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Music Teacher Educators' Perceptions of the Society for Music Teacher Education *A National Survey*

In April of 1988, leaders of the Society for Music Teacher Education (SMTE) authorized a nationwide survey of college and university music teacher educators. The purposes of the survey were to determine respondents'

1. degree of awareness of SMTE activities in their states
2. level of current participation in SMTE activities
3. general interest in SMTE
4. interest in providing services to SMTE
5. interest in receiving SMTE services
6. perceptions about the need for SMTE to better define its goals and functions
7. willingness to support SMTE through annual dues.¹

Method

Following development and pilot testing, a survey questionnaire was mailed to SMTE division chairs (SMTE divisions correspond with those of

MENC), who in turn distributed them to state chairs for dissemination to all known music teacher educators within each state. This procedure was followed because financial limitations prohibited direct mailing to individuals. A total of 832 questionnaires from 442 institutions in 48 states were returned by October 1989.²

Due to the unorthodox distribution procedure, neither the exact number of questionnaires distributed nor the return rate can be determined. However, the return rate from a random sample of colleges and universities listed in *The College Music Society Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 1988-90* suggests that somewhat more than 50 percent of the total population of American music teacher educators returned the questionnaire.³

Results

The degree of teacher educators' awareness of existing SMTE activities

n their states (purpose 1) was assessed by a single question with three possible categorical responses: "yes," "no," and "don't know." Music teacher educators' perceptions about the need for SMTE to better define its goals and functions (purpose 6) were determined through a single question with a five-point Likert-type response scale anchored by "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree." The amount of annual SMTE dues music teacher educators are willing to pay (purpose 7) was assessed by a single open-ended question asking for an exact amount (\$5.00 was suggested). The remaining questionnaire items were grouped into four subscales.⁴ Questions in the first subscale, current SMTE participation (purpose 2), included a four-point response scale anchored by "frequently" and "never." Questions included in the second subscale, general interest in SMTE (purpose 3), used a three-point response scale anchored by "very interested" and "not interested." The remaining two subscales, interest in providing services to SMTE (purpose 4) and interest in receiving SMTE services (purpose 5), consisted of questions with five-point response scales anchored by "most interested" and "least interested," or by "most strongly favor" and "least favor." Table 1 contains the results for each interval-response question and subscale.

Research questions and findings

1. To what extent are respondents aware of SMTE activities in their respective states?

Only 37 percent of all respondents are aware of SMTE activities in their states. Approximately 10 percent stated that there are no SMTE activities in their states, while more than 52 percent do not know whether such activities exist. These percentages are

based on statistically significant frequency differences [$\chi^2(2, n = 808) = 225, p < .01$].

- 2A. To what extent do respondents participate in SMTE activities (current participation subscale)?

Respondents reported a low level of current participation, with a mean response for the subscale of 1.66 on a scale of 1-4 (with 4 being the highest).

- 2B. Are there differences between respondents' current participation in SMTE activities at the state, division, and national levels?

Current participation in state-level activities received a higher response than national-level participation, which in turn received a higher response than division-level participation. Repeated-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) results, followed by a Fisher modified least-significant difference (FMLSD) test,⁵ indicate that all three mean scores are significantly different from each other ($p < .01$).

- 2C. Are there differences in current SMTE participation (current participation subscale) between MENC members and nonmembers, and between respondents in the six MENC divisions?

There are no significant differences between MENC divisions in percentages of MENC member and nonmember respondents [$\chi^2(5, n = 823) = 1.60, p > .01$]. Two-way factorial ANOVA results indicate that MENC members are significantly more likely than nonmembers to be participating in SMTE activities ($p < .01$), that there are no significant differences in current participation between MENC divisions ($p > .01$), and that there is no significant interaction between the

Table 1
Possible Response Ranges, Means, and Standard Deviations for Interval Questions (N = 832)

