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Profile of a Career Music Educator

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Our nation's schools are required to annually combat the costly and daunting task of filling over 500,000 teacher vacancies as 15% of all teachers either migrate to another school or leave the profession (Gruber, Willey, Broughman, Strizek, & Burian-Fitzgerald, 2002). Teacher attrition poses a problem to music education, as well, with 11% to 27% of music educators planning to leave the teaching profession annually (Hancock, 2008; Killian & Baker, 2006). With the increasing demand for new music educators, the decline in music education graduates, and the number of music teachers leaving the field (Asmus, 1999; Hill, 2003; Kimpton, 2005; Lindeman, 2004), major deficits ensue. In addition, this high level of teacher turnover has a negative impact on budgets, program stability, teaching quality, and student achievement (Grissmer & Kirby, 1997; Podgursky, Monroe, & Watson, 2004).

To address the problem of teacher turnover, much attention has been given to the causes of attrition and migration. Based on data acquired from the National Center for Education Statistics, Hancock (2009) found that between 1988 and 2001, 84% of music teachers remained in their current positions, 10% moved to different schools, and 6% quit the teaching profession every year. Rather than focusing on the educational defectors, it might be more enlightening to pose the question, "What keeps 84% of music teachers in the profession?"

Few studies have been conducted to ascertain why music educators make the decision to remain in the teaching field. A study conducted by Cutietta and Thompson (2000) surveyed 25 music educators who had taught from 15 to 33 years and found several defining characteristics. Firstly, they tended to have successful programs because they had a realistic concept of what their students could achieve and were not afraid to demand a high level of performance. Secondly, they were more "child-centered" in their approach to teaching and were not as concerned about accolades or recognition from administrators or parents. Finally, these career educators were most profoundly rewarded by hearing from former students how they had impacted their lives, by having students express their appreciation, and by seeing how their teaching had changed a student's life. In summary, these veteran educators agreed that "music teaching is about music and kids" (Cutietta & Thompson, 2000, p. 51).

Method

Participants included Texas music educators teaching at all grade levels, Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. E-mails were sent to all of the elementary, choir, band, and orchestra

teachers in Denton Independent School District and Dallas ISD requesting that they complete the survey online. Members of the Texas Music Administrators Conference, including the fine arts directors of most of the school districts in Texas, were sent an e-mail asking that they distribute the request to complete the survey to their music teachers. The state of Texas is divided into 28 Regions by the Texas Music Educators Association. Using the online directories to obtain names and addresses, e-mails were sent to music educators in Regions 2, 3, 5, 7, 20, 24, and 25. Those regions were selected because they include suburban, urban, and rural schools, and, because they are located in the North Texas area near the researcher's university, it was hoped that name recognition would increase the response rate. A total of 357 educators responded, which was deemed a large enough sample for the research study.

The survey was developed by the Teacher Retention Area of Strategic Planning (ASPA), which is affiliated with the Society for Music Teacher Education. The ASPA was comprised of four members currently serving on university music education faculties and two music education doctoral candidates. Six experienced music educators examined it for validity, made suggested changes, piloted both the questions and the e-mail process using participants not represented in the final survey, made more revisions, and arrived at the final version of the survey.

The first portion of the survey focused on demographic information: gender, age, ethnicity, and marital status. The following set of questions examined the respondent's educational background: highest educational degree attained, area of specialization, method of certification, and type of schools attended prior to college (i.e., urban, suburban, etc.) Other areas examined included current job assignment (teaching area and type of school) and commitment to job as defined by number of non-required hours worked daily, number of outside rehearsals, number of years planning to continue teaching, and number of years planning to teach until retirement.

Using a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (low) to 5 (high), respondents were asked to rank items in each of the following categories: Factors Impacting Decision to Persist as a Music Educator; Respondents' Self-Evaluation of Teaching Skills; and Respondents' Self-Evaluation of Character Traits.

Results

Results, based on 357 returned surveys, consisted of frequency of responses to each question on the survey. The mean, median, and mode of the Likert-scale rankings were calculated and placed in rank order for ease of comparison.

Number of years teaching music was reported in five-year increments, beginning with the sixth year and extending to 26+ years. Forty-three percent of respondents had taught for over 20 years, providing a large sample of experienced music educators (see Table 1). The majority of the respondents were female (56%). Ages of respondents were categorized in 10-year increments (see Table 2), with the largest percentage falling in the 30–39 years of age bracket (32%). Forty percent of respondents were 50 years or older. Caucasians comprised the largest ethnic group (90%), followed by African-Americans (4%) and Hispanics (3%). Most of the respondents reported being married (79%), with the remainder being single (12%), divorced (8%), and widowed (1%).

Career music educators' years of teaching experience (N = 357)

Years Teaching Music	% of Respondents
6-10	21%
11-15	22%
16-20	15%
21-25	12%
26+	31%

Table 2

Age of respondents (N=357)

Age in years	% of Respondents
20-29	3%
30-39	32%
40-49	24%
50-59	28%
60+	12%

Investigation of the educational background of respondents revealed that 51% had a bachelor's degree, 45% had a master's degree, and 4% had a doctorate. Eighty-eight of the respondents received their certification as part of their degree program, 6% received alternative certification, 3% only took the certification test, 1% had emergency certification, 1% were not certified, and 2% designated their certification as Other.

Band was the most commonly reported teaching area among respondents (37%), followed by choir (29%), general music (14%), orchestra (11%), and other (10%). Table 3 provides a comparison between the pre-college educational background of respondents and their current

teaching assignment. While 57% of respondents attended suburban schools and only 11% attended urban schools prior to college, currently 40% teach in urban schools and 38% teach in suburban schools.

Table 3

Pre-college training compared to current job assignment of respondents

Type of School	Pre-College Training % of Respondents	Current Job Assignment % of Respondents
Urban	11%	40%
Suburban	57%	38%
Rural	24%	16%
Private	5%	1%
Other	2%	4%
Home	1%	0%

Examination of job commitment revealed that 47% of respondents reported spending 1 to 2 non-required hours at their school each day, 40% reported 3 to 4 hours daily, and 10% reported spending 5 to 6 additional hours each day. Respondents stated they conduct after-school rehearsals, on average, 1 (14%), 2 (20%), 3 (16%), 4 (20%), up to 5 (21%) days a week, with 9% reporting no outside rehearsals. When asked how many years they plan to continue teaching, 96% of respondents stated that they plan to teach until retirement.

In an effort to determine what influenced respondents to persist in music education, they were provided a list of factors and were asked to rank their importance on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 = least impact and 5 = greatest impact (see Table 4). The factors that were ranked the highest were student-centered: 1) make a difference in students' lives; 2) ability to inspire children; and 3) students accomplish musical goals. The two factors that had the least impact were record keeping and staff development provided by the school district.

Table 4

Rankings by factors impacting decision to persist as a music educator

Factor	Mean	Median	Mode
Make a Difference in Students' Lives	4.39	5	5
Ability to Inspire Children	4.25	4	4
Students Accomplish Musical Goals	4.03	4	4
Administrative Support	3.61	4	4
Adequate Teaching Resources	3.58	4	4
Non-ISD Professional Development	3.56	4	4
Adequate Facilities	3.40	4	4
Salary	3.26	3	3
Funding to Attending Conferences	3.02	3	3
Record Keeping	2.13	2	1
ISD Staff Development	2.10	2	1

Note. Ratings based on 5-point Likert scale (1 = Low Impact; 5 = High Impact).

To gain a clearer picture of their performance as a teacher, the respondents were asked to rank their level of proficiency in various skills pertinent to being a successful music educator (see Table 5). Organization was ranked highest, followed by knowledgeable about music, communication, and discipline/classroom management. Time management and stress management were ranked the lowest.

Table 5

Rankings by respondents' self-evaluation of teaching skills

Skill	Mean	Median	Mode
Organization	4.07	4	5
Knowledgeable about Music	4.33	4	4
Communication	4.23	4	4
Discipline/Classroom Management	4.15	4	4
Time Management	3.99	4	4
Stress Management	3.40	3	3

Note. Ratings based on 5-point Likert scale (1 = Low; 5 = High).

Personality and character traits were the focus of the final portion of the survey (see Table 6). The trait that received the highest rank order by participants was determined/persistent, followed closely by love and passion for teaching. Other traits ranking high included: sense of humor; caring; goal-oriented; compassionate; psychologically healthy; creative/resourceful; positive; energetic; flexible; and patient. Negative was the only characteristic that received a low ranking.

Table 6

Rankings by respondents' self-evaluation of character traits

Trait	Mean	Median	Mode
Determined/Persistent	4.57	5	5
Love and Passion for Teaching	4.55	5	5
Sense of Humor	4.47	5	5
Caring	4.45	5	5
Goal-Oriented	4.41	5	5
Compassionate	4.30	4	5
Psychologically Healthy	4.23	4	5
Creative/Resourceful	4.20	4	5
Positive	4.24	4	4
Energetic	4.13	4	4
Flexible	4.10	4	4
Patient	3.64	4	4
Negative	2.15	2	2

Note. Ratings based on 5-point Likert scale (1 = Low; 5 = High).

Discussion

While the attrition and migration rates of music educators are alarming, leaving school understaffed and diminishing the quality of education, it is heartening to note that 84% remain in the teaching profession each year. In terms of gender, this study reveals that more women than men tend to persist in music education. This is in contrast to studies of music teacher attrition that indicated that a significantly larger number of women than men intended to leave the profession (Killian & Baker, 2006; Madsen & Hancock, 2002).

Two important statistics to note are 31% of the participants had taught for 26 or more years and 40% of the respondents were 50 years of age or above, which places them either close to retirement age or eligible for retirement. While 96% of respondents stated that they plan to teach

until they retire, almost half of them are nearing that point in their career. This leads to another issue plaguing music education—retirement of qualified teachers, resulting in further teacher shortages.

The overall educational training of the respondents seemed to be above average, with 49% having graduate degrees. Further, the fact that 88% of respondents received their certification as part of university training is in keeping with research that indicates that music teachers with alternative certification tend to leave the profession at a much higher rate (Asmus, 2003). While the majority of respondents attended suburban schools (57%), most of the current job assignments were in urban schools (40%), which only 11% of respondents reported having attended prior to attending college. Research indicates that urban schools tend to have the highest attrition rates (Delgado, 1999; Hill, 2003; Quartz, 2003), yet the majority of the respondents were teaching urban populations, in spite of the fact that a small percentage had an urban educational background.

A further distinguishing trait of the respondents was their commitment to their job and the amount of time they worked beyond the requisite hours. Almost all of the respondents (97%) reported working, on average, anywhere from 1 to 6 hours per day outside of school hours. Further, 91% conducted after-school rehearsals from 1 to 5 days a week. The extra hours spent at school also represents additional interaction time with students (a critical motivating factor for respondents remaining in the teaching profession).

One of the overarching self-reported attributes of the respondents was their child-centered approach to education. The predominant factors impacting their decision to persist as a music educator were all focused on students: making a difference in students' lives; being able to inspire children; and seeing students accomplish musical goals. This is in keeping with the study conducted by Cutietta and Thompson (2000) that described veteran music educators as being "child-centered" in their approach to education. The next highest-ranking factor was administrative support, which is in keeping with previous studies pointing to the relationship between job satisfaction and support from administrators (Baker, 2007; Brewster & Railsback, 2001; Cutietta & Thompson, 2000; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Madsen & Hancock, 2002). Record keeping and staff development provided by the respondents' school districts had very little impact on retention, which seems to indicate that paperwork is not a strong detractor and district training is not a strong attractor.

Evaluation of teaching skills revealed that respondents ranked their organizational skills higher than being knowledgeable about music. Perhaps effective teaching occurs best when lessons, classrooms, and programs are well organized, in addition to providing the educator a working environment in which they experience less stress and thus are able to teach for a longer period of time. Stress management was the skill that respondents indicated was their weakest, so perhaps having strong organizational tools enables respondents to keep stress to a manageable level.

The character trait that superseded all others, according to the respondents' self-evaluation, was being determined and persistent. An additional characteristic which respondents ranked highly was being goal-oriented, an attribute of career music educators identified by Cutietta and Thompson (2000). It seems that these two traits are interrelated in that great determination is required to achieve goals, particularly when faced with some of the challenges unique to music educators. Love and passion for teaching was also ranked highly by respondents, which is a quality that is closely connected with a long-term commitment to any profession.

Results of the study suggest that career music educators remain in the profession because they are committed to having a positive impact on students' lives and because they possess the

unique skills and character traits essential to longevity in the teaching field. Essentially, music educators persist in teaching because of their self-determined and intrinsically motivated behaviors.

Because this study is limited to Texas, the results are indicative of a specific geographic region and are not necessarily representative of the national population of music educators. However, this study does provide some interesting and insightful information regarding the teachers who choose to make music education a life-long career.

