

## THE ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY IN THE MUSICAL PRACTICE OF ELDERLY PEOPLE: A SCOPING REVIEW

### O PAPEL DA AUTOEFICÁCIA NA PRÁTICA MUSICAL DE IDOSOS: UMA REVISÃO DE ESCOPO

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

This study aims to characterize scientific production of knowledge about self-efficacy, the elderly and musical practices. This is a scoping review, based on searches covering the period from 2001 to 2021, resulted in the selection of nine articles that were published in the areas of psychology, music, health, and education. General self-efficacy was found to be as much as musical

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self-efficacy, with studies on sources of self-efficacy in the elderly in musical practice resulting in only one article being published in 20 years. The articles highlight the importance of the teacher in shaping the self-efficacy beliefs of elderly music practitioners. Sources of self-efficacy are considered a priority for music teachers, choirmasters, and facilitators in pedagogical activities. More research is needed on sources of self-efficacy, since self-efficacy beliefs can unfold in excellent learning strategies that generate self-confidence among elderly people.

**Keywords:**

education; elderly people; music; self-efficacy; singing

**RESUMO**

Este estudo tem como objetivo caracterizar a produção científica do conhecimento sobre: autoeficácia, idosos e práticas musicais. Trata-se de uma revisão de escopo, baseada em pesquisas que abrangem o período de 2001 a 2021, que resultou na seleção de nove artigos publicados nas áreas de psicologia, música, saúde e educação. Os estudos abordam autoeficácia geral, autoeficácia musical e fontes de autoeficácia, sendo encontrado um único estudo sobre fontes de autoeficácia em idosos na prática musical publicado em 20 anos. Fontes de autoeficácia são consideradas prioritárias para professores de música, coralistas e facilitadores em atividades pedagógicas. Os artigos destacam a importância do professor na formação das crenças de autoeficácia dos praticantes de música idosos. Mais pesquisas são necessárias sobre fontes de autoeficácia, uma vez que as crenças de autoeficácia podem se desdobrar em excelentes estratégias de aprendizagem que podem gerar autoconfiança na população idosa.

**Palavras chave:**

autoeficácia; canto; educação; idosos; música

**1. Introduction**

In recent decades educational psychology has shown an interest in integrating self-efficacy research topics with education. The sociocognitive perspective emphasizes how much self-efficacy beliefs influence a person's motivation and achievement, indicating a sense of self-efficacy. We build our self-efficacy beliefs in different

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domains based on interpretation of information received from four sources: (i) direct experience (personal experiences perceived as positive) (ii) vicarious experience (observation of other people), (iii) social persuasion (verbal judgments received), and (iv) physiological and emotional indicators (physical and emotional reactions) (Bandura, 1986b; Usher & Pajares, 2008; Hendricks, 2016)

Research into self-efficacy has been conducted in different contexts and fields of knowledge, such as: education, health, psychology, administration, and sport (Bandura, 1997; 2004). In the field of education, one of the domains investigated is academic self-efficacy, defined as students' judgment of their abilities to learn or to carry out scholarly activities (Schunk & Meece, 2006), and appears as a mechanism that mediates students' motivation to carry out educational activities (Bandura, 1997; laochite, 2016).

Self-efficacy in education and musical performance has been studied for more than a decade, especially following the publication of two studies that demonstrate the predictive power of self-efficacy beliefs in musical performance (McCormick & McPherson, 2003; McPherson & McCormick, 2006; Hendricks, 2016). If on the one hand worldwide research on musical self-efficacy can still be considered relatively sparse (Bonshor, 2016), Brazil has been a country with considerable production on investigation of self-efficacy in the field of music (Sobreira Gonçalves & Cardoso de Araujo, 2014; Cavalcanti, 2014) and education (Bzuneck, 2001; Gomes & Boruchovitch, 2019).

Development of self-efficacy may be especially important for elderly peoples' continued engagement in complex sensory-motor activities such as learning to play a musical instrument or cognition and rhythm activities such as learning to sing. Learning a musical instrument or singing can involve all four sources of self-efficacy. (Bugos et al., 2016, Bonshor 2016).

Some studies show that musical contributions to well-being can continue throughout lifetime and into old age (Bonshor, 2016; Hopper et al. 2016). It is interesting to note how important music is to senior citizens, and group singing particularly so, in an intense way

that is quite similar to the benefits of music narrated by younger people (Johnson et al., 2015).