Question/Subscale	Possible response	Mean	Standard deviation
Current state-level participation	1-4	1.85	1.15
Current division-level participation	1-4	1.49	.90
Current national-level participation	1-4	1.63	.99
<i>Current participation subscale</i>	1-4	1.66	1.01
Interest in state-level leadership	1-3	2.47	.63
Interest in division-level participation	1-3	2.29	.70
Interest national-level participation	1-3	2.56	.73
<i>General interest in participation subscale</i>	1-3	2.44	.69
Interest in providing leadership	1-5	3.15	1.43
Interest in providing editorial services	1-5	2.89	1.44
Interest in conducting research	1-5	4.35	.92
Interest in writing articles	1-5	3.47	1.37
<i>Interest in serving SMTE subscale</i>	1-5	3.51	1.29
Interest in SMTE networking	1-5	2.97	1.37
Interest in SMTE newsletter	1-5	3.96	1.20
Interest in SMTE electronic mail	1-5	3.10	1.42
Interest in certification information	1-5	4.19	1.03
Interest in SMTE clearinghouse services	1-5	4.35	.92
Interest in methods course information	1-5	4.30	.94
<i>Interest in receiving SMTE services subscale</i>	1-5	3.84	1.15
Define goals and functions	1-5	4.54	.78
Dues	open	5.07	2.17

membership and division variables ($p > .01$).

- 3A. To what extent are respondents interested in participating in SMTE (general interest subscale)?

Respondents seem quite interested in SMTE participation, with a mean response for the subscale of 2.44 on a scale of 1-3.

- 3B. Are there interest differences among state, division, and national SMTE participation?

Repeated-measures ANOVA results, followed by a FMLSD test, indicate that respondents

are significantly more interested in participating at the state level than at the division level ($p < .01$). Interest levels in division and national activities are not significantly different ($p > .01$).

- 3C. Are there interest differences in SMTE activities (general interest subscale) between MENC members and nonmembers, and between MENC divisions?

Two-way factorial ANOVA results indicate that MENC members are significantly more interested in general participation

Respondents seem moderately to highly interested in receiving services.

than nonmembers ($p < .01$), that there are no significant differences among MENC divisions regarding general interest in participation ($p \geq .01$), and that there is no significant interaction between the membership and division variables ($p \geq .01$).

- 4A. To what extent are respondents interested in providing services to SMTE (providing services subscale)?

Respondents seem moderately interested in providing services, with a mean response for the subscale of 3.51 on a scale of 1-5.

- 4B. Are there interest differences between providing services to SMTE through leadership, editorial work, research, and article writing?

Repeated-measures ANOVA results followed by a FMLSD test indicate that respondents are most interested in conducting research, followed in descending order by article writing, leadership, and editorial work. Differences between all four variables are statistically significant ($p < .01$).

- 4C. Are there interest differences in providing specific services to SMTE (providing services subscale) between MENC members and nonmembers, and among MENC divisions?

Two-way factorial ANOVA results indicate that MENC mem-

bers are significantly more interested than nonmembers in providing services ($p < .01$), that there are no significant differences in interest among MENC divisions regarding providing services ($p \geq .01$), and that there is no significant interaction between the membership and division variables ($p \geq .01$).

- 5A. To what extent are respondents interested in receiving services from SMTE (receiving services subscale)?

Respondents seem moderately to highly interested in receiving services, with a mean response for the subscale of 3.84 on a scale of 1-5.

- 5B. Are there interest differences between the types of services respondents wish to receive from SMTE?

Repeated-measures ANOVA results followed by a FMLSD test indicate that respondents are most interested in receiving services in the following (descending) order: information about methods courses, information about certification, clearinghouse services, a newsletter, electronic mail services, and networking services. Some of the differences between variables are statistically significant (see table 2).

- 5C. Are there interest differences in receiving SMTE services (receiv-

Table 2

Fisher Modified Least-Significant Difference Test for Differences Between Means for Specific Services Desired

Methods courses	Certification	Clearing-house	Newsletter	Electronic mail	Networking
4.25	4.19	4.12	4.05	3.19	2.96

Note: Underlining indicates nonsignificance. All other comparisons are statistically significant ($p < .01$).

ing services subscale) between MENC members and nonmembers, and between MENC divisions?

Two-way factorial ANOVA results indicate that there are no significant interest differences in receiving SMTE services between MENC members and nonmembers ($p > .01$) or among MENC divisions ($p > .01$). Further, there is no significant interaction between the two variables ($p > .01$).

- 5D. Are there interest differences between providing SMTE services (providing services subscale) and receiving SMTE services (receiving services subscale)?

Paired two-tailed *t*-test results indicate that respondents are significantly more interested in receiving services than in providing services ($p < .01$).

6. To what extent do respondents believe that SMTE should better define its goals and functions?

Respondents believe strongly that SMTE should better define its goals and functions, with a mean response of 4.54 on a scale of 1-5.