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Perspectives of Elementary General Music Teachers on Factors Influencing Student Participation in Secondary Music Ensembles

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A wide variety of factors contribute to student participation in secondary music ensembles. Factors standing outside of the school setting may include family socioeconomic status (SES) and parental influences. In a review of literature, Albert (2006a) reported on several studies showing how family SES affects student participation in instrumental ensembles at the secondary level. Lower SES students take part at a much lower rate than do higher SES students. Albert also found that greater degrees of parental support were closely associated with student participation in instrumental music programs in middle school. Kinney (2010) found that students who live with both parents are more likely to initially enroll and continue studying music in band programs. This study also suggested that single parents have a difficult time scheduling several extracurricular activities thus resulting in a lower participation rate. Furthermore, results of a survey of undergraduate music education majors conducted by Mizener (2006) indicated that parents had a strong influence on the decision of students to study music in college.

Within the school setting, the issues of administrative support of the music program, vertical alignment of the music curriculum, and recruitment efforts of ensemble directors may influence decisions to participate in secondary music activities. Abril and Gault (2007) conducted a study examining perspectives on the school music program, focusing on the community and administrators. They found that even though administrators value music education, they sometimes give priority to other subjects. Studies by Smith (1997) and Corenblum and Marshall (1998) found a close relationship between the SES of families within a school and level of administrative support for instrumental music programs. Thus, the SES of families of students within a school seems to influence the access students have to music activities.

A second school-related factor is vertical curriculum alignment. Curriculum alignment has many facets. The term often refers to the relationships between the curriculum as it is

documented in materials from national, state, and local agencies and the content as teachers actually teach it, and then the relationships between the content of instruction and the areas of content that are assessed. Glatthorn (1999) and Squires (2009) both observed that planning close connections among the written curriculum, instruction, and assessment can be very effective, as evidenced in improved standardized test scores, under certain circumstances.

Vertical alignment, one of several aspects of curriculum alignment, is the practice of purposely designing the curriculum for a particular academic area so objectives and learning activities are coordinated and lead to the accomplishment of a set of mutual goals. Schielack and Seeley (2010) noted that in mathematics, when teachers communicate across grade levels to understand the content and processes of instruction at all levels, students move from level to level more successfully. Furthermore, a successful transition from elementary math to middle school math builds a foundation for greater achievement at the high school level. Because the elementary music program is typically the first opportunity a student has for formal music study, its strength may play an important role in a student's decision to pursue further musical studies.

Recruitment is still another in-school factor related to participation in secondary instrumental ensembles. Recruiting efforts draw many participants to bands, orchestras, and choirs in the secondary schools. The directors must actively make their programs visible to potential new members. Nierman and Veak (1997) found that participatory recruiting techniques on the elementary level, including recorder lessons and instrument "petting zoos," resulted in increased numbers of students expressing interest in participating in band. They also observed that recruiting activities were most effective when held in close proximity to the date on which a student registers for band. Albert (2006b) found that performances by the middle school band for the elementary students as well as visits to the middle school by the elementary students were effective recruiting strategies. In addition, any means of increasing visibility of the band program, including clothing printed with the name of the band, community performances, and recordings, resulted in greater participation in the program.

From within the school, another potential influence on secondary ensemble participation is the elementary general music program and the music teacher. This influence may sometimes be overlooked as factors in decisions to participate in music after the elementary years. There is, however, evidence that elementary music experiences do affect the desire to participate in music activities after the elementary grades. In a study of factors influencing choir participation, Mizener (1991) found that among fifth- through eighth-graders, loving to sing and enjoying choir-related activities are the strongest factors related to wanting to join a choir. The study suggests that elementary music teachers can foster a positive attitude toward choir and encourage students to continue their music participation by selecting attractive musical materials and by providing opportunities to take part in musical performances. Similarly, a summary of data from a survey performed by Child Trends (2010), a research organization, observed that support for music in the elementary and middle schools is critical to student participation in music activities through high school and into adulthood.

Because of the small amount of research regarding the influence of the elementary general music teacher on student participation in music after elementary school, it seemed appropriate to explore some aspect of the effect of the elementary music teacher on student participation in secondary music ensembles. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to consider characteristics of elementary general music teachers and their views of factors influencing students to take part in secondary music programs, including their own influence and characteristics of their music programs. Factors investigated in this survey included, but were not limited to, teacher certification, curriculum alignment, and secondary ensemble recruitment.

The following research questions concerning selected characteristics of elementary general music programs and music teachers' perspectives of them guided this study:

1. What is the typical teaching situation of a teacher responding to the survey in this study?
2. What are the qualifications of teachers responding to the survey, and what are some of their routine instructional practices?
3. To what extent does the district music program employ vertical curriculum alignment between the elementary and secondary levels?
- 4a. To what extent do secondary ensemble directors recruit at the elementary level?
- 4b. In the estimation of the study participants, what portion of their students go on to participate in secondary music programs?
5. How do elementary general music teachers perceive the relationship between their qualifications and experiences and student participation in secondary ensembles?

Method

A comprehensive survey was developed and sent to 195 elementary general music teachers in Southeast Texas. All elementary music teachers surveyed were active members of the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) Regions 10, 19, or 23. Of the 195 e-mail addresses used, 10 addresses were invalid or no longer usable, leaving 185 survey requests sent. Respondents were given two months to complete and return the survey, with e-mail reminders sent every two weeks. There was a 51.9% ($n = 96$) rate of return. The educators also had the option of requesting the survey results when completed, with 20 choosing to do so. The survey was developed and sent out via Survey Monkey, an online survey service, and can be found at www.surveymonkey.com.

The survey contained a demographic section with 11 questions pertaining to the teaching position and school district. The 15 questions of the second section concerned the respondents' teaching beliefs, philosophies, and practices. Question formats included multiple choice, short answer, and open response.

Data gathered through multiple choice questions were presented in frequencies and percentages. Short answers and open responses were analyzed and placed into categories according to emerging themes.

Results

The first section of the survey contained demographic questions revealing that the typical teaching situation is in an urban setting, the teacher has 15 or more years of experience, and he or she teaches elementary general music to 100-150 children every day. The respondents provided the name of the school in which they were currently employed and the name of the city or town in which their school was located. The respondents then indicated if their school were classified as "urban" (40.6%), "suburban" (37.5%), "rural" (12.5%), or "other" (9.4%). The educators who chose to expand upon their answer in the "other" category listed characteristics such as inner city, urban students living in the suburbs, and lower income suburban in a non-typical suburban setting.

When asked to indicate the number of years of teaching experience, the majority of respondents listed 15 or more years (50%), followed by 0-3 years (15.6%), then 6-10 years (14.6%), 10-15 years (12.5%), and finally 3-6 years (7.3%) (See Figure 1).

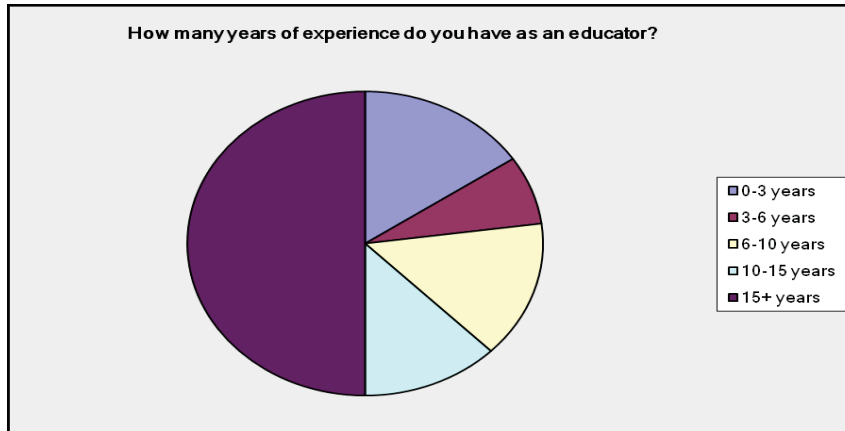


Figure 1. Number of years of teaching experience.

Next, the respondents provided their current teaching assignment. The greater part of them listed elementary general music (92%). A small number of participants indicated elementary choir (4.2%) or middle school choir (2.1%). Other assignments listed by individuals included beginning band, elementary orchestra, elementary art, and elementary band.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the approximate number of students taught in a typical school day. The largest number of students taught per day was 100-150 (38%), followed by 151-200 (18.8%), then 201-300, and 301-430 were equal (11.6%) and finally 25-100 (9.4%).

The final question in the demographics section of the survey asked the educators for anything they would like to add about their particular situation. Several of the answers involved multiculturalism and the many combinations of ethnicity among their students, levels of socioeconomic standing, and school funding. These responses will be examined further in the discussion section of this paper.

The second section of the survey related to the teachers' educational beliefs and instructional practices and to the administrative policies of the district. The second research question concerned the qualification and experience of the participants and their routine instructional practices. Briefly, the majority of the respondents hold Texas certification in music, grades EC-12, and they earned it in a traditional university certification program. For most, elementary general music is their preferred area of teaching. They most often use teacher observation of classroom activities and oral tests for assessment. They implement the TEKS in their instruction on a regular basis, with their supervisors encouraging them to do so frequently. Singing, playing instruments, and moving are the most frequent activities in the music classroom.

Respondents listed their qualifications and certifications for teaching in the classroom, with several listing more than one certification. The majority of respondents (60.4%) indicated Texas certification EC-12 music. Two educators indicated the same certification from Missouri. The remaining answers were split among elementary general classroom (18.7%), Kodály (5.2%), and early childhood ESL (5.2%). Several certifications were given by small numbers of respondents (one to three), such as special education, Orff, Nebraska general music, K-8 self-contained classroom, Michigan general music, principal, secondary math, K-12 Art, 4-8 grade generalist,

ESL supplemental, superintendent, life/earth science and geology, K-8 grade theatre, learning resource specialist, and none.

The majority of respondents (81.3%) specified traditional university college of education certification, whereas others indicated an alternative certification course (18.8%). The 18 individuals who indicated alternative certification named the course through which they received certification. Educational service centers in two regions, two school districts, two universities, and three commercial alternative certification programs provided certification training to the teachers.

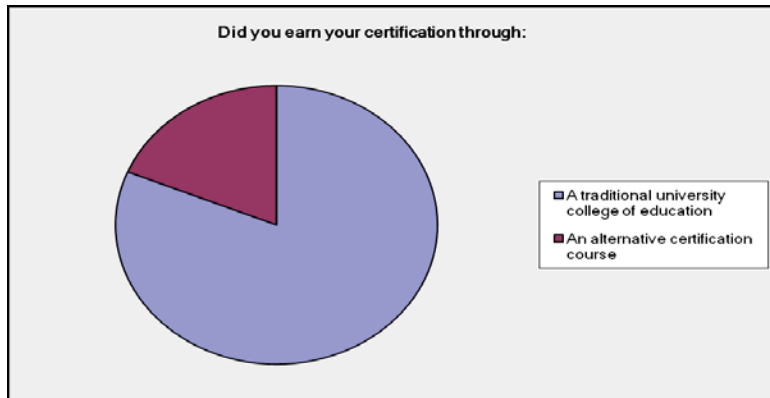


Figure 2. Source of teacher certification

When asked if they felt comfortable teaching their subject area and level, educators ranked their top three teaching preferences, with “one” being the first choice. The options included “elementary general music,” “sixth- through eighth-grade band,” “sixth- through eighth-grade choir,” or “sixth- through eighth-grade orchestra;” “ninth- through twelfth-grade band,” “ninth- through twelfth-grade choir,” or “ninth- through twelfth-grade orchestra;” and “other.” A clear majority of participants preferred elementary general music (87%), with sixth- through eighth-grade band (15.6%) the second preference, and sixth- through eighth-grade orchestra (3.1%) as the third preference. Responses in the “other” category (23.9%) included music history, music theory, general classroom, and college.

How elementary general music teachers assess their students was one of the instructional practices explored. The educators marked their preferred methods of assessment, with more than one option possible. The majority of respondents (97.5%) chose “teacher observation of classroom activities” as the favorite method of assessment. “Formal performances,” was chosen by more than half of the participants (54.8%). Approximately 1/3 of the participants (32.9%) used “oral tests.” Other options included “written tests,” “prepared worksheets,” and “district-specified assessments of objectives included in the district curriculum goals.”

Implementation of the TEKS in the classroom was examined as well. Educators were asked to what degree their supervisor (principal, fine arts supervisor, or mentor teacher) encouraged them to implement the TEKS. Respondents chose “frequently” (62.2%), “occasionally” (17.1%), “infrequently” (13.4%), or “not at all” (7.3%). When asked to what degree they implemented the TEKS in classroom instruction, participants responded overwhelmingly with “frequently” (92.7%). Smaller numbers of respondents selected “occasionally” (6.1%), and “infrequently” (1.2%), and no one chose the option “not at all.”