Few studies have shown interest in investigating older adult amateur singers or musicians and their sources of self-efficacy in producing beliefs (Bonshor, 2016). The effects of these beliefs on the quality of performative experiences and satisfaction in group singing activities have not previously been studied in detail. More research is needed on the sources of self-efficacy considering the complexities of personal beliefs and how they may unfold in new methods and learning environments in music. (Hendricks, 2016; Bonshor, 2016).

Discussions have taken place on how studies of self-efficacy applied to teaching music appear to investigate confidence in performance and self-regulated learning in students more than pedagogical practices of fostering the sources of self-efficacy in students (Hendricks, 2016). Educational practices lack more effective guidance emphasizing the importance of the teacher in shaping music students' self-efficacy beliefs.

Education researchers suggest that teachers may be able to help students to learn to manage their self-efficacy beliefs, which in turn may positively influence persistence, self-regulation, and subsequent task-based achievement (Bandura, 1997; Pajares & Urdan, 2006; Zimmerman, 2000; Hendricks, 2016). Music teachers, choirmasters, and facilitators of music groups with older adults could also empower adult and older students by strengthening their control over the development of their own musical skills, helping them to promote positive self-efficacy beliefs (Hendricks, 2016).

While research suggests that sources of self-efficacy contribute to performance quality in young students, little is known about the effects of practicing music on self-efficacy in the elderly (Ritchie & Williamon, 2012). Studies of self-efficacy in amateur adult and elderly singers and musicians are rare and appear to be related to populations with limitations, who are overcoming difficulties and in unfavorable circumstances (Bonshor, 2016). The objective of this scoping review is to characterize scientific production of knowledge

about self-efficacy, elderly people and musical practices published in articles and journals in the last twenty years.

To gain a better understanding of the variables dealt with in this study, we conducted a systematic search based on studies addressing self-efficacy in the elderly adult population involving participation in practical activities regarding music, singing, choirs and playing instruments. We sought to identify a possible scientific gap in the combination of these variables in the studies we selected. The development of our search strategy, the inclusion and exclusion criteria, and the results found are presented below.

## **2. Method**

This is a Scoping Review, in accordance with the review method proposed by the Joanna Briggs Institute (Aromataris & Munn, 2020). This method allows identification of the types of evidence available in a given field or identification of the main characteristics or factors related to a concept.

To build the research question, we used the Population, Concept and Context (PCC) strategy for scoping reviews, which we defined as follows: P – Studies on self-efficacy; C – Elderly people; C – Study areas: Musical practices involving choirs and musical instruments. The guiding questions were then established based on these definitions: 1) What scientific articles on assessment of self-efficacy in elderly people who practice musical activities have been published in the last 20 years? 2) What methods, objectives, instruments, and questionnaires were used in those articles? 3) In which areas were these articles published and which fields of self-efficacy did they investigate?

The systematic review methodology is highly effective in identifying scientific evidence. In this systematic search, we used the Rayyan QCR1 application, developed by the Qatar Computing Research Institute, specifically intended for peer reviews, and aiming to support researchers undertaking systematic reviews. This method

allows identification of the types of evidence available in a given field, the main characteristics and the factors related to a concept.

To systematize our search, we chose eight indexed databases commonly used for reviews and research in the area of music and education: CAPES Journal Portal, Education Resources Information Center - Eric, Scientific Electronic Library Online - Scielo, SCOPUS, Web of Science. We also included in our search the ABEM and SINCAM/SIMPOM databases to look for Brazilian publications in the area of music, and also the GOOGLE ACADEMICS database because of its scope. The search was limited to the period from January 2001 to March 2021, taking original articles published in the last 20 years in peer-reviewed journals published in Portuguese, English and Spanish.

The descriptors were used in the three languages mentioned above, in accordance with Health Sciences Descriptors (DeCS), Medical Subject Headings (MESH) and Thesauros. We used descriptors that characterize self-efficacy, such as (self-efficacy, self-efficacy, *autoeficácia*). The word *autoeficácia* was also applied in the way it used to be written, "*auto eficácia*", so that articles published prior to the Portuguese language reform in Brazil would be included. We also used the English words "self-efficacy beliefs" because of the frequency with which they were found as a descriptor in publications on the subject.

