



## Article

# A descriptive analysis of research productivity in the *Journal of Music Therapy* as measured by authorship and affiliations: 2000-2015

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### ABSTRACT

To date, the authors are not aware of any researcher who has studied research productivity solely specific to the *Journal of Music Therapy*. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine research productivity within the *Journal of Music Therapy* by descriptively analysing the first authors and their respective institutional affiliations of refereed articles within the journal from 2000-2015. We hand-searched all refereed articles in the *Journal of Music Therapy* from 2000-2015 and created a database of first authors and their affiliations. From 2000-2015, 181 different first authors published articles in the *Journal of Music Therapy*. The most frequently publishing author had 15 articles (Silverman), while five authors published six articles (Cevasco, Gregory, Lim, VanWeeldon, and Walworth), and four authors published four articles (Gooding, Hilliard, Register, and Waldon). From 2000-2015, authors from 91 different universities or colleges and 26 non-university institutions published articles in the *Journal of Music Therapy*. Authors affiliated with Florida State University (42 articles), the University of Kansas (24 articles), and the University of Minnesota (13 articles) published the most articles. The long lists of contributing first authors and their respective affiliations highlight the selectivity and diversity of the *Journal of Music Therapy*. However, there are other ways – including citations and journal impact factors – to measure research eminence and the authors caution against generalisations. Suggestions for future research, limitations and implications are provided.

### KEYWORDS

author, affiliation, Journal of Music Therapy, productivity, research

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## INTRODUCTION

A vital aspect of any scholarly journal is the contributing authors and their institutional affiliations. Measuring research productivity within a specific journal can be a method for depicting status within the field and even helping prospective students make decisions on which institutions to attend. Although a number of investigators have studied research productivity of multiple top tier music-based journals (Brittin & Standley 1997; Grashel & Lowe 1995; Hamann & Lucas 1998; Schmidt & Zdinski 199; Standley 1984), a study examining authors and affiliations solely specific to the *Journal of Therapy* has not been located by the present authors. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine research productivity within the *Journal of Music Therapy* by descriptively analysing the first authors and their respective institutional affiliations of refereed articles within the journal from 2000-2015. The research questions were as follows:

1. How many different first authors have published research articles in the *Journal of Music Therapy* from 2000-2015? Who were these authors and how many research articles did they publish?
2. How many different institutional affiliations have authors published research articles under in the *Journal of Music Therapy* from 2000-2015? What are these affiliations and how many articles were published under these affiliations?

## METHOD

### Article inclusion criteria

To determine if articles within the *Journal of Music Therapy* from 2000-2015 met inclusion criteria, we established specific guidelines. Articles were only included if they were refereed, including featured articles, in the *Journal of Music Therapy* from 2000-2015. As we were concerned with research productivity, we focused exclusively on refereed journal articles to highlight and lend credence to the vigorous peer review process of the *Journal of Music Therapy*. Journal articles could therefore include theoretical and position papers. However, to respect the peer review process and lend credence to scholarly articles, we excluded book reviews, invited articles and editorials.

### Author criteria

To answer the first research question, we created a database of the first author listed of all articles that met inclusion criteria. In studies that were conducted by multiple authors, we only utilised the author listed first due to the intellectual responsibility of this person's contribution to the paper (Grashel 2007; LeBlanc & McCrary 1990; Silverman, Waldon & Kimura 2014). We recognise and acknowledge this decision and its ensuing implications as a limitation. We then summed the total number of articles by author.

### Affiliation criteria

To answer the second research question, we created a database of the first author's institutional affiliations of all articles that met inclusion criteria. In the case of a first author having multiple affiliations, we only used the first affiliation. No attempt was made to verify the accuracy or change the affiliation cited in the journal. We then summed the total number of articles by affiliation.

## RESULTS

A total of 291 research articles met inclusion criteria. From 2000-2015, 181 different first authors published articles in the *Journal of Music Therapy*. One author (Silverman) published 15 (5.15%) of all research articles while five authors published six articles (2.06% each; Cevasco, Gregory, Lim, VanWeeldon, and Walworth), four authors published four articles (1.37% each; Gooding, Hilliard, Register, and Waldon), 13 authors published three articles (1.03% each), 32 authors published two articles (0.69% each), and 126 authors published one article (0.34% each). Table 1 depicts the list of first authors.

From 2000-2015, authors from 91 different universities or colleges and 26 non-university institutions published articles in the *Journal of Music Therapy*. Authors from Florida State University published 42 articles (14.43%), while authors from the University of Kansas published 24 articles (8.25%), authors from the University of Minnesota published 13 articles (4.47%), authors from the University of Missouri – Kansas City published 10 articles (3.44%), authors from the University of Iowa and the University of the Pacific published eight articles (2.75% each), authors from Colorado State University published

First author	Articles
Silverman, M. J.	15
Cevasco, A. M.	6
Gregory, D.	6
Lim, H. A.	6
VanWeelden, K.	6
Walworth, D. D.	6
Gooding, L. F.	4
Hilliard, R. E.	4
Register, D.	4
Waldon, E. G.	4
Burns, D. S.	3
Colwell, C. M.	3
Darrow, A. A.	3
de l'Etoile, S. K.	3
Ghetti, C. M.	3
Hsiao, F.	3
Jones, J. D.	3
Kern, P.	3
LaGasse, A. B.	3
O'Callaghan, C.	3
Pasiali, V.	3
Robb, S. L.	3
Whipple, J.	3

Note: 33 other authors with 2 publications; 125 other authors with 1 publication.