Respondents ranked music activity choices in the order of importance, with more than one activity usable at the same rank (see Figure 3). The top-ranked activity was “singing,” chosen by a majority of respondents (85.3%). “Playing instruments” was the second choice, selected by about a third of the respondents (34.1%), and about a third of the respondents selected “movement” (31.7%) as the third choice. Other choices were “listening to musical literature,” “reading and writing music,” and “creating music through improvising and composing.”

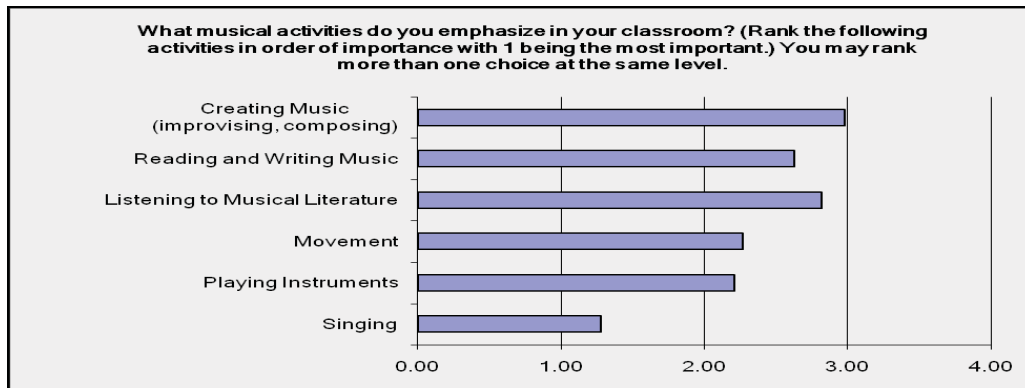


Figure 3. Rank order of reported classroom musical activities emphasis

Vertical alignment between the elementary music program and the secondary music program was the subject of the third research question. In summary, most respondents indicated that there was no formal vertical alignment. Of those replying that the elementary and secondary programs were vertically aligned, the majority said that there was no regular discussion of the objectives between elementary and secondary teachers. Most respondents also thought that the programs were not aligned informally, but in the open responses, several participants observed that if teachers base instruction on the TEKS, then vertical alignment from level to level automatically takes place.

Educators indicated if the overall elementary music program were officially vertically aligned with the secondary program. The answers were “no” (58.5%), and “yes” (41.5%). If the respondents answered “yes,” they were then asked if the alignment objectives were discussed regularly between elementary and secondary teachers. Again, the results favored “no” (69.4%) over “yes” (30.6%). The last survey question in the area of vertical alignment concerned unofficial alignment between elementary and secondary music programs. The majority (55.6%) believed their programs were either not aligned or aligned very little with the secondary music program. Only a small number of respondents (23%) believed their programs were aligned unofficially.

In questions related to vertical alignment, the survey asked about implementation of district guidelines for fine arts and what courses were being offered to meet these guidelines. In open-ended responses, educators indicated to what degree they implemented the goals, objectives, and activities specified in the district curriculum guide. The replies varied widely, with several educators indicating they were not aware of any district curriculum guide; therefore they were not required to follow it. Others, however, stated they were strongly encouraged to follow their guide. Respondents who were aware of a curriculum guide indicated their willingness to follow it as well as encouragement by their supervisors to do so “frequently” if not “daily.”

The next survey question asked what fine arts courses were offered to students in junior high or middle school to meet the one-credit junior high fine arts requirement. Respondents could select more than one course. The most common answer was “band” (64.6%), followed closely by “choir” (61%), then “orchestra” (37.8%), “theatre arts” and “drama” (35.3%), “art” (34.1%), “unknown” (19.5%), “dance” (9.8%), “general music” (9.8%) and “other.”

The perceptions of elementary general music teachers regarding how many students continue participating in secondary music programs were then addressed in the survey (See Figure 4). The largest portion of respondents (41.5%) estimated that 26-50% of their elementary music students participate in secondary music programs. Smaller numbers of respondents chose 0-25% (28%), 51-75% (23.2%) and 76-100% (7.3%).

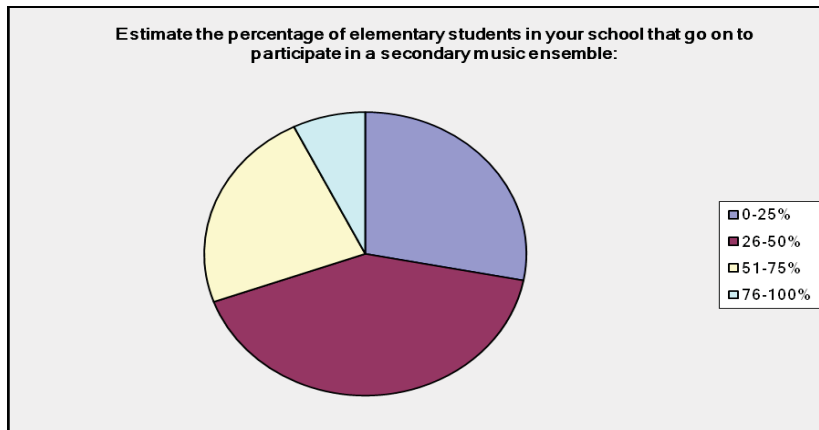


Figure 4. Estimate of secondary music participation

The next topic of discussion in the research questions was recruitment. Most teachers said there was a recruiting program in their school districts, band was the strongest recruiting area, and that recruiting efforts were effective, ranging from “somewhat” to “very.” Respondents were asked if the secondary ensembles in their districts had a systematic program of recruitment in the elementary school. Most respondents chose “yes” (57.3%) with the remaining respondents choosing “no” (42.7%). The educators were then asked which secondary ensemble recruited most actively. The answers ranked in order were “band” (48%), “choir” (18%), “none” (14%), “equal” (8%), “orchestra” (6%) and “not sure” or “don’t know” (6%). The educators then indicated the effect recruitment efforts had on student participation in a secondary ensemble. The answers were “somewhat effective” (42.7%), “very effective” (32.9%), “slightly effective” (15.9%), and “not effective” (8.5%).

The final research question dealt with the relationship between the elementary general music teachers’ qualifications and experiences and student participation in secondary ensembles. Respondents indicated whether they believed there was a relationship between the two factors. The open-ended responses could be categorized into “agree” (74.4%), “unsure” (6.1%), and “disagree” (3.7%). Finally, respondents were asked if they would like to add anything more about the relationships between elementary general music teachers and secondary ensemble participation. There were forty responses, which will be discussed in detail in the discussion section of this paper.

Discussion

When educators were asked to describe their schools, over 75% indicated either “urban” or “suburban.” The location of a school district often determines the variety and quantity of resources available to the schools and the conditions under which students and teachers learn and teach. For example, students who attend urban or suburban school districts have opportunities that rural students may not have, whereas students in rural schools may experience a less threatening environment than those in urban schools.

Half of the respondents indicated fifteen or more years of teaching experience. Perhaps less experienced teachers, those with fewer than three years of experience, were not as interested or did not have the available time to complete the survey. The more experienced teachers may have had a deeper understanding of the importance of the influence of elementary music experiences on later participation in musical activities.

The final question in the demographics section of the survey asked if there were anything the respondents would like to add about their teaching situation. Several responses were associated with the SES of the students. Many teachers listed factors such as working-class Latino students, Title I school classification, gang-related areas, at-risk students, multilingual students, and an insufficient number of music teachers for the size of the school. The fact that teachers felt the need to include factors about their schools that were not obvious to the general public indicated that these teachers considered economic factors important in dealing with students. The economic surroundings can greatly influence activities in a music classroom.

When asked to list their teaching certifications and qualifications, over half of the respondents listed a certification in EC-12 music, indicating that the majority of elementary general music teachers are highly qualified. Other certifications were also listed, such as administrator, math, art, life science, resource specialist, and elementary general classroom, which indicate that not all teachers in a fine arts class are teaching in their primary area of expertise. Whereas the majority of fine arts teachers are teaching in their area of specialization, it is not uncommon to see others in the classroom as well.

Another area examined by this survey was teaching preference. Respondents were asked to rank their top three teaching preferences. A strong majority ($n = 84$) listed elementary general music as first choice. This suggests that the majority of the respondents were teaching their preferred subject area. It seems that most respondents prefer to teach the younger-aged students compared to the high school level students. In the “other” category, several respondents listed teaching older students only if necessary.

Respondents were asked to choose which methods of assessment they preferred. Teacher observation of student participation in classroom activities was the most common. This suggests that educators make daily participation an important criterion in grading. Oral testing, another category of classroom participation, was also a preferred assessment used by the respondents.

The survey also asked which musical activities were emphasized in the classroom. Singing, playing instruments and movement were all considered important. These activities are not sit-down activities and encourage complete and active participation by the students. It is certainly easiest to grade these activities through a daily participation grade rather than through written tests or worksheets. Creating music, a higher-order thinking skill, was the least emphasized

activity in the classroom. Educators often regret not spending enough time on creating music, perhaps due to its time-consuming nature and to the teachers' lack of preparation or understanding regarding teaching composition and improvisation in music.

Many respondents viewed vertical alignment between the elementary and secondary music programs as a positive concept. In elementary general music, as in other subject areas, the subject matter should be presented in a sequential manner, a practice that can prepare students for participation in secondary ensembles. If educators value vertical alignment, why did the majority of respondents answer that their program was aligned neither officially nor unofficially with the secondary music program and that alignment objectives were not discussed regularly among teachers? This could be due to a lack of communication between directors or administrators or to a lack of enforcement of an aligned curriculum by the immediate supervisors.

There appears to be a discrepancy between what educators want and what educators are going to do for the good of their students. Several educators indicated, however, that as long as the TEKS are followed, vertical alignment within the district should fall into place. The question then becomes one of teacher evaluation by the administrators to be sure the TEKS are being followed. Educators seem to value vertical curriculum alignment, but there is often no follow-through either by the elementary or the secondary directors.

Implementation of the TEKS in the musical classroom must be enforced by administrators as well as by the music teacher. When asked to what degree does the supervisor encourage the implementation of the TEKS, most respondents answered "frequently." A large majority of the survey participants also responded "frequently" when asked to what degree they implemented the TEKS in classroom instruction. If the respondents claim high TEKS implementation, why is vertical alignment not stronger? Weak vertical alignment could be the result of little follow-through regarding curriculum implementation. The respondents were then asked to what degree the goals in the district curriculum guide were implemented. This question was answered indirectly, with educators choosing to focus on the lack of a known district curriculum guide. The Texas Education Agency (TEA), Texas education's governing state agency, requires the use of a district curriculum guide for each district. Several of the respondents indicated a willingness to use a district guide if one were available but did not know of one.

Investigating student participation in secondary ensembles after completing elementary school is one of the purposes of this study. In an essay format, participants answered in an essay format whether they believed a relationship exists between the qualifications, experience, and teaching skills of the elementary music teacher and participation in secondary ensembles. Very few respondents answered "no." Several respondents expanded upon their answers by writing about characteristics that contribute to a positive experience in their classrooms. Teacher enthusiasm, self-confidence, and a love for music were mentioned frequently. Having a positive experience in the elementary music classroom was also cited as a major contribution to secondary participation. Respondents believed that personally making an extra effort to promote secondary ensemble participation made a difference in the future decisions of their students.

With educators encouraging student participation, secondary recruitment is the next step. When asked if the secondary ensembles in their district have a systematic program of recruitment, over half of the respondents answered "yes." Of the respondents, a large majority felt that recruitment efforts were either "somewhat effective" or "very effective." These percentages may actually be low because they are based on the perceptions of the elementary teacher and not on actual enrollment figures. Respondents also felt that the band programs recruited most actively. There was a gap between the recruitment efforts of band and choir,

which could explain the lower degree of secondary participation in vocal ensembles compared to instrumental. The attraction of using new instruments rather than singing every day, an activity respondents claim to use frequently, could be another factor contributing to greater participation in band.

Educators were asked if there were anything they would like to add about the relationships between elementary general music and secondary ensemble participation. The responses were gathered in essay form and categorized according to content. Educators were firm in the belief that if a solid musical foundation, either through enjoyment or enthusiasm, were provided, students would be successful and would desire to continue studying secondary music. Elementary music teachers provide their students with their first exposure to a music classroom, which can set the students up for success or failure. If a student has a negative experience at the elementary level, that student may not be willing to participate in secondary music despite the level of recruitment efforts in place.

Respondents also expressed concern over the lack of vertical alignment between elementary and secondary ensembles, citing communication as an essential tool for success. Vertical alignment was recognized as weak in an earlier section of this survey. Since the majority of respondents listed fifteen or more years of teaching experience, the lack of communication among music educators should be taken seriously. Younger educators may be more interested in logistical concerns while older educators are traditionally concerned with the betterment of their students, having already mastered fundamental teaching skills. It is clear that vertical alignment and communication among educators in a given district is often seen as limited and must be improved.

