

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

The Significance of Teaching Music to Urban African American Underprivileged Students

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the School of Music
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Master of Music Education

by

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Lynchburg, Virginia

May 2023

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A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Music Education

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

May 2023

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the significance of providing music education to African American students living in urban areas. By utilizing differentiated instructional techniques and reflective questioning, this study advocates for academic excellence and societal growth in music. The inquiry highlights the undeniable correlation between music education, cultural identity, and student prosperity. Thus, underscoring the critical importance of music for low-income students. Band directors can effectively support academic and musical success through diverse teaching approaches, such as method books and collaborative opportunities. The investigation carefully evaluated key factors, including the participants' socioeconomic status, music development, and academic accomplishments. The research emphasized the significance of music education in advancing societal progress. Extensive research has revealed that cultural identity barriers can hinder students' success. This insight is essential for shaping educational policies and practices. Music has the power of fostering diversity, empathy, and cross-cultural understanding, leading to a more equitable and inclusive society.

DEDICATION

I would like to thank God, my creator, who has been my source of strength, inspiration, wisdom, knowledge, and understanding throughout this study. Without His guidance and support, I would not have been able to achieve my goals. I am also grateful to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, for providing me with the wisdom, strength, and knowledge required to explore new horizons and overcome the many obstacles I encountered during my studies. His guidance and determination have been valuable, and I am truly thankful for His enduring love and unwavering support.

I owe a great deal of gratitude to my late grandmother, Charlene, and my mother, Felisha, for their unwavering support throughout my academic journey. Their constant encouragement and belief in me have been my driving force, instilling in me the values of perseverance and hard work. Their outstanding examples have motivated me to strive for excellence in everything I undertake, and I am extremely fortunate to have them by my side. I would also like to extend my sincerest appreciation to all those who have contributed to this research project, sharing their valuable knowledge and expertise to make it a reality. Without the help and support of others, this project would not have come to fruition.

I must express my sincere gratitude and thanks to my wife, Taylor, and my twin brother, Tyrone. Their unwavering support and motivation were absolutely essential in helping me complete my thesis. Without their invaluable help, I would not have been able to achieve this remarkable feat. Throughout this journey, their unyielding assistance has been truly indispensable, and for that, I am immensely grateful.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful for the support and guidance of my academic advisers, Dr. Thomas P. Goddard, and reader, Dr. Monica Taylor, who have played an integral role in shaping my thesis. Their invaluable intellect, advice, comments, and recommendations have been instrumental in improving my study and pushing me beyond my limits. I also want to extend my appreciation to my thesis committee for their contributions and encouragement. Additionally, I am thankful to the Beaumont Independent School District for providing me with the opportunity to conduct my study, and I would like to specifically acknowledge the contributions of Ms. Jacobs, Mr. Spencer, and Mr. Nickson, whose participation influenced my study.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for all the support and inspiration I received throughout this journey. Without your help, my pursuit of this endeavor may have ended in failure. Each member of my thesis committee provided me with substantial personal and professional advice, as well as teaching me a great deal about music education, study, and life in general. I am also incredibly grateful to everyone who participated in my research. Their willingness to share their knowledge and perspectives was invaluable to my study and contributed to the success of this thesis. I am deeply grateful to my entire family for their unwavering support and trust in my abilities. While I cannot express my gratitude to each of you individually, I want you to know that your contributions have not gone unnoticed. My thesis would not have been possible without your prayers, blessings, and genuine love. Thank you all for everything you have done for me.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Music education is crucial for providing a creative outlet and developing essential skills such as discipline and teamwork. For African American students residing in urban areas, music education can significantly impact their lives, whether it involves singing, playing an instrument, or joining a school band. It is an excellent way to boost their self-esteem, express themselves, and discover their unique talents. Schools and other institutions can provide the support needed to help these students refine their musical skills, improve their academic performance, and make meaningful contributions to their cultural and societal development. Urban music educators are truly exceptional. Urban band directors are remarkable at inspiring their students through dedication, creativity, and enthusiasm. Their passion for music is infectious, making them true role models. Scholar Peter C. Murrell asserts that, “accomplished teachers of African American children are critical consumers of contemporary curriculum, educational policy, and instructional practice, and interrogate them as a matter of daily practice by asking, how does this practice or policy perpetuate the underachievement of African American learners?”¹ Recognizing the value of music pedagogy is crucial for African American students. It helps assess abilities and fosters creativity. Music is an integral part of many cultures and serves as a powerful means of expression. Whether singing, playing an instrument, listening to music, or creating rhythms, music opens us up to new experiences and possibilities. Embracing music as a genre is key to unlocking one’s potential.