As such the search string we used was as follows: (autoeficácia OR "self-efficacy" OR "self-efficacy beliefs" OR autoeficácia OR autoeficacia) AND (singing OR choir OR canto OR "music performance") AND (adults OR "older adults" OR adultos OR elderly OR "older people" OR aged). All the processes to select and assess the articles were done by peers (C.C.H; S.O.B.). When they did not agree on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, a specific discussion was held on the article in question until reaching consensus.

An initial analysis was performed based on the article titles; followed by an assessment of the abstracts of all those that met the inclusion criteria or those that it was not clear whether they should be

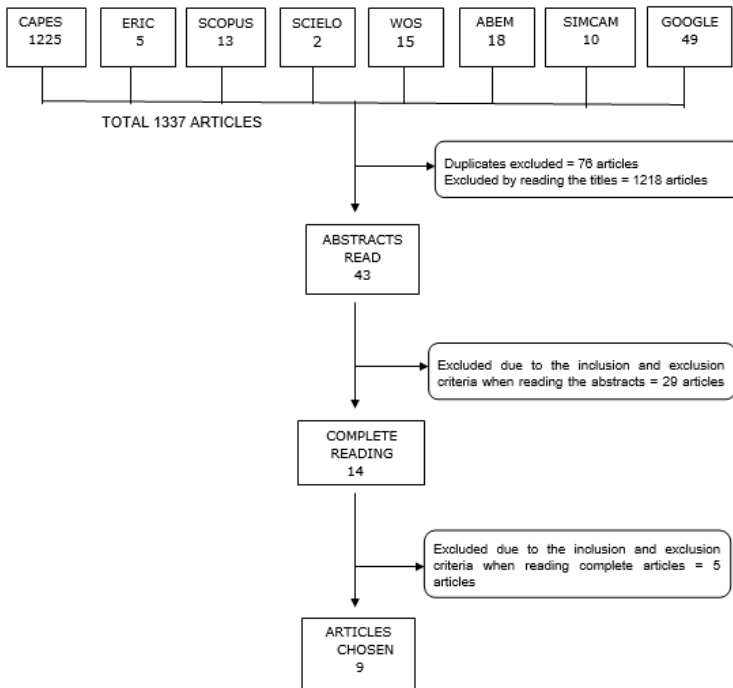
excluded. After analyzing the abstracts, all the articles were retrieved in full and later examined in accordance with the established inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The following inclusion criteria were used: (i) Original articles published in peer-reviewed journals; (ii) Studies published between January 2001 and March 2021 (the last 20 years); (iii) Samples with individuals aged 60 or over, divided between heterogeneous groups with older adults, and homogeneous groups just with elderly people; (iv) Participants in research on self-efficacy in relation to singing or playing a musical instrument, divided into groups of singers or musicians, and into singing/choir activities.

The following exclusion criteria were used: (i) Theoretical studies; (ii) Studies containing samples with illnesses and diseases; (iii) Theses, dissertations, monographs, and book chapters; (iv) Articles on self-efficacy in higher education, academic self-efficacy and teacher and student self-efficacy in schools and universities.

In order not to limit the search, we accepted studies with the following designs: quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, cross-sectional and with intervention, regardless of the homogeneous or heterogeneous sample of subjects, due to the low number of publications found. Three distinct stages were used in selecting the documents: (1) the search stage, in which the studies held on the indexed databases were retrieved, (2) the selection stage, by filtering the findings using the inclusion criteria and filtering duplicated publications and, (3) the choosing stage, in which the studies that will be analyzed are defined (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1 - FLOWCHART OF THE PROCESS OF SEARCHING AND SELECTING STUDIES FOR THE SCOPING REVIEW



SOURCE: Hackenberg et al. (2023)

Once the studies had been chosen following the selection process, the analysis charts were created by means of qualitative analysis, with characterization of the publications. Two charts will be presented. Chart 1 organizes the articles by title; author's name; place and date; objective; participants; methodology; instruments.

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Chart 2 lists the articles by title, journal/periodical, the variables in each article, and the fields of self-efficacy investigated.

### **3. Results**

We found a total of 1,337 articles in eight databases. Duplicates were removed (76 articles) and articles were excluded based on their titles (1,218 articles). We read 43 abstracts and excluded 29 articles after reading the abstracts, totaling 14 articles to be read in full. In the end, a further 5 articles were excluded, and 9 articles were selected to compose those to be studied (Figure 1).