Results of this survey reveal a high level of concern and involvement among elementary general music teachers regarding the participation of their students in music activities in middle school and high school. Elementary music teachers are interested in the entire music program in their districts. They have connections with their students that can benefit music participation at all levels. It would be a great advantage for secondary ensemble directors to establish working partnerships with elementary music teachers and for curriculum directors and music supervisors to facilitate the formal development of the music program across all grades.

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Effects of Age, Experience, and Instruction on Elementary Music Teacher Movement Self-Efficacy: A Pilot Study

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As one of the recognized media of the Orff-Schulwerk method of music instruction, movement is fundamental to music specialists' teaching. It can embody the mantra of "sound before sign," and provide the means by which students experience the kinesthetic learning that is so natural to their musical development. In her 1972 address to the American Orff-Schulwerk Association (AOSA), Barbara Haselbach stated, "Skipping, running, tripping along, turning, and springing and all other ways in which children move are signs of an increased consciousness of life, but also of an excess of vitality that must disperse itself through some kind of motor activity" (Carley, 2004, p. 107). Music teachers often take advantage of childrens' natural movements, incorporating them as expressive elements in the instruction of music fundamentals. "Orff teachers do not view movement study as an end in itself but as another means towards musical and emotional growth" (Frazee, 1987, p. 19).

Because teachers using the Orff music method must model, lead, and teach movement applications, there exists a recognized model of training. The American Orff Schulwerk Association (AOSA) (1998) cites the following as goals of movement coursework throughout its three training levels: development of improvisational skills, movement and dance vocabulary, and movement and dance pedagogy. However, AOSA also states that limitations of physical condition and capability as well as social acceptance of movement should be taken into account by instructors.

Educators have long championed the use of movement in music instruction. Progressive educators, such as Froebel (1878), Farnsworth (1909), and Hall (1911), advocated the use of motions that included clapping, marching, stepping, and dancing (Campbell, 1991). With his system of eurhythmics, Jaques-Dalcroze (1930) popularized learning musical concepts through movement. General music teaching materials have continued to recommend movement as a respected instructional approach to teaching musical concepts, especially at primary levels (Campbell, 1991).

Researchers have examined the types of movement used in music instruction (Campbell, 1991; Flohr & Brown, 1979; Gilbert, 1980; Metz, 1989), and its effect on children's performance of basic music skills (Aschersleben and Prinz, 1995; Boyle, 1970; Frega, 1979; Malbrán, 2000;

Rainbow, 1981; Schleuter & Schleuter, 1985). Rainbow (1981) examined the ability of three and four year-old children to keep a steady beat. Vocal responses were easiest for both age groups when accompanied by the movements of clapping and tapping. Aschersleben and Prinz (1995) found that hand tapping yielded significantly more accuracy than foot tapping. Malbran (2002) reports that steady beat accuracy in arm movements is found to increase with age.

Teachers must have the knowledge, skill, and confidence to model, perform, and give feedback on movement to effectively impact students' musical learning. Bandura (1997) stated that to be motivated to participate in an activity, one must possess self-efficacy, the belief in one's own abilities to perform a task successfully. Bandura defined it as "...beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3).

Research in self-efficacy has been frequently investigated in the fields of psychology and education with findings indicating various significant impacts on students (Anderson, Greene, & Loewen 1988; Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000; Lent, Brown, & Larkin, 1986; Moore & Esselman, 1992; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991; Pajares, 1996; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996; Schunk, 1995; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). Research has shown that teacher efficacy was indicative of student achievement on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (Moore & Esselman, 1992), the Canadian Achievement Tests (Anderson, et al., 1988), and the Ontario Assessment Instrument Pool (Ross, 1992). Related to these findings are studies that claim teacher efficacy may even influence students' own efficacy (Anderson et al., 1988) and motivation (Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989).

Students' self-efficacy beliefs also tend to decline gradually throughout schooling (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Research shows that teachers can positively impact student efficacy by providing learning goals (Zimmerman & Kitsantas; 1996, 1997), implementing learner-centered instructional practices that stress critical thinking (Meece, Herman, & McCombs, 2003), and by supporting students' academic achievement (Anderman, Patrick, Hruda, Linnenbrink, 2002).

Research reveals strong relationships between self-efficacy and musical achievement in performance (McCormick & McPherson, 2003; McPherson & McCormick, 2006), individual practice (McCormick & McPherson, 1999; Nielson, 2004), jazz improvisation (Davison, 2010; Watson, 2010), and music teaching (Steele, 2009). There is evidence that student self-efficacy is a predictor of performance success (McCormick & McPherson, 2003; McPherson & McCormick, 2006, McPherson & Zimmerman, 2002). Klinedinst (1991) and Stewart (2002) found that self-efficacy also plays a major role in student retention in music programs. These results may suggest that students choose to remain in programs that showcase their perceived strengths (Ebie, 2005).

Outside of student self-efficacy, there also exists research that explores many other variables that may affect adult and teacher self-efficacy, including participation and retention factors (Ayotte, Margrett, & Hicks-Patrick, 2010; Callea, Spittle, O'Meara, & Casey, 2008; Fontaine & Shaw, 1995). Callea, Spittle, O'Meara, and Casey (2008) examined the self-efficacy of primary grade teachers related to teaching Australia's Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) classes and found a positive relationship between self-efficacy related to teaching these classes, and interest in teaching the classes, and participation in physical activity. Fontaine and Shaw (1995) investigated healthy adults and their adherence to an eight-week step aerobic class. Results indicate that participants who adhered to the program had a significantly higher self-efficacy score than those who dropped out. This attrition among participants may be explained by

Bandura (2006), who concluded that perceived efficacy can determine the pivotal choices people make at significant decision points in life. When faced with difficulties, those with low efficacy opt to give up whereas those with high efficacy view obstacles as surmountable and prove to be resilient.

Another variable that may impact self-efficacy is age. Differences in self-efficacy have been examined across age groups in motor skills research. Ghisletta, Kennedy, Rodrigue, Lindenberger, and Raz (2007) compared younger and older adults on bimanual coordination tasks at various movement speeds. Results indicate that older adults tended to perform as well as younger individuals in terms of accuracy and stability at slow paces, but age differences existed at higher speeds. Potter (2009) examined older adults' perceived ability to complete mentally and physically challenging tasks. It was found that older adults with higher confidence displayed only minor errors, while those showing lower confidence made extreme errors. These results seem to indicate that, with the exception of limitations such as speed of tasks, older adults may display similar gains to younger adults in motor learning. Research has yet to show the role of self-efficacy in physical activity performance.

Experience in performing tasks may also be a determinant in adult and teacher self-efficacy (Anderson et al., 1988; Housego, 1992; Hoy and Woolfolk, 1990; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998; Tsorbatzoudis, Daroglou, Zahariadis, & Grouios, 2003). Tsorbatzoudis, et al. (2003) used the Coaching Efficacy Scale, to examine coaches' beliefs about their ability to affect athletes in areas of game strategy, motivation, teaching technique, and character building. Results yielded significant differences between experienced and less experienced coaches on teaching technique and overall self-efficacy, with experienced coaches having higher efficacy scores. Research has shown teachers' self-efficacy to be more malleable during pre-service years (Housego, 1992; Hoy & Hoy, 1990). Anderson, Greene, and Loewen (1988) and Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, and Hoy (1998) found that teachers' efficacy becomes resistant to change with more years of experience. Ross (1994) discovered an increase in general teaching efficacy following an eight-month training on cooperative learning. General teaching efficacy was defined as the ability to use techniques to control various social conditions of students. Personal teaching efficacy was defined as confidence in one's teaching ability, and was found to be stable across time, indicating that self-efficacy may be difficult to increase with teachers' experience. Ross (1994) stated that self-efficacy increases may appear diminished because teachers are affected by the perceptions and comparisons of other teachers, who may also be in professional training.

Studies have also shown that professional development may only result in higher self-efficacy when training focuses the teacher in a meaningful and participatory way, which usually involves application of the knowledge learned (Bandura, 1997; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990, 1999; Henson, 2001; Knight & Boudah, 1998; Noffke, 1997; Ross, 1994). For example, researchers have directly involved teachers in research, which may include critical examination of their classrooms and evaluation of the effect of the teachers' interventions within it (Knight & Boudah, 1998).

The relationship between meaningful participation and self-efficacy can also be seen in music research on self-efficacy (Davison, 2010; Nielson, 2004; Watson, 2010). Davison (2010) studied the effect of intensive improvisation instruction on middle school instrumentalists' self-efficacy. Results indicated a significant increase in both instrumental music and improvisation self-efficacy following treatment. Watson (2010) examined the effects of two instructional approaches (aural and pedagogical) on achievement and self-efficacy of instrumental college musicians. Participants' self-efficacy increased significantly with the instruction in jazz

improvisation. Similarly, when studying college students' practice techniques, Nielson (2004) found that those who were more deeply involved with thought processes during practice and performance demonstrated higher self-efficacy.

Despite increasing research on students' self-efficacy, there remains scant research on music teachers' self-efficacy within the music class. A notable exception is Bergee and Grashel (2002), who found that teacher self-efficacy beliefs can be strengthened over time. Other studies (Madura, 2000; Madura Ward-Steinman, 2007) examined teachers' self-efficacy in teaching improvisation at various grade levels. Findings indicated an inverse relationship, as music teacher improvisation self-efficacy decreased significantly as student age increased. This may be explained by Watson (2010), who suggested that self-efficacy is situational and contextual.

Because there are multiple variables that may affect self-efficacy, it is important to discover their relationships in the field of music education, specifically as it relates to teachers' own movement development and confidence level. The purpose of this research was to measure the effects of age, experience, and instruction on elementary music teacher movement self-efficacy. This pilot study also was designed to examine differences in the overall pretest scores of Level I and Level II participants.

Method

Volunteer participants ($N=23$) in this study were enrolled in Level 1 ($n=14$) or Level 2 ($n=9$) of a two-week AOSA approved Orff Schulwerk training workshop held at a Southern university. Participants were primarily female music teachers ($n=22$) representing three states. Orff Schulwerk courses typically comprise 3 curricular components: basic pedagogy, recorder, and movement. Each participant in a two-week Orff Schulwerk workshop engages in at least 1.25 hours of movement instruction per day for a total of 12.5 hours. Movement activities were also implemented in the basic training during this study, but were not the primary focus.

Participants completed the *Movement Self-Efficacy Scale for Elementary Music Teachers* (MSES), a measure created by the researchers, before beginning the Orff workshop and immediately following the last movement class on the last day of the workshop (pre-test, post-test design). The 24-item survey (see Figure 1) was made up of statements in which participants had to circle a number (0 – 10) that corresponded to the confidence in their ability (or self-efficacy) to perform the given task, with 10 meaning “confident I can do” and 0 meaning “cannot do at all”. The *Movement Self-Efficacy Scale* was created following the recommendations of Bandura (2006) for developing a valid self-efficacy instrument. Content validity for the scale was then evaluated by an AOSA approved movement instructor and a music educator who had recently completed Level I movement training. Cronbach's alpha of .98 suggests that the items included in the *Movement Self-Efficacy Survey* are internally consistent.

Movement Self-Efficacy Scale for Elementary Music Teachers

Please rate each of the following statements based on how certain you are that YOU can do each of the following.

Please circle one rating for each statement – please do not circle between numbers.

	Cannot do at all				Moderately confident				Confident I can do			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1. I can shadow another person's movements.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
2. I can model movement in front of 3 rd -6 th grade students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3. I can perform body percussion patterns.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
4. I can perform movement with a group of adults.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
5. I can perform movement in low space.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
6. I can perform movement set to fast tempo music.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
7. I can create/design locomotor movement activities for elementary students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
8. I can mirror another person's movements.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
9. I can perform fluid movement through space.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
10. I can create/design non-locomotor movement activities for elementary students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11. I can perform movement with delicacy and finesse.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
12. I can create body percussion patterns.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
13. I can model movement in front of PreK-2 nd grade students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
14. I can perform movement in high space.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
15. I can create/design non-locomotor movement activities with an object for elementary students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
16. I can model movement in front of adults.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
17. I can perform movement with force and power.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
18. I can perform movement with a group of 3 rd -6 th grade students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
19. I can perform sharp or sudden movements through space.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
20. I can perform movement with a group of PreK-2 nd grade students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
21. I can create/design locomotor movement activities with an object for elementary students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
22. I can improvise fluid movements to music.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
23. I can improvise sudden/sharp movements to music.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
24. I can model choreographed dances in front of elementary students.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Figure 1. Movement Self-Efficacy Scale for Elementary Music Teachers

Participants were handed the survey at the opening orientation meeting of the workshop. The researchers instructed participants to only circle one rating for each item. Demographic information (such as date of birth, number of years teaching elementary students, etc.) was also obtained from the participants on the back of the survey. Participants were coded into groups by age [“1” = 20-35 years of age ($n=7$), “2” = 36-50 years of age ($n=9$), “3” = 51+ years of age ($n=7$)], as well as experience [“1” = 1-4 years ($n=6$), “2” = 5-10 years ($n=8$), “3” = 11+ years ($n=9$)]. Age was calculated in years from date of birth to date of the pretest.