**Table 1: First author and number of published articles in the *Journal of Music Therapy*, 2000-2015**

seven articles (2.41%) and authors from Sam Houston State University, Temple University, and the University of Georgia published five articles (1.72% each). Table 2 depicts the rank ordered list of institutional affiliations.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine research productivity within the *Journal of Music Therapy* by descriptively analysing the first authors and their respective institutional affiliations of refereed articles within the journal from 2000-2015. Results indicated that from 2000-2015, 181 different first authors published articles meeting inclusion criteria in the *Journal of Music Therapy*. Of those articles, 91 different universities or colleges and 26 non-university institutions were represented. The long lists of contributing first authors and affiliations highlight the selectivity and diversity of the *Journal of Music Therapy*. Additionally, affiliation results are congruent with

Institutional affiliation	Articles
Florida State University	42
University of Kansas	24
University of Minnesota	13
University of Missouri - Kansas City	10
University of Iowa	8
University of the Pacific	8
Colorado State University	7
Sam Houston State University	5
Temple University	5
University of Georgia	5
No affiliation	4
Ohio University - Athens	4
Sookmyung Women's University	4
University of Alabama	4
University of Kentucky	4
University of Melbourne	4
University of Miami	4
Aalborg University	3
Drexel University	3
Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis	3
Louisiana State University	3
Michigan State University	3
Queens University of Charlotte	3
Shenandoah University	3
State University of New York - New Paltz	3

Note: 17 other affiliations with 2 articles; 78 other affiliations with 1 article.

**Table 2: Institutional affiliation and number of published articles in the *Journal of Music Therapy*, 2000-2015**

Silverman (2008), who found that Florida State University and the University of Kansas had the largest number of research posters at American Music Therapy Association conferences. This may be resultant of more faculty members at the institutions, the university's research mission that allocates faculty research time, and a larger number of graduate students.

Despite being a research journal dedicated to innovative and prominent music therapy research, approximately 9% of articles were published by authors at a non-academic affiliation. Thus, although not publishing as prominently as academics, clinicians seem to be involved in publishing at least some articles in the *Journal of Music Therapy*. However, it is possible that publishing clinicians were involved in graduate

programmes and published their work with their clinician-associated institutional affiliation rather than the academic institution to which they were associated when they conducted the research. Relatedly, Silverman (2008) found that independent clinicians and scholars were active researchers and presented more research posters at the American Music Therapy Association Research Poster Session than any single academic institution. Silverman's (2008) finding may also have been influenced when first authors changed from academic to clinical affiliations after degree completion.

As music therapy researchers publish their work in a plethora of music-based and non-music-based publication venues, results of the current study may be misleading if trying to determine overall scholarly productivity and research eminence. Thus, readers are urged to not generalise results beyond the *Journal of Music Therapy* from 2000-2015. Additionally, another factor potentially limiting generalisability specific to institutional affiliation is that authors can change affiliations.

It is interesting that, in general, the top-ranking authors and their respective affiliations are located in the United States. This may be resultant of the *Journal of Music Therapy* itself, as it is a publication of the American Music Therapy Association. As many productive music therapy scholars are located outside the United States, we caution readers against generalising results of this study.

A noted limitation of this study's analysis is that authors listed second or after were excluded. While we acknowledge the significant contributions of the co-authors (and collaborative processes) in research studies, as researchers, we had to make a uniform decision about how to approach this factor in our database. Based from previous music researchers who have studied productivity (Grashel 2007; LeBlanc & McCrary 1990; Silverman, Waldon & Kimura 2014), we only considered the first author in our analyses. Additionally, there may have been cases when co-authors shared research and writing responsibilities equally and decided to list their names alphabetically in the publication order. Finally, results are limited by only including articles published between 2000-2015. Thus, many prestigious music therapy scholars who have considerably influenced the profession with numerous publications in the *Journal of Music Therapy* before 2000 were not recognised as such in the current study.

Future researchers might also measure productivity by counting citations of refereed articles published in the *Journal of Music Therapy*.

Furthermore, it might be interesting to study other journals wherein music therapy researchers frequently publish their work, such as the *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy*, *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, and *Music Therapy Perspectives*. Future researchers might also investigate the other contributing authors to studies within the *Journal of Music Therapy*. For example, if researchers found that a scholar contributed to multiple papers with the *Journal of Music Therapy* as a second or third author, this author could then be recognised as a productive and contributing scholar.

There are specific types of content analyses of the music therapy literature available (Coddling 1987; Gfeller 1987; Gregory 2000, 2001; James 1985; Schwartzberg & Silverman 2011; Silverman, 2006; Tsiris, Spiro & Pavlicevic 2014; Wheeler 1988). Therefore, researchers might conduct studies connecting music therapy content with specific authors and institutional affiliations. Moreover, to determine research eminence within the music therapy field, additional research could be conducted on the editorial committee of various music therapy journals (Pasilai, Lin & Noh 2009).

Although scholarly productivity articles exist in the music education research literature, to the best of our knowledge, there is no such study in the music therapy literature. Research productivity data can have implications for funding as agencies typically desire to see an established record of published research. Therefore, the purpose of the current descriptive study was to determine research productivity within the *Journal of Music Therapy* by analysing the first authors and their respective institutional affiliations of refereed research articles within the journal from 2000-2015. The lengthy lists of contributing first authors and their respective institutional affiliations underscore the selectivity, diversity and prestige of the *Journal of Music Therapy*. Additional research is warranted to determine aspects of authors and affiliations contributing to the *Journal of Music Therapy* and other music therapy publication venues.

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