Answering the first question: What scientific articles on assessment of self-efficacy in elderly people who practice musical activities have been published in the last 20 years? We found four studies from the United Kingdom by Ritchie & Williamon (2010); Fancourt et al. (2019); Hopper et al. (2016); Bonshor (2016). We found three studies from the United States by Woody et al. (2019), Bugos et al. (2016) and Johnson et al. (2015). We found one study from Japan by Sakano et al. (2014) and one from Australia by MacRitchie & Garrido (2019). All the articles were published between 2010 and 2019.

As a result of the search and numbered<sup>1</sup> as per Charts 1 and 2, eight articles had samples with elderly people all of whom were aged 60 or over, with a total number of participants varying between 7 and 58, divided into 6 studies with singers and 2 studies with musicians (articles 1-8). The ninth article stands out as having a heterogeneous sample of 250 people aged 25 to 67 of both singers and musicians (article 9). According to Bonshor (2016), studies of self-efficacy in elderly singers or musicians are rare. Our research shows that in 20 years nine articles were published, and all of them were produced in the last ten years. This emphasizes that studies on self-efficacy in elderly people are not common.

Regarding the most common objectives for conducting studies on self-efficacy with elderly people who practice musical activities, Bonshor (2016) indicates that these studies appear to be

related to populations with limitations, who are overcoming difficulties and in unfavorable circumstances. Our study identified two such articles: one with elderly people who had chronic pain (article 3) and another with elderly people in a state of bereavement (article 2).

We organized the articles according to their objectives (CHART 1) and according to their variables and types associated with self-efficacy (CHART 2): creative production (article 1), depression (article 2), psychosocial engagement (articles 3 and 5), self-efficacy beliefs and sources (articles 4 and 7), efficacy and health status (article 6), stress and performance (articles 8 and 9). This description of diverse themes demonstrates that self-efficacy is an adaptable variable and is applicable in many areas.

We also noted that the themes most clearly related to self-efficacy in this review were: self-confidence (articles 3,4,5), which is often used interchangeably with self-efficacy in literature (Vealey et al. 1998). Another theme was depression, which appears as a focus of study and/or theoretical review (articles 2,3,5,6); stress in older people's performance or the contribution of musical practices in controlling psychological stress (articles 3,6,9).

#### **4. Discussion**

Looking at the second question about the methods, objectives, instruments used in these articles by the self-efficacy studies, we found reinforcing the frequency of evaluations. Articular there were interventions and longitudinal studies (articles 1,2,5,8,9) and two studies with mixed methods (articles 7,8). However, the findings of our search highlight the incidence of qualitative research in the investigation of self-efficacy beliefs and sources (articles 3,4,6,7).

Regarding the instruments used in the articles, the following stand out in the quantitative approaches: the General Self-Efficacy Scale - GSE (articles 2,8), the Musical Performance Self-Efficacy Scale – MPSES (article 8), the NIH Toolbox Self-Efficacy Scale

(article 5) and the General Self-efficacy Scale adapted for the aspects of learning and performance (article 9). In the qualitative research all articles administered interviews with open-ended questions, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and individual interviews. The Social Cognitive Theory and Bandura's Self-efficacy Theory were cited as guiding the formulation of the questions, as highlighted in the article by Bonshor (2016) who investigated sources of self-efficacy beliefs and administered a questionnaire to investigate the four domains: (i) direct experience, (ii) vicarious experience, (iii) social persuasion and (iv) physical and emotional states (Bandura, 1986b).

To answer the third question, the results of the search show that the areas of publication on self-efficacy in these nine articles are concentrated as follows 3 articles in psychology and music (articles 7,8,9), 4 articles in medical and health journals (articles 4,5,6,7) and two articles in music, culture, and education (articles 1,4). The publications in the field of health and medicine show that music can be included in several fields, as its contributions in studies on well-being and stress emphasize positive outcomes in terms of longevity and a significance very similar to youth (Hopper et al., 2016).

We also noted that the themes most clearly related to self-efficacy in this review were: self-confidence (articles 3,4,5), which is often used interchangeably with self-efficacy in literature (Vealey et al. 1998). Another theme was depression, which appears as a focus of study and/or theoretical review (articles 2,3,5,6); stress in older people's performance or the contribution of musical practices in controlling psychological stress (articles 3,6,9).