Item responses were summed with a possible overall score ranging from 0 – 240. The higher the score, the more efficacious the participant perceived himself or herself to be in movement ability. Posttests were issued immediately following the last movement class of the workshop. The same instructions were given, but no demographic information was requested on the posttest. The same scoring procedure used on the pretest was employed on the posttest.

This study sought to measure the relationship between Orff-Schulwerk movement instruction and the movement self-efficacy of participating music teachers. Other variables such as age and experience were also compared. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were calculated for each item response for Level I and Level II participants. Overall descriptive statistics were also calculated for scores on the *MSES* by levels, experience groups, and age groups. To determine whether Level I and Level II participants differed on the *MSES* pretest, a one-way, between subjects ANOVA was performed. A mixed ANOVA with repeated measures was calculated to examine the effects of instruction on Level I participants’ movement self-efficacy, with between-subjects variables of teaching experience and age compared. An alpha level of .05 with a nondirectional hypothesis was established for analysis.

Results

Means and standard deviations for each item response on the Movement Self-Efficacy Scale pretest were calculated by Orff Level. As Table 1 shows, Level 1 participants reported lowest self-efficacy scores on item 16 (“I can model movement in front of adults”) and item 17 (“I can perform movement with force and power”). Level II participants also reported lower efficacy on item 16 indicating that, overall, participants are less confident modeling movement in front of their peers. High means for both levels were reported for Item 20 (“I can perform movement with a group of PreK-2nd grade students”). Level II participants also indicated they felt efficacious in their ability to model movement in front of PreK-2nd grade students (Item 13).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Item Responses on Movement Self-Efficacy Scale by Level

Item	<u>Level 1</u>		<u>Level 2</u>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. I can shadow another person's movements.	7.93	1.94	9.22	1.09
2. I can model movement in front of 3rd-6th grade students.	7.86	2.41	8.89	1.54
3. I can perform body percussion patterns.	7.64	2.02	8.78	1.30
4. I can perform movement with a group of adults.	7.07	2.37	8.78	1.79
5. I can perform movement in low space.	5.93	2.56	9.00	1.32
6. I can perform movement set to fast tempo music.	6.80	2.52	8.11	1.90
7. I can create/design locomotor movement activities for elementary students.	6.57	2.82	8.33	2.06
8. I can mirror another person's movements.	7.93	1.82	9.44	0.73
9. I can perform fluid movement through space.	6.36	2.88	9.00	1.12
10. I can create/design non-locomotor movement activities for elementary students.	6.71	2.79	8.89	1.17
11. I can perform movement with delicacy and finesse.	5.79	2.52	8.00	0.87
12. I can create body percussion patterns.	7.07	2.20	8.22	1.20
13. I can model movement in front of PreK-2nd grade students.	8.14	1.75	9.78	0.67
14. I can perform movement in high space.	7.29	2.46	9.44	0.88
15. I can create/design non-locomotor movement activities with an object for elementary students.	6.07	2.13	8.44	1.74
16. I can model movement in front of adults.	5.93	3.39	7.56	2.19
17. I can perform movement with force and power.	5.93	2.92	8.22	2.28
18. I can perform movement with a group of 3rd-6th grade students.	7.14	2.74	9.00	1.32
19. I can perform sharp or sudden movements through space.	6.79	2.55	8.33	1.58
20. I can perform movement with a group of PreK-2nd grade students.	7.93	1.94	9.56	0.88
21. I can create/design locomotor movement activities with an object for elementary students.	6.36	2.27	8.33	1.80
22. I can improvise fluid movements to music.	6.29	2.81	8.33	1.32
23. I can improvise sudden/sharp movements to music.	6.43	2.62	7.78	1.72
24. I can model choreographed dances in front of elementary students.	7.14	2.85	8.00	2.29

Overall means and standard deviations on the Movement Self-Efficacy Scale pre/posttest were calculated by level, experience, and age. As Table 2 reveals, overall posttest means were higher than pretest means for each grouping variable. Standard deviations were also lower for each group on the posttest, which indicates a reduction in variance. While Level I and Level II

participants showed overall mean gains between the pretest and posttest (Level I = +34.42, Level II = +16.78), results show that Level II participants reported descriptively higher self-efficacy scores on the pre-test ($M=207.44$, $SD=25.46$) than Level I participants scored on the post-test ($M=200.21$, $SD=41.74$). For the variable of age, Group 2 (36-50 years of age) had the lowest mean ($M=170.67$, $SD=48.72$), but made the largest mean gain between the pretest and posttest (+39.22). Group 3 (51+ years of age) showed the lowest mean gain (+10.72) between the pretest and posttest.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for MSES Pre/Post-Test by Age, Experience, and Level

Variables	Pre-test		Post-test	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Levels				
Level 1	165.79	52.94	200.21	41.74
Level 2	207.44	25.46	224.22	19.94
Age				
Group 1 (20-35 years)	188.14	45.97	217.42	25.44
Group 2 (36-50 years)	170.67	48.72	209.89	37.10
Group 3 (51+ years)	190.71	54.04	201.43	46.89
Experience				
Group 1 (1-4 years)	199.50	43.77	220.33	27.91
Group 2 (5-10 years)	158.38	53.49	193.75	45.81
Group 3 (11+ years)	191.56	42.43	216.56	30.13

For the variable of experience, participants with 5-10 years of teaching experience (Group 2) reported the lowest mean on the pretest ($M=158.38$, $SD=53.49$) and posttest ($M=193.75$, $SD=45.81$), but showed the greatest mean gain (+35.37) between the pretest and posttest. Group 1 (1-4 years of experience) had the highest mean scores on the pretest ($M=199.50$, $SD=34.77$) and posttest ($M=220.33$, $SD=27.91$).

In order to evaluate whether Level I participants differed from Level II participants in movement self-efficacy, a one-way, between-subjects ANOVA was conducted with “Level” serving as the independent variable, and the Movement Self-Efficacy Scale pretest serving as the dependent variable.

A mixed ANOVA with repeated measures was calculated to examine the effects of instruction on Level 1 participants’ movement self-efficacy, with between-subjects variables of teaching experience and age compared. As Table 3 shows, the repeated measures ANOVA revealed that the pretest scores ($M=167.79$, $SD=52.94$) significantly differed from the posttest scores ($M=200.21$, $SD=41.74$), [$F(1,26)=13.12$, $p=.009$] indicating intensive movement instruction over a 2-week period may have accounted for the increase in participants’ reported

movement self-efficacy. No main effect was found for the between-subjects variables of experience or age. No significant interactions were found.

Table 3

Mixed ANOVA Summary Table

Source	SS	<i>df</i>	MS	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<u>Within Subjects</u>					
<i>MSES</i>	5983.87	1	5983.87	13.11	.01
<i>MSES</i> x Age	701.78	2	350.89	.77	.50
<i>MSES</i> x Experience	218.05	2	109.03	.24	.79
<i>MSES</i> x Age x Experience	41.10	2	20.55	.05	.96
Error	3195.96	7	456.57		
<u>Between Subjects</u>					
Age	5215.46	2	2607.73	.79	.49
Experience	12471.54	2	6235.77	1.89	.22
Age x Experience	22980.63	2	11490.31	3.48	.09
Error	23096.63	7	3299.52		

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of age, experience, and instruction on elementary music teacher movement self-efficacy. This pilot study was also designed to determine if differences existed in the overall pretest scores of Level I and Level II participants.

Volunteer participants ($N=23$) of this study were enrolled in a two-week AOSA approved Orff Schulwerk training workshop, and completed the Movement Self-Efficacy Scale for Elementary Music Teachers (MSES) before beginning the Orff workshop and immediately following the last movement class on the last day of the workshop (pretest, posttest design).

Participants in Levels I and II reported high levels of confidence in performing movement with a group of PreK to 2nd-grade students, with Level II participants indicating an even greater confidence in their ability in this environment. The finding supports the statement by Watson (2010) that self-efficacy is contextual. While participants were comfortable moving with and modeling for children in primary grades, their perceived confidence diminished as student age classifications increased (e.g., 3rd to 6th grade and adults). This trend of diminishing movement efficacy has also been found in the improvisational efficacy of choir directors (Madura, 2000; Madura Ward-Steinman, 2007). Results from the current study counter Anderson et al., (1988) and Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) who found self-efficacy resistant to change with age.

It should be noted that while all participants completed the movement training, there were times when some of the older participants refrained or modified movements possibly due to movement limitations. Research has shown that participants who adhere to a task or program increase in self-efficacy (Bandura, 2006, Callea, et al., 2008; Fontaine & Shaw, 1995). While modifications are mentioned in the movement guidelines of AOSA (1998), it is important that instructors realize the effect of participation on self-efficacy and encourage and engage

participants accordingly. While no movement participant should be forced beyond his or her own physical capabilities, it is possible that discontinuance of a task is simply the result of low self-efficacy and perception of capability. As Bandura (2006) found, when faced with difficulties, those with low efficacy tend to give up where as those with high efficacy view obstacles as achievable.

That each participant completed the program and showed growth in movement self-efficacy is consistent with research that shows meaningful and active immersion in intensive training increases self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990, 1999; Davison, 2010; Henson, 2001; Knight & Boudah, 1998; Nielson, 2004; Noffke, 1997; Ross, 1994; Watson, 2010). While all participants showed increased movement self-efficacy, results revealed a statistically significant difference between Level I and Level II participants on the *Movement Self-Efficacy Scale*. Perhaps this is due to Level II participants' previous Level I movement training in addition to the application of movement activities within their respective classrooms throughout the year. That there were no main effects of age or experience supports the research by Ghisletta, et al. (2010) who noted many similarities in the motor skill accuracy of older adults.

Overall results indicate that the Level I participants had significantly lower movement self-efficacy than Level II participants upon entering Orff Schulwerk movement training. Results also indicate that Orff Schulwerk Level I movement instruction may significantly increase participants' movement self-efficacy. This is consistent with research by Bergee and Grashel (2002) who found that teacher self-efficacy can be increased over time. The increase in movement self-efficacy for Level II participants may not be as substantial due to the ceiling effect, or could be attributed to differences in the amount of instruction between levels. Results from this study also show that neither age nor years of experience appear to have an impact on movement self-efficacy results. More research utilizing a larger sample size is needed to see if these trends are confirmed.

Other areas of future research may involve a concentrated examination of only Level I participants since Level II mean scores were found to be more efficacious from the beginning. Studies might also investigate other sources of movement training and their comparative effects on movement self-efficacy. Also of interest is the frequency of movement integration following intensive movement training, and whether teacher movement self-efficacy remains constant or shifts over the course of movement application in the classroom.

By showing that teacher movement self-efficacy is impacted by Orff Schulwerk instruction, this study lends support to the importance of active participation in training. Because of the low sample size within this pilot study, readers should take caution when generalizing results. In this study, however, it seems that movement self-efficacy may be increased regardless of age or experience. Music teachers, especially those that feel inhibited in movement, may benefit from participation in a professional development program such as Orff Schulwerk instruction.

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Educator Access and Application of Music Research

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One role of music education research is to “enhance knowledge regarding the teaching and learning of music,” as articulated in the manuscript submission section of the *Journal of Research in Music Education* (JRME) (Sage Publications, 2011a). Despite the fact that music education research is published several times each year in multiple journals, a communication gap between music researchers and music teachers continues to exist.

Donald Dillon, past Executive Director of The National Association for Music Education (NAfME, formerly MENC), says, “For years we have heard the complaint that the majority of research being done by doctoral candidates and the academic community is of little direct use to the classroom teacher” (as cited in Brand, 1984, p. 1). Researchers are disappointed in music teachers’ response and music teachers feel impatient with researchers for offering little guidance regarding important pedagogical questions and failing to help them improve their teaching.

Hedden (1979) suggests three reasons teachers have little involvement in research. First, they lack training in research techniques. Second, many regard research as an “ivory tower activity, one best appreciated by a small group of ‘elitist academics’” (p. 35). Third, research jargon and technical terms can be off-putting to those who are not familiar with them. In his study, 25 of 35 respondents agreed “the effort I put in when reading research reports outweighs the benefits I receive from the articles.” Respondents (33 of 38) agreed “more teachers would be interested in research if researchers concentrated their studies on ‘practical’ problems.” Most (26 of 36) thought articles in research journals were not relevant to what they did as a teacher.

The lack of research exposure in undergraduate courses is cited as a possible reason for the lack of music teacher involvement in research. According to Madsen and Furman (1984), it is uncommon for undergraduate students to become involved in ongoing scholarly work or to understand transfer issues in research. They administered Hedden’s *Assessment of Research Knowledge* (1979) and a second test of research comprehension to groups of graduate and undergraduate students. Graduate students scored significantly higher than undergraduates in these tests. This result suggests that those with only an undergraduate education may not have acquired the skills needed to comprehend and apply research.

