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Overcoming barriers to equitable change: Identifying sociological and policy barriers that prevent teachers from employing equitable methods

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People of racial minorities, Indigenous heritage and low socioeconomic status are marginalised within contemporary society. Similarly, such populations are disproportionately absent from high school music classrooms. Research demonstrates that the use of music and pedagogy that is culturally relevant to marginalised populations fosters more inclusive music student cohorts. This has the potential to curate representative cohorts of music scholars at a university level; introducing the voices of those disadvantaged by dominant practice to discussions of educational reform.

Yet, the vast majority of music educators are trained within paradigms of western art music, and report feeling unprepared, unable or unwilling to employ methods associated with popular music. There is currently little research identifying exactly what barriers lead teachers to determine that a switch to more inclusive curricula and pedagogy is untenable. My research will explore the sociological and policy barriers that teachers present as impacting their ability to change methods.