It is an indisputable fact that the development of musical abilities has a positive impact on academic performance and contributes significantly to society. Therefore, it is of utmost

¹ Peter C. Murrell, Jr., *African-Centered Pedagogy: Developing Schools of Achievement for African American Children* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 18.

importance that urban band directors possess valuable insights and strategies to achieve these goals. With their exceptional skills, they can make a significant difference in their students' lives by teaching impeccable technique, encouraging creativity, and fostering a genuine love for music. It is undeniable that urban band directors have a unique role in shaping the minds and talents of youth, and their impact cannot be overstated. Murrell asserts that, "the idea of activity setting is also meant to invoke understanding of teaching and learning as a scene in which teachers and learners are coparticipants and coproducers of learning achievements."² In urban areas, it is important to recognize the value of activity settings in a child's education. Music has proven to be a positive influence for students in low-income neighborhoods, improving academic performance and fostering positive attributes. Urban schools have developed exemplary methods and strategies of music education that should serve as models for educators across the profession.

Background

Music educators of urban African American underprivileged students, confidently recognize and respect the social and cultural backgrounds of their students. This approach helps to create an inclusive and safe learning environment that celebrates diversity. Educators have a responsibility to ensure that students feel supported and valued, and most educators work tirelessly to achieve this goal every day in urban communities. It is passionately believed that by acknowledging and understanding the unique experiences and perspectives of each student, educators can help students utilize music to express themselves and reach their full potential. Urban music instructors absolutely commit themselves to fostering a supportive and encouraging atmosphere for their students. Through the provision of impactful metrics such as test-based

² James Strong, *Effective Teachers=Student Achievement: What the Research Says* (Taylor & Francis Group: Routledge, 2010), 105.

development indicators, students are making considerable progress both academically and socially. Wholeheartedly, educators must understand the transformative power of music education in helping students achieve their goals. This encompasses attending school regularly, graduating on time, and developing a keen sense of self-assurance. Instructors are unwavering in their dedication to empowerment of students to reach their full potential and guarantee an environment that is both safe and fair for all learners. According to Strong, “an effective teacher is effective with all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status background; conversely, an ineffective teacher is ineffective with all students.”³ To effectively instruct African American students in urban areas, it is important for music educators to be culturally sensitive and student-centered. An innovative and intriguing music curriculum that stimulates students’ interests, experiences, and circumstances can be instrumental in promoting positive outcomes. It is crucial to acknowledge that not all students enter school with the same level of preparation, and differentiated instructional strategies are necessary to support the achievement and success of underprivileged African American students.

This study focused on the utilization of instructional strategies by band directors in urban areas. To accommodate all students, it is recommended for urban music instructors to use differentiated instructional strategies. These teaching techniques are suitable for students with varying musical levels. Steven N. Kelly asserts that, “research studies have shown that when students are exposed to a broad diversity of musical experiences, they begin to expand their musical behaviors and preferences which may allow them to make more knowledgeable and

³ James Strong, *Effective Teachers=Student Achievement: What the Research Says* (Taylor & Francis Group: Routledge, 2010), 41.

responsible music decisions for themselves.”⁴ To optimize music education in urban areas, band directors should utilize an active learning approach that focuses on hands-on activities and the application of new knowledge. This method necessitates the development of an individualized instructional model that considers each student’s musical abilities and experience levels. The ultimate goal is to unlock each student’s artistic potential. Kelly states that, “a better cultural understanding of the relationship between music, music education, and our society may bridge the gap between academic music expectations and social music interactions.”⁵ It is important for all students to grasp the same ideas and abilities to meet the Common Core state standard requirements, regardless of their unique variations. The Common Core music standards require students to read, write, compose, assess, evaluate