The readability of research reports is a hindrance for some music teachers (Brand, 1984). According to Flowers, Gallant, & Single (1995), “Teachers will be more likely to read research that is practical, relevant, and free of jargon.” In their study, educational background was found to have little effect on participants’ ratings of music research. But when readers were interested

in a topic, they were willing to read the research despite the style (informal, formal with research statistics and tests, or a hybrid).

Yarbrough, Price, & Bowers (1991) found that teachers were likely to adjust their teaching when presented with research relating to their subject area. Their study asked if teachers would use information from research studies if they were made aware of it. Teachers were taught a sequential teaching strategy and later observed to see if they used the newly learned strategy. The study found that “the teachers chose to change without any contingencies operating to encourage or discourage this change” (p. 17).

Several attempts have been made to bridge the gap between researchers and teachers. Three sessions had this objective at the Ann Arbor Symposium entitled “From Research to the Music Classroom” (Documentary Report of the Ann Arbor Symposium, 1981). UPDATE: The Applications of Research in Music Education, a journal published by NAFME, was designed to make research reports accessible to music teachers. Since 1989, UPDATE has focused on bringing “research in music teaching and learning close to everyday practice to help teachers apply research in their music classrooms and rehearsal halls” (SAGE Publications, 2010). It is available to all NAFME members at no additional cost. NAFME also published *What works: Instructional Strategies for Music Education* (Merrion, 1989), a collaborative project to make research that describes effective teaching strategies known to music teachers. The book is organized by area: preschool music, elementary general music, junior high general music, secondary general music, instrumental music, string music, choral music, perception, and college teaching strategies. Within each area, instructional strategies are presented along with research findings, comments, and a list of references that support the assertions. According to the introduction, “As new findings emerge, revisions will be forthcoming” (p. vii). No more recent editions or similar books have been found.

According to Madsen (1985), attempts like these are highly commendable, but have not yet found acceptance in the appropriate group. Madsen found that in order for teachers to value research, they must first develop the skill of transferring research results to their own activities in the classroom. To that end, Madsen designed a long-term project in which music teachers were taught an approach to reading research and to discuss possible music situations to which the studies might apply. Once successful transfer skills had been practiced, “no longer [were] band directors, for example, upset when they [did] not have a band model. They [learned] from a choral rehearsal, a bassoon recital, or a child’s singing” (p. 19).

The studies described above examined factors that prevent teachers from being involved in research, evaluated teachers’ response to research, and postulated as to how research accessibility could be improved, but I found no recent descriptions of how these issues may have changed since the last cited study was published in 1995. The present study asked these questions of practicing music teachers in Texas, exploring their access to music education research, their impressions regarding research, and ways they believe it could help them more.

Method

Four hundred Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) members were selected at random from the TMEA website (where they had made their addresses available and given permission for other members to contact them). An online survey asked for basic demographic information from each respondent: level taught, area taught, number of years teaching, the highest degree they had attained, and whether the respondent was enrolled in a graduate program. A checklist of research journals was included, as found in the Music Education Search

System (MESS) (Asmus, n.d.), a nationally recognized music research website, as well as an open-ended question asking respondents to list any other journals they read. Respondents were asked how much time they spent per month reading those journals and whether they perceived that their reading informed their teaching. Next, respondents indicated the methods by which they typically sought to improve their teaching (e.g., workshops, journals, courses). They also noted factors that prevented them from reading or applying music research and suggested ways that research access could be improved. Finally, space was provided for respondents to write how they believed music education research could better serve them.

Results

Participants

Data consisted of combined responses ($N=105$) on the survey, a 32.2% response rate with 326 successful email invitations sent out to TMEA members in November 2003. Multiple levels of music teaching were represented: high school ($n=53$), junior high/middle school ($n=48$), elementary school ($n=28$), undergraduate ($n=25$), graduate ($n=9$) and pre-kindergarten ($n=5$). Forty percent taught more than one level. More respondents taught choir ($n=37$) than any other area, followed by band ($n=29$) and orchestra ($n=9$). Forty percent of respondents taught areas other than band, choir, or orchestra and 20% taught multiple areas.

Respondents selected from a list the number of years they had taught: 0-2 years ($n=0$), 3-5 ($n=6$), 6-10 ($n=25$), 11-15 ($n=23$), 16-20 ($n=13$), 21-25 ($n=17$), and over 25 years ($n=18$). More than two-thirds of respondents ($n=71$) had taught for more than 10 years. Sixty-three percent ($n=66$) of respondents had graduate degrees (49 with a masters and 17 with a doctorate). Eleven respondents were enrolled in a graduate program at the time of the survey.

Journals Read by Respondents

Respondents were asked which journals they read (see Table 1). The most frequently selected journals were *Instrumentalist* ($n=28$), *Choral Journal* ($n=17$), *Music Educators Journal* ($n=16$), and *Journal of Research in Music Education* ($n=11$). Other journals were selected no more than five times. The average amount of time respondents ($n=90$) spent reading journals was 41 minutes per month.

Table 1

Journals in MESS listed by frequency of selection

Journals	Readers
Instrumentalist	28
Choral Journal	17
Music Educators Journal	16
Journal of Research in Music Education	11
Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education	5
Jazz Educators Journal	5
Southeastern Journal of Music Education	5
Journal of Music Teacher Education	4
UPDATE	3
Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning	2
Dialog in Instrumental Music	1
Philosophy of Music Education Review	1

Note. *Southern Music Education Journal*, though currently listed on MESS, was not part of the database at the time this survey was conducted.

Table 2 lists the journals that respondents indicated they read but were not listed as response options. The most frequently entered journal by far was TMEA’s Southwestern Musician ($n=53$), followed by the Texas Choral Directors Association’s Texas Sings ($n=6$). Teachers submitted forty-two other journals, but none of the others were submitted more than five times. The average amount of time spent reading these journals for those who responded to the question ($n=81$) was 63 minutes per month.

Table 2

Journals entered by participants listed by frequency of selection

Journals	Readers
Southwestern Musician (TMEA Publication)	53
Texas Sings (TCDA Publication)	6
School Band and Orchestra	5
Orff Echo (AOSA Publication)	3
40 other journals	< 3

Respondents were asked about the usefulness of journals from each list (see Figure 1). The most selected response for either list was, “I always find something helpful.”

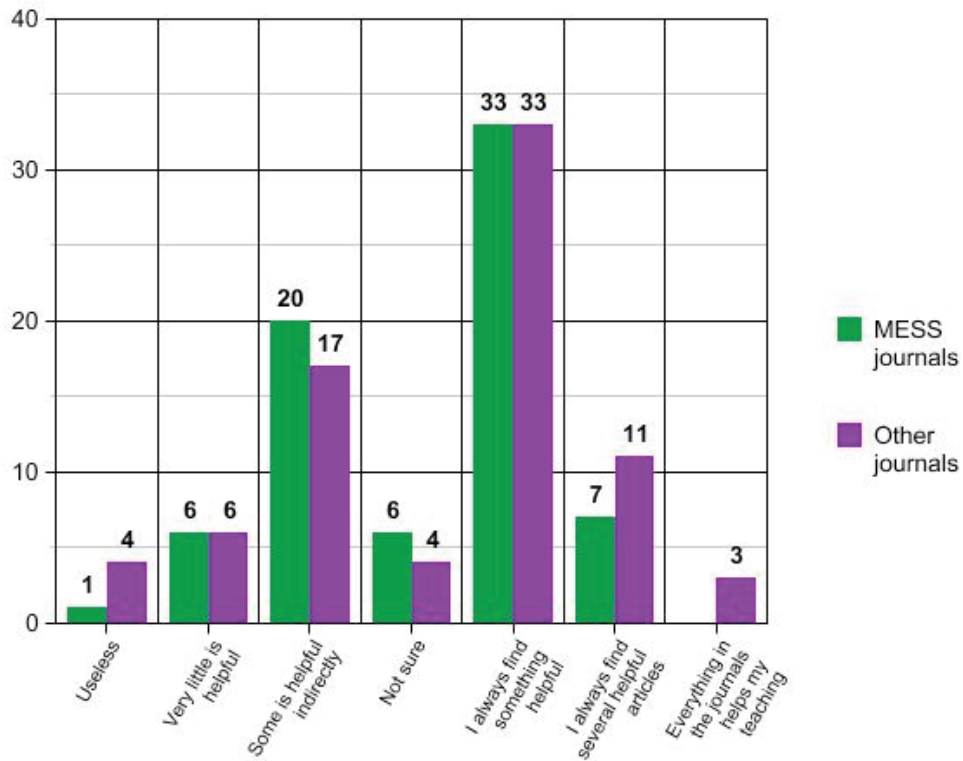


Figure 1. Survey question: “How useful is the information in these journals to your teaching?”

Factors that Prevent Research Reading and Involvement

The final portion of the survey asked respondents about factors that prevented them from reading or participating in research and how it could be more accessible. Respondents were also asked to indicate the resources they used to improve their teaching.

Lack of time was the factor that most prevented respondents from reading or participating in music research ($n=74$) (see Figure 2). Twenty-six respondents (24.8%) did not believe research was relevant to their teaching situation. Fifteen people (14.3%) were inhibited by the cost. Only 3 respondents indicated that they had no interest in research at all.

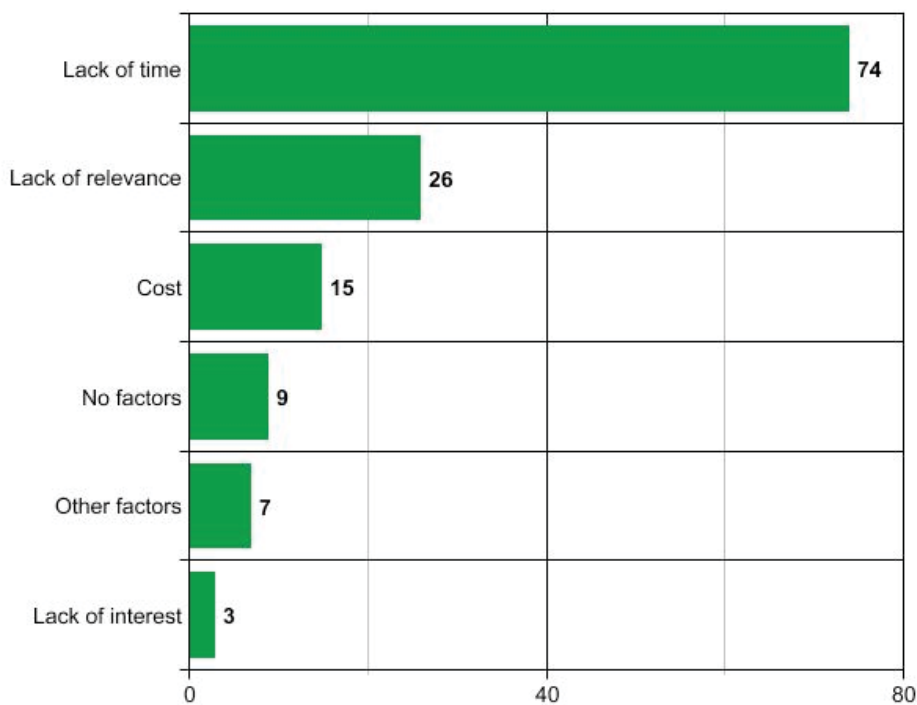


Figure 2. Survey question: “What factors prevent you from reading or participating in music research? (Check all that apply)”

When asked how research could be more accessible, the most requested option was a searchable web resource ($n=73$) (see Figure 3). A monthly column highlighting current research projects was believed to be helpful by 30 respondents. Respondents ($n=23$) indicated interest in the creation of a yearly compilation of major research findings that organizes information by topic.

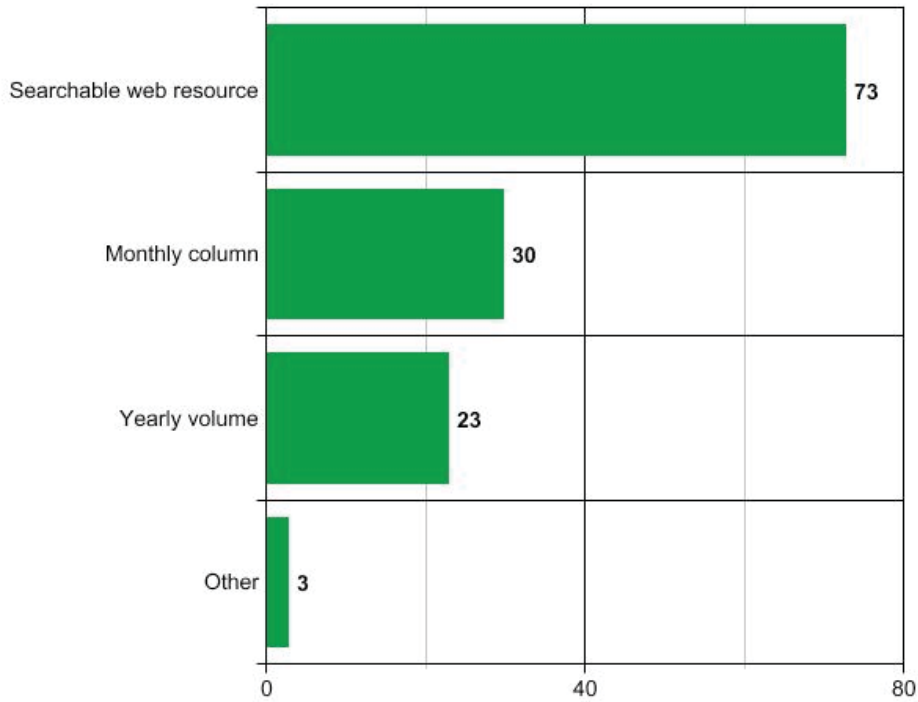


Figure 3. Survey question: “Which of the following would you find beneficial in accessing research? (Check all that apply)”

Most respondents (92.4%) indicated that workshops were important in improving the quality of their teaching (see Figure 4). Fifty-six (54.3%) said reading magazines helped their teaching. The internet and books tied for the third most popular answer with 48 responses each (45.7%). Competitions received 45 votes, graduate courses 26, research journals 18, and 31 “other” responses.