7. How much are respondents willing to pay in annual SMTE dues?

Respondents are willing to pay mean annual dues of \$5.07 for SMTE membership (\$5.00 was suggested on the questionnaire.)

Discussion

Caution should be applied in interpreting the results of this survey due to the method used to distribute the questionnaires. Nevertheless, the results seem to indicate that most music teacher educators are either unaware of state-level SMTE activities or that such activities do not exist in many states. Further, the mean response for current state-level participation is low (1.85 on a scale of 1-4), but the mean response for interest in state-level participation is much higher (2.47 on a scale of 1-3). These findings suggest that music teacher educators would like to participate in state-level SMTE activities to a greater extent than they currently are.

Similar discrepancies exist between current SMTE participation and interest in future SMTE participation at both the division and national levels. However, because division activities were rated second in interest (behind the state) but only third in current participation (behind the state and nation, respectively), it would seem that SMTE

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should facilitate the development of more activities at the division level.

Music teacher educators who responded to the survey seem to be extremely interested in conducting research and moderately interested in writing articles on music teacher education. Leadership service evoked somewhat less interest, followed by editorial services. The high level of interest in research and publication could reflect the emphasis placed upon those activities by many institutions of higher learning.

Respondents seem very interested in receiving information about the content and teaching of methods courses and about certification, and they appear somewhat interested in clearinghouse services and a newsletter. They seem considerably less interested in electronic mail and networking services. Not surprisingly, respondents are significantly more interested in receiving services than in providing services to SMTE, which suggests that potential readers may have to be sought out and cultivated.

Compared to nonmembers, MENC members are significantly more aware of SMTE activities, more likely to be participating at present, more interested in participating in the future, and more interested in providing services to SMTE. Interestingly, however, MENC members and nonmembers seem

equally interested in receiving services from SMTE. These findings suggest that the leadership and membership constituencies for SMTE probably lie primarily within the ranks of MENC members, although non-MENC members appear to be willing to avail themselves of certain services.

The fact that there are no significant differences among MENC divisions in current participation, general interest in participation, interest in providing services, or interest in receiving services suggests that interest in the organization is national in scope, rather than limited to one or more regions of the country. An absence of significant interactions between the MENC membership and division variables reinforces the idea that interest in SMTE is relatively uniform among MENC members in different divisions.

This survey seems to indicate a high level of interest among music teacher educators in SMTE and in the types of activities that the organization might provide. The relatively high mean scores on questionnaire items relating to the organization and its potential activities, coupled with an apparent willingness on the part of respondents to pay annual dues at the level suggested, seem to indicate considerable interest in the organization. On the other hand, the survey indicates a strong belief among respondents that

SMTE should better define its goals and functions. The mean response to this question was higher than for any other question.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this survey, SMTE should consider

1. concentrating on defining its purpose
2. organizing and publicizing activities in all fifty states, all six divisions, and at the national level, in that order
3. providing outlets and other types of support for research and article writing related to music teacher education
4. providing information and otherwise stimulating discourse on methods courses and certification
5. facilitating clearinghouse activities and publishing a newsletter
6. targeting MENC members for the organization's leadership positions and general membership
7. identifying potential members for leadership roles within the organization, especially for editorial and other leadership positions.
- *8. setting annual dues at \$5.00
9. conducting periodic surveys to determine the perceived needs of the nation's music teacher educators.

**Editor's note:* At the March 1991 meeting of the MENC National Executive Board, the Society for Music Teacher Education's proposal for a journal was approved. In July 1991, the subscription rate for the *Journal of Music Teacher Education* was set at \$11.00. None of the MENC societies have dues; there are, however, amounts indicated on the MENC membership form for subscriptions to various MENC journals.

Notes

1. Because of space limitations, this article describes only a portion of the survey results. A complete descriptive account (Barrie Wells, *Final Report: Society for Music Teacher Education Survey* unpublished report, 1990) may be obtained from Music Educators National Conference, 1902 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091. Statistical tables related to the present article may be obtained from either of the authors, School of Music, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287.
2. The original report is based on 807 responses received by the initial return deadline.
3. *The College Music Society Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities, U.S. and Canada, 1988-1990* (Boulder, CO: College Music Society, 1989).
4. Earl R. Babbie, *Survey Research Methods* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1973), 270-76.
5. B. J. Winer, *Statistical Principles in Experimental Design* 2d ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), 196-201.

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