The theme of self-esteem was mentioned (articles 2,3) and is considered by some researchers as complementary in general self-efficacy research in that it captures motivational beliefs (or judgment) regarding abilities to perform tasks. Self-esteem helps to explain individual differences in motivation, attitudes, learning and task performance (Schwarzer & Jerusalem,1995). Finally, the theme of psychosocial engagement was mentioned as a variable or theoretical basis in five studies (articles 2,3,4,5,6). The theme appears to be an

area of interrelation between music and aging since it is addressed in both fields of research.

Self-efficacy, according to this systematic search, is studied in the fields of psychology, music, health, and education, which presents us with several intersecting fields for the application of this variable in research. We highlight self-efficacy related to musical performance (articles 1,7,8,9) and musical learning (articles 4,7,8,9); general self-efficacy in stress situations (articles 2,8,9), and psychological well-being (articles 3,6); self-efficacy beliefs that concern thoughts, meanings and senses (articles 1,3,4,7,8,9); efficacy of choral music practice (article 5); sources of self-efficacy and the domains that strengthen personal confidence in musical practice (article 4). We found only one study on the sources of efficacy and only one study published in an education journal, but they are not the same study. It seems that there is a gap in research on sources of self-efficacy and a gap in publications on self-efficacy in education journals.

Investigations of self-confidence in music pedagogy are related to music performance and academic performance, especially in children and young students, addressing a population of technical schools and vocational and university music courses. This seems to be a difference in the context of adult and elderly amateur students, who are almost always included in musical practice applied to the field of continuing education and lifelong development (Woody et al., 2019).

The articles found by this systematized search show us that the environments in which amateur older adults practice music are informal social musical environments. Everyone participates by offering their life skills and the emphasis is on fun and engagement, rather than performance and presentation (Woody et al., 2019). It is common for older adults who have never participated in musical practices before to do so for the first time after the age of 60. These first-timer elderly people do not consider themselves to be particularly musical. At this point a negative perception of their capabilities is established, generating doubts, fears, and anxieties.

If we consider that teachers can pay more attention to their students' perceptions of their own personal competencies, as stated by McPherson & McCormick (2006), we can say that the studies we found on self-efficacy in musical practice with the elderly highlight the same understanding. The music project teacher, choirmaster, leader, seem to model members' commitment and engagement and improve their self-efficacy beliefs (Woody et al., 2019). Self-efficacy beliefs in elderly singers seem to be formed by two preponderant sources of self-efficacy that are very relevant in constructing positive thoughts: (i) vicarious modeling, i.e., learning from other singers, and (ii) verbal persuasion, the need for a safe and reliable teaching leader to create positive beliefs (Bonshor, 2016).

These results corroborate the findings of Hendricks (2016) who states that music teachers, choirmasters, and facilitators of musical practice groups with older adults could also empower adult and elderly students by strengthening their control over the development of their own musical skills, helping them to promote positive self-efficacy beliefs.

## **5. Final Considerations**

This scoping review presented a collection of studies on self-efficacy in musical practices with the elderly, relating the scientific production in the area in national and international publications over the last 20 years. The field of music education has looked with interest at the academic self-efficacy beliefs of young students, yet there is still a vast space for research on self-efficacy beliefs and pedagogical practices within the perspective of lifelong human development. Our study suggests that we could value the role of the teacher in non-formal education activities as well, where lifelong and continuing education projects are concentrated, based on the understanding that the pedagogical guidance mission found in the educators, caregivers and project leaders involved, is much more powerful and important for modeling self-efficacy in elderly people than is imagined.

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*CHART 1 – Details of the nine articles chosen.*

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Self-Efficacy Instruments</b>
1	Musical Identities of Older Adults Are Not Easily Changed: An Exploratory Study (Woody et al., 2019)	To explore the role of self-efficacy in participative musical production.	31 experienced chorister participants aged over 60.	An exploratory single-group pre- and post-test study, its quasi-experimental design.	Pre-test and post-test questionnaire with three sections: (1) General Information (2) Music and Your Life, and (3) Beliefs about Music.
2	Group singing in bereavement: Effects on mental health, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and well-being (Fancourt et al., 2019)	To explore the effects of choir singing on a group of singers, all of whom were bereaved due to cancer.	58 adults who had experienced bereavement in the last 5 years.	Non-randomized controlled cross-sectional exploratory study. Two groups at the time of enrolment: a choir group and a control group	General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE)
	A qualitative study exploring the effects of attending a community pain	To explore the participants' perceptions of the choir and impact on their psychological well-	7 choir singers	Qualitative study with semi-structured interviews to obtain detailed descriptions of the participants' experiences in taking part in	Semi-structured interviews to gather detailed descriptions of participants' experiences of choral activities: Choir meaning in your life and experience impacts