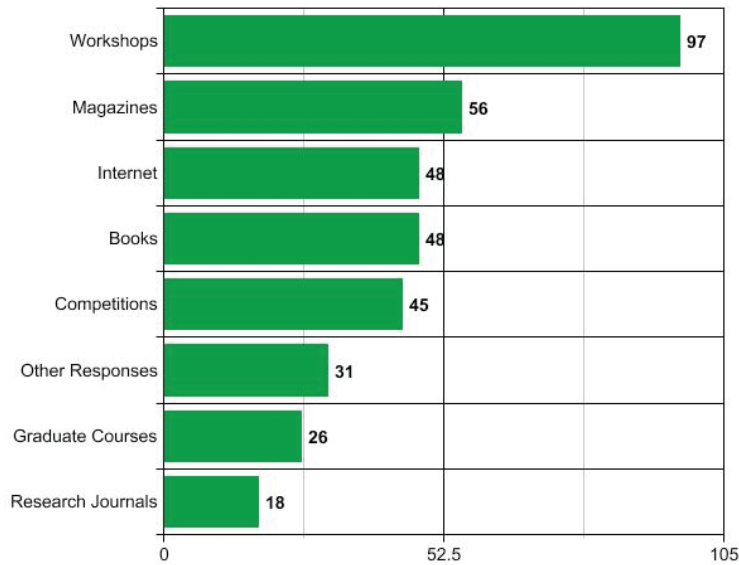


Figure 4. Survey question: “Which of the following help you teach better (Check all that apply)?”

Free Responses

The final question provided a large text box and asked respondents, “How could music education research serve you better?” Most responses fell into a few categories: relevance ($n=14$), accessibility ($n=9$), and advocacy ($n=4$). Below are representative samples of responses from each category.

Relevance.

“Keeping articles relevant and applicable to the average, in-the-trenches teacher will give them higher value.”

“If the research were more applicable. I feel that current research is rather abstract and very useless. Many articles are written for college professors or directors at large schools consequently the information is not useful to the small school director. The problems that small school bands face are different and are rarely addressed in a manner that could be used in a real life situation.”

Access.

“I would be more likely to read highly applicable, readily available, quick and easy to read material . . . I am interested, it's just not easy and so I don't make it happen!”

“Make information easy to find. Publish where to find information in many places (mags./conventions/mailings) There are many sites to find if you look long enough, but once you find sites, it's not necessarily the best place to go.”

“Since I prefer online research, having an easily searchable and central data base would help me most.”

Advocacy.

“I need data that is presentable to parents. I am already sold on music and most data seems to be directed at me where it really needs to be directed at the parents of future musicians.”

“To convince EL [elementary school] administrators that music re-enforces [sic.] academics.”

Discussion

The three most frequently selected journals from MESS were *Instrumentalist*, *Choral Journal*, and *Music Educators Journal*. All of these journals are benefits of membership in a professional music organization (The National Band Association, American Choral Directors Association, and NAFME, respectively). This may be the reason that these journals are read more often than paid subscription research journals like *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* and *JRME* (*JRME* subscription is available only to NAFME members at an additional cost).

JRME was the fourth most frequently selected journal. It was the most frequently selected general, refereed research journal from the list and had more than double the number of responses of any other research journal on the list. Despite these seemingly impressive statistics, only 11 (10.5%) of those surveyed read *JRME*. All of these 11 respondents had graduate degrees except one, and that respondent was enrolled in graduate courses. Only four respondents who read the journal taught in areas other than colleges or universities. These data suggest that most teachers are not reading research from major subscription research journals.

Similar results came from the responses that indicated what other journals were being read. Journals that were included with a membership in a professional organization were, by far, the most read. *Southwestern Musician* is a benefit of membership in TMEA. All of those surveyed

were members of TMEA, so they all received this journal. It is no surprise, then, that this would be the most mentioned “other” journal.

When asked which of several items helped them teach better, the most selected response was workshops, followed by magazines, the Internet, books, and competitions. The least selected responses were graduate courses and research journals. Music education research is designed to help teachers teach music more effectively, and, according to the instructions to contributors in JRME, “to enhance knowledge regarding the teaching and learning of music.” The teachers surveyed in this study do not seem to believe research journals are meeting their objectives. Workshops often give teachers ready-made lessons and strategies they can implement immediately. Teachers search the internet for instant access to resources for their teaching. Teachers read books and magazines that they find interesting or that include topics in which they want to improve. Graduate courses and research journals, however, require money and time. They may be more likely to challenge thinking than to offer strategies.

These data are not consistent with the idea that practicing teachers find that reading journals informs their teaching. It may be that teachers believe that journals contribute to developing ideas or stimulating thought, rather than directly improving how well they teach. Perhaps teachers who do read journals, do so to improve their thinking rather than their teaching.

A web resource, as indicated by teachers, might make a huge difference in reducing the prominence of these factors. More than two-thirds of teachers believed a searchable web resource would benefit them the most in terms of accessing research. It is much easier and more efficient for a teacher to pull up a web page than to search for subscription research journals in print that are rarely found outside of institutions of higher education. Educating teachers about the existence of the MESS may be beneficial, as it is a manually updated, user-friendly web resource for accessing music education research and contains a wealth of information.

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Yarbrough, Price, & Bowers (1991) in that teachers report an interest in research, but are inhibited in accessing and applying it in some way. Perhaps the most exciting of my findings is that only three respondents indicated that they had no interest in research at all.

This study examined the responses of a small sample from a single state. Future research may look at other state populations and at a larger pool of music teachers. Methods for disseminating research more accessibly, perhaps through workshops and use of the internet could also be investigated.

The results of this study suggest that changing the way research is reported may be of benefit to both researchers and practitioners. “The cost in terms of time, money, and student achievement is excessive when methods of instruction are chosen by trial and error and perpetuated because of a lack of alternatives” (Flowers et al., 1995). If music education research is conducted to discover better ways of teaching music or to test current practice, it has tremendous value and can greatly influence the quality of music education in our schools.

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Church Music as an Education Enterprise: Lessons to Learn

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While church choirs are commonly considered to be community music ensembles where music making takes place, there have been few systematic investigations of church choirs as learning environments whose members have instructional needs that must be met. Rohwer (2010) documented the strong worship-related perceptions of interviewed church choir musicians. This perception of worship being a primary reason for participating in a choir was different from other music education study results that cited reasons for ensemble participation as social and musical (Adderley Kennedy & Berz, 2003; Belz, 1994; Coffin, 2005; Coffman, 1996; Cooper, 1996; Darrough, 1991; Hylton 1981, Kennedy 2002; Pike, 2001; Rohwer, 2009; Rohwer & Rohwer, 2009; Seago, 1993). This additional factor of worship may mean that the challenges faced in church choirs may be greater than in other community music organizations, where the instructional focus is on meeting musical and social needs. The instructional challenges of balancing three instructional need entities instead of two may mean that more information is needed on how instruction can work ideally in church music settings (Rohwer, 2010).

The preparation of church leaders in terms of their musical, liturgical, and educational skills may be an additional challenge to church music settings as community learning environments. While Branscome (2009) noted that church music directors may need to take music education coursework in order to be prepared thoroughly for their jobs, church choir directors may feel that they lack either musical, liturgical, or educational skills, dependent on their higher educational track. Regier (1986) noted that pastors who were trained in seminary settings where pedagogy and music learning were superseded by worship-based learning may be challenged by the musical component of the job, and conversely, Sharp (2007) noted that ministers of music in Evangelical churches have often been trained as choral directors and may not have the liturgical knowledge to be able to meet the demands of the position. Even the type of university setting may determine the learning focus that can occur: for instance, denomination-affiliated institutions may emphasize ministry training more than secular-based universities (Yang, 2009). Ihm (1994) found that only one-third of music directors had degrees in music, with 43% of music directors indicating that additional training in conducting, worship planning, vocal technique, and theory would be helpful. Yet, while church employees may desire continuing education about church music topics, work, family, and financial constraints may be too weighty to avoid (Dawson, 2008).

While much research has addressed the preparation of future public school teachers, more information is needed on the necessary skills for church music settings. Rohwer (2010) noted that church musicians had concerns such as attendance, musical skill diversity, and recruitment, but there is a need for research to address the instructional skills and characteristics that church musicians perceive to be necessary in a skilled church music director. Because little research has been completed on church music as an educational enterprise, there is a need for an investigation of church music participants' perceptions of instructional needs in church settings. The purpose of the study was to describe the perceived learning needs of a group of church musicians attending a musical, religion-based summer camp.

Method

The questionnaire was completed by 62 church choir musicians at a 5-day national summer music camp with a Methodist affiliation. The population was mainly Caucasian ($n = 49$, with 13 not responding to the ethnicity question), with a larger number of females ($n = 41$) than males ($n = 16$), and 5 not responding to the gender question. The age of the respondents ranged from 20 to 81, averaging 51.73 ($SD = 12.61$), and the voice parts represented were soprano ($n = 22$), alto ($n = 19$), tenor ($n = 12$), and bass ($n = 4$), with 5 not responding. The participants came from 15 states: 2 Western states, 7 South Atlantic states, 4 East South Central states, 1 West Central State, and 1 Northeastern state (state groupings: US Census Bureau, 2010). The number of years that participants had sung in their home church choir ranged from 1 to 64, averaging 23.11 ($SD = 16.96$), with many of the participants with fewer years of singing in their home church noting that they moved often.

The questionnaire and consent form were distributed at the first music rehearsal at camp, and the participants had 4 days to complete the questionnaire, on their own time. Reminders were given during each rehearsal to complete and return the questionnaire, if they desired. The items on the questionnaire were 5 open-ended items asking about the participants' perceived instructional needs in church choir setting and 4 demographic questions. The items took approximately 15-30 minutes to complete.

A panel of two experts in the areas of music and church settings initially reviewed the questions for content validity. Three church musicians then reviewed the questionnaire for clarity. To estimate reliability of the responses, 5 individuals answered the open-ended questions twice, and an external evaluator documented that the general content of the responses was consistent across the two measurement administrations.

Results

The most commonly documented need-to-know issues for any church music director were person-based issues ($n = 43$), such as how to work with people and the important personal characteristics and beliefs of the director, such as patience and commitment to God. In relation to working with people, respondents stated:

Future teachers should focus more on learning to work with people, which many schools don't stress though it is a major factor in teacher success...things like maturity and professionalism.

I think choir directors need to take a class in ethical decisions when dealing with choral musicians. We are complicated and directors need to be prepared to handle us.

Know the needs of the choir members. Survey their interests and their concerns and their skills and then reach them at their level.

Ask the church musicians what kind of church music they enjoy, and be gentle with us. We are not professional musicians.

In relation to being committed to God, participants stated:

The goal should be to understand the purpose of the church first and foremost to serve and glorify God and be teachers with music as the vehicle to do that.

First, directors should be committed Christians and not focus so much on correct notes, but making a beautiful sound unto the Lord and worshiping as they give of their talents. They need to be aware of others in order to work with people. It isn't all about the director. The director is a servant of Christ. It is more than a job.

And, in relation to patience, participants stated:

They must be understanding when relating to a variety of ages and varying expertise levels in reading music.

Church directors need to be able to teach to every level of musician in the room, patiently and carefully. It's difficult, but inexperienced musicians need to understand what the director is saying. Beware of using terminology too much.

You are dealing with volunteers and cannot hold a grade over their head. The act of making music in worship needs to be motivational and "care-full" and the director needs to guide that.

The next most commonly cited need-to-know skill for church music directors was organizational skill ($n = 15$):

Church musicians of course need to be spiritually in tune with their ministry, and they should be much like teachers: well-prepared for rehearsals, organized having good time management skills.

