabling them to assess and relate educational content to real-life experiences. This activity allows students to pose inquiries, resolve uncertainties, and reinforce concepts that remain inadequately understood from the learning session.

This study emphasizes the importance of contextual simulation in the educational framework. Contextual simulation allows students to apply their acquired knowledge in meaningful real-life scenarios. Students have a wonderful opportunity to enhance their understanding of the practical application of theory by engaging in role-playing or simulating professional scenarios. This aligns well with the findings of Chi, Wang, and Liu (2023), which showed that contextual simulations significantly boost students' problem-solving skills and help them grasp complex topics more easily. Involving students in meaningful situations enhances their academic understanding and sharpens practical skills relevant to their lives.

While post-learning and contextual simulation exercises show great potential, further research indicates that they may present some challenges for classroom implementation. Anderson (1984) suggests that while resources and time may be limited, there are opportunities to overcome these challenges and achieve the objectives. The results are positively influenced by the effectiveness of teachers in planning and executing post-learning activities and simulations. This indicates that while post-learning and contextual simulation activities hold great significance, with thoughtful planning and support from the school environment, they can truly thrive and provide students with exceptional benefits.

The seven-step (Pre-activities, introduction, Simulation execution, Critical Discussion, Creative project-based Scenarios, Reflection and assessment, and post-activities) of the pedagogical model in integrating Ideological and political education (IPE) in music teaching and learning.

This study proposes a pedagogical model comprising seven steps: Pre-Activities, Introduction, Simulation Execution, Critical Discussion, Creative Project-Based Scenarios, Reflection and Assessment, and Post-Activities, as an integrative approach to amalgamating ideology and politics education (IPE) within music instruction. The initial phase, Pre-Activities, seeks to intellectually and emotionally prepare pupils prior to commencing the lecture. Additionally, during the introductory phase, information about political ideology's values is presented through an engaging and pertinent elucidation of the musical setting. Zhao and Zhang's (2025) research corroborates this finding, demonstrating that contextual initial introductions facilitate students' connections between ideology and their lives, particularly in the realm of art education. Thus, music is perceived not merely as a technical accomplishment but also as a vehicle for imparting profound ideological ideals.

The subsequent phase, Simulation Execution, enables students to implement theoretical concepts in a realistic context. In this simulation, students can participate in the creative process, integrating musical aspects with pertinent ideological concerns. Chang and Liu (2025) demonstrate that a simulation-based method enhances student comprehension of political and social topics more thoroughly and authentically. During the critical discussion phase, students can examine and deliberate on their study content's social and political ramifications. This essential discourse

fosters reflective thought, prompting students to interrogate and refine their perspectives on the nexus between music and ideology, as articulated by Gao, Wang, and Quan (2025), which underscores the significance of critical conversation in value-based education.

In the concluding phases, encompassing creative project-based scenarios, reflection, and assessment, along with post-activities, students are allowed to develop innovative projects that amalgamate philosophy and music alongside self-evaluation and reflection on their acquired knowledge. This creativity-based activity enables students to demonstrate their comprehension via tangible effort. Wang, Gao, and Chen's (2024) research indicates that the project-based approach enhances students' creativity and enriches their comprehension of the subject matter. Ultimately, reflection and assessment enable students to appraise their learning experiences and relate them to applying ideological principles in daily life. This paradigm offers a holistic approach to incorporating IPE in music education, emphasizing musical proficiency and cultivating students' character and social awareness.

6. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that a pedagogical model comprising seven steps, Pre-Activities, Introduction, Simulation Execution, Critical Discussion, Creative Project-Based Scenarios, Reflection and Assessment, and Post-Activities, can effectively integrate ideology and politics education (IPE) into music instruction. Each component of this framework, from the preliminary phases to the final reflection, is crucial for augmenting students' comprehension and application of political ideology issues in music education. Critical discourse and simulation-based approaches enable students to analyze the connection between art and ideology, while creativity-driven projects provide a concrete means for students to articulate their understanding. This study's findings indicate that incorporating IPE into music education enhances students' musical abilities and expands their understanding of social and political issues. Students' reflective evaluations post-education allow them to analyze the impact of their ideological convictions on their daily lives. This framework enhances academic proficiency, fosters character development, and cultivates social awareness in students, thus enriching holistic education.

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