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	service choir on wellbeing in people who experience chronic pain (Hopper et al.,2016)	being, self-efficacy, and relationship with their chronic pain.		the community choir	your psychological well-being and self-efficacy.
	Sharing knowledge and power in adult amateur choral communities: The impact of communal learning on the experience of musical participation (Bonschor, 2016)	To explore the experience of choral singers; (i) perceptions of their performance ability; (ii) confidence as singers; (iii) strategies.	18 choral singers	Exploratory qualitative study with three focus groups, and individual interviews. A total of 40 hours of recorded verbal data was collected. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions.	The interviews were based on a semi-structured format with open-ended questions: (i) the experience they lived (ii) main influences on performance ability (iii) factors affecting their confidence as singers (iv) strategies designed to manage confidence problems among amateur choral singers.

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5	Study protocol for a cluster randomized trial of the Community of Voices choir intervention to promote the health and well-being of diverse older adults (Johnson et al., 2015)	To examine the effect of a community choir program on health and well-being in a large sample of diverse seniors living in the community.	12 senior centers were randomized to recreate the 12-month Community Voices choir program. Adults aged 60 and older were recruited from the areas of each senior center.	Controlled study randomized by clusters. Senior centers were randomly assigned to start choir immediately (intervention group).	NIH Toolbox – this self-efficacy measure assesses confidence in solving problems. Community of Voices is a culturally adapted choir program that reflects three components of engagement (cognitive, physical, and psychosocial)
	Possible benefits of singing to the mental and physical condition of the elderly (Sakano et al., 2014)	To investigate the efficacy of singing on oral health status, mental health status and immunity of the elderly to determine if singing could contribute to improving their physical	44 individuals took part in this study (10 men, 34 women), aged 60 or over.	The efficacy of singing on mental health status and immune competence was examined by swallowing function, oral health condition, blood, and saliva tests, as well as questionnaires administered before and after singing.	Saliva and blood samples were collected before and after singing. POMS and VAS questionnaires were administered, inclusion of three questions in the post-test: "Do you like to sing?" and "Did you sing well?" and "Yes" or "No" answers.

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		condition			
	Ageing and the orchestra: Self-efficacy and engagement in community music-making (MacRitchie and Garrido, 2019)	To examine the relationship between age, self-efficacy and intellectual, emotional, and social engagement in a group of amateur and professional musicians.	23 orchestra musicians (52.2%) were between 41 and 60 years old and (26.1%) were aged 61 and over.	Using a mixed methods design, this study used two distinct data collection tools: (a) a questionnaire distributed to all orchestra members, (b) individual semi-structured interviews.	The semi-structured interviews used questions in three main categories: (a) background, (b) beliefs and expectations, and (c) general perceptions of engagement.
	Intense piano training on self-efficacy and physiological stress in aging (Bugos et al., 2016)	To evaluate the effects of an intense piano training program on general self-efficacy, musical self-efficacy and physiological stress	17 healthy elderly people from the community (60-85 years old) with little or no previous musical training participated in a within-subjects experimental design.	Measures of self-efficacy and cortisol levels were taken at three times: an initial pre-test session, a second pre-test after a one week no treatment control period, and a post-test session.	General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) Musical Performance Self-Efficacy Scale (MPSES)

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	Measuring distinct types of musical self-efficacy (Ritchie and Williamon, 2010)	To examine the specific nature of self-efficacy beliefs within music.	250 music students, singers, and instrumentalists, aged 18 to 67.	Quantitative approach developed with a scale adapted from and based on the General Self-efficacy Scale.	Two musical self-efficacy questionnaires were adapted from Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, and Rogers' (1982) General Self-efficacy Scale, addressing respectively (1) musical learning and (2) musical performance.
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*SOURCE: Hackenberg et. al. (2023)*

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<sup>1</sup> The articles are numbered in the text, as presented in Charts 1 and 2, with the aim of making it easier to read the results.