Due to the limited rehearsal time, directors need to work fast and be prepared. They need to be flexible and understanding but establish clear expectations of membership and participation.

It is difficult to get a quality product from limited time with volunteers, but relying on the spirit in those times often helps. It also helps if the director is very prepared and educated so that higher quality can be achieved.

Organizational skill was followed by the need for music to be linked with the liturgy ($n = 14$):

Some church musicians really don't know much about sacred music and it's not their fault because a lot of college music programs don't emphasize it. However they should all have classes like hymnody and history of sacred music.

Church directors should have a portfolio of at least 6 weeks of planned music for the choir that goes along with the lectionary.

The music skills of the director were noted by 10 individuals in the context of a varied list of important attributes, with worship being the top priority, such as in the following quotation:

First of all a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a passion for worship. I think all directors should have some keyboard and rhythm skills as well as being good conductors, and they should have great interpersonal and time management skills.

The majority of respondents cited church music participation as purely a service activity ($n = 44$), while a smaller number cited participation as a combination of service and fun ($n = 18$). No respondents cited church music as purely a leisure activity.

I hope that my work with the choir is an expression of discipleship and not self-serving. As a choir member I feel that I am sharing my gifts that God has blessed me with. The fellowship of the choir is also an important part and strengthens the bond with the church.

Church music is service primarily which brings great pleasure. We are worship leaders, not performers. There has to be a balance with fun – not just intrinsic rewards. People won't keep coming back if they are treated like martyrs.

Because I love it so much it is hard to see it as service, yet I make great sacrifices to do it. On occasions where it requires me to give up something else, or if there's music I don't care for, or I have to get up really early it seems more like service. I think in either case what I need as a learner is for it to be somewhat enjoyable but also not a waste of my time.

It would be nice if people would look at church music participation as a worship opportunity as opposed to a leisure activity that we can be uncommitted to.

One set of participants believed that church music participation should be “for all” regardless of skill level ($n = 28$), while the largest set of participants believed that while there should be music choices for all, there should also be ensemble opportunities specifically for the more skilled ($n = 32$). Two participants did not respond to this question.

Reasons for music for all were cited as:

Church size is a big factor in the types of ensembles you can have. If you don't have many people to choose from, you must have the "for all" attitude. I tend, however, to have this attitude regardless of church size.

Directors should make all welcome in an ensemble and they should work with any who may need extra instruction. A good leader should be able to blend the different skill levels and the better folks should be mentors.

Church music should be for all. If it wasn't I would have never become involved nor would I have been able to realize or explore my talents.

A church's music organization is unique and should accept anyone that wants to be a part. There should only be one choir. The most important thing is worship, not excellence.

Reasons for both all and select were cited as:

There should be a place for everyone in a program, but maybe not for everyone in every ensemble. It would not be kind to encourage a beginner to join an ensemble with advanced members.

I think there should be levels if the church is large enough to support it. Higher level groups can do more challenging and extended works, while lower levels can meet more general needs. Music should be pleasing to the listener, so some restrictions must apply.

I think there absolutely should be more challenging opportunities for more trained singers. For instance, I had a vocal scholarship in college and want to be in ensembles that might do Faure or Mozart's Requiem for instance, and not just music I did in high school.

The idea of how musical excellence fits in church music was clearly a point of contention within this bigger issue of ensemble choice:

I believe church service should be open to all. I do struggle with members of music ministry who seem to be tone deaf, though. Perhaps the merciful thing for all would be to counsel out those whose spiritual gifting does not include choral music or instrumental gifting.

All should be able to participate. In one instrumental ensemble I was blessed to be a part of we had a young man who played tuba who kind of ruined our sound. He was always ahead, behind, played wrong notes, etc. We prayed about it – God took care of it. He is now playing in a heavenly ensemble.

For some musical styles I'd want to hear only those who are skilled to participate. I really prefer skilled musicians and vocalists in my worship experience.

Some individuals had contextual qualifications to their answers to the ensemble choice question:

The question has several considerations: size of church what type of community (college, rural, downtown); size of music program; do you have music readers, professional musicians in your program, and if so how can you best use their talents?

Balance is important, guided by theology of worship and ethos of a particular congregation. Balance of music as offerings of the people, imperfect as they might be, but emphasizing the value of offering our best to God, not music casually prepared.

In a small church skill level can be a sensitive issue. It works well for our music minister to select ahead of time those he would like to be part of an ensemble. There is a way for all to be included, who desire, at some point in time.

Everyone is not a soloist, so solos should be chosen based on ability. Directors should never say to a child or adult: "just mouth the words." It is devastating. The directors should give personal lessons to help remedy or solve musical problems.

The most commonly mentioned frustration and need issue was the dedication of the other church choir members ($n = 23$) which most commonly manifested itself in a plea for better attendance ($n = 17$):

I am bothered by people not taking church music seriously as a responsibility to the church and to God.

Everyone should practice outside of rehearsals so that they remember better for Sunday.

I get irked with people who show up late for rehearsal and miss warm ups and then complain about how composers make the bass parts too high.

Some of the dedication statements were philosophical in nature:

Church choir members should see themselves as a vital part of worship instead of performers of an anthem.

I would like for the leadership and the church members and the choir to view the role of music as an integral part of the worship service. Some people might be reached via a great sermon message but others can get as music or more out of a message delivered through song.

Beyond this most common issue, the responses were more varied: 9 participants were concerned with the leadership of the church and music ministry working together well, with 8 additional participants citing the need for more volunteers that work well in conjunction with the church leadership:

The Administration seems to not be focused on God sometimes when making decisions.

I am frustrated by directors who don't give enough time, dedication, and effort to the church music program.

Earlier planning needs to happen across the pastor, youth, music program, and staff. They just don't get how early the music program needs the sermon topics so that music can be chosen, purchased and rehearsed. Advent decisions can't wait until November! What is everyone thinking?

Nine participants were frustrated by the variety of musical levels of the other church choir members, with 8 additional participants being concerned with the contemporary versus traditional music choices of their church:

When not all singers are at the same skill level, this can lead to repetition which is sometimes boring. Directors need to do a great job of keeping rehearsals fresh and moving.

People who only want easy pieces or contemporary pieces are difficult.

Six participants were frustrated by the lack of time they had in rehearsals:

It is difficult to have only one 1-hour rehearsal each week instead of the daily rehearsals they have in schools.

We should probably have more rehearsals in a week, but that might be difficult for some people.

Five participants cited the size of their group as a concern, and 4 additional participants cited the need for better recruitment of new members:

A challenge is recruiting the transitory population of so many people, especially 20 and 30 year olds.

Delegate, invigorate, recruit. I know it is easier to just try and do it all, but the real work is in equipping others.

Five participants desired more support for youth music activities in their settings, such as in the following quotation:

Youth music is the cornerstone for the continuation of music ministry with adults. We need to concentrate on the youth instead of treating them like an afterthought. Instructors need to help them musically instead of just treating them like they are "cute" entertainment. Youth shouldn't be relegated to lay leaders.

Four participants were frustrated by the musical feedback that they received, such as in the following quotation:

We need honest compliments from directors (every piece can't be "excellent": we know otherwise).

Discussion

As in previous studies of adult musicians (Rohwer, 2009; 2010), the participants in the current study perceived people-related skill to be an important variable to address with future teachers of adults. More than musical factors, issues related to dealing with people may need to be included, strategically, in teacher preparation programs if students are to feel prepared to teach adults. Because of the content-related requirements that universities need to meet for certification agencies and the National Association of Schools of Music, musical content can sometimes supersede the important people skill content that exemplary teachers model. Based on the perceptions of the participants in the current study, however, universities may want to consider a balance of musical-pedagogical content and people skills scenarios in their courses so as to address this important community music skill.

Universities may also want to consider adding interviews to their audition procedures to advise students if personality variables are a red flag, or conversely, to encourage through words

and scholarships those applicants who not only have great musical skills and wonderful leadership experiences, but also have personalities that align with a career that requires personal interaction skills. Universities may also want to consider having observations in church music settings so that future teachers have an authentic perspective of the church music environment and can discuss the pedagogical similarities and differences that may be apparent in a variety of contexts.

In addition, universities modeled on the conservatory paradigm of conductor-as-purveyor-of-knowledge may want to consider how to highlight the multifaceted nature of the teacher-conductor position for the instructors in the teacher preparation program, since a one-sided conductor persona may be contrary to the desires of church choir musicians. Modeling how to be a nice, caring, God-loving, organized person, may align with the future career path needs of church choir directors more than the old-fashioned vision of a “maestro.” The traditional maestro model highlights the chasm that has existed in the past between performer and conductor; this may be an outdated professional model that may need to be modified for the sake of community musician desires. Clearly, if communication between the director, the pastor, the volunteers, and the adult and youth musicians is to be a goal, then directors need to care about the perceptions of all those involved in the church. This necessitates a certain kind of person who can balance the musical, the instructional, and the interpersonal. Universities that have instructors who can model and reinforce this kind of well-balanced persona may serve to benefit the future directors in their care.

In addition to having people skills, participants also cited the need for directors to be focused on God more than themselves. The desire for musical and instructional decisions to be made with a Christian focus instead of a singular-minded focus was documented in the current study’s responses. This group-worship focus was also noted in Rohwer (2010) where respondents cited their top reasons for participating in church choir as a combination of worship, music, and fellowship. Communicating this balance of musical, instructional, and liturgical-interpersonal strengths and considerations with future music ministers can be a first step in highlighting this delicate balance that these future professionals need to keep in mind throughout their careers.

Respondents also cited the need for directors to be organized and dedicated instructors who can be strong recruiters. In addition, respondents cited the need for the various members of the church leadership (staff, pastor, volunteers) to work together to plan cohesive church services. It appears then, that the job of a church director necessitates both a music education focus where music-related pedagogical aspects are practiced, as well as a ministry focus where liturgical aspects are addressed. It may be that the best degree path for those wanting to be skilled church musicians is to work toward a bachelor's degree in music education followed by a master's degree in divinity or church music. While that may be an extended preparation course, it may be difficult to find an undergraduate institution that can do the combination of musical, instructional, and liturgical functions well.

There was a lack of consensus in participant responses concerning whether their church music participation was service or leisure. This may mean that our understanding of leisure as a model for how music works in the community may be incomplete. Because many participants noted a feeling that leisure implied a cavalier attitude toward participation, they did not see their participation in that way. While some felt that their participation was service completely, others noted that they were dedicated, but that they wanted it to be fun, and hence it was a service endeavor with a leisure benefit. The terms leisure and service may be the culprits here, with a black and white definition from the participants clouding their grey participation perceptions.

It is clear that in almost every community music setting there may be members who are participating for a balance of what might be termed service and leisure reasons. The band members who were music majors and professional musicians in community bands may see their participation as a way to mentor and guide other struggling band members. This mindset is clearly different from the leisure concept espoused in leisure theories. And, there are many community musicians who may see their participation to be about benefiting them, but they are dedicated in their practice and attendance, showing up early and staying late. In the same way that they may be militant golfers, they are dedicated musicians. Many of these individuals had or still have successful careers where they were dedicated, and they have used community music as an extension of this organized life. The term leisure, then, may need to be extended in order to fit the new model of individuals that are pushing the boundaries of the term.

The issue of skill level in relation to whether groups should be “y'all come” groups or have select ensembles was another issue that lacked consensus across the participants. It may be that each person has within himself a mixture of wanting great music but wanting to be inclusive. On which side the overall group leans may need to be evaluated by the director through discussion. In other words, it may be important for the director to consider the ensemble questions through a perspective different from the traditional maestro perspective where decisions are often made unilaterally. Inclusive/exclusive decisions are contextual hotbeds that should be addressed ideally by the complete ensemble in order to come to an appropriate, agreed-upon outcome for the group.

As in Rohwer (2010), the most commonly cited frustration of church choir members was dedication, with a focus on attendance being a common dedication component. Some church musicians who were dedicated to their ensemble, found lack of consistent attendance among other members upsetting. To alleviate this situation, the director and the choir members might consider planning well in advance the pieces that they would like to perform so that music could have a long cycle instead of a quick turnaround that may not lead to quality performances. Advance planning in conjunction with the liturgical calendar may also make the link between the music and the service more apparent for the congregation. Having an organized rehearsal schedule that is communicated to all constituents may also help to alleviate the concern about amount of time in rehearsal, since small, sequenced steps could be taken in musical learning, thereby reinforcing past learning and leading toward greater progress in musical excellence. Small sequenced steps could also help those who have lower musical skills know what they need to prepare so as to ease their stress. Directors who can break down the learning into smaller sequenced steps may also be able to provide more accurate and specific feedback to the church musicians, which can lead toward more positive musical growth.

The job of a church music director is a challenging one; the director must be musician, teacher, liturgist, motivator, organizer, God-loving individual, and all-around good person. In order to be as prepared as possible, each future director should consider how to develop these skills and characteristics while also keeping at the forefront the gestalt idea of the joy of church music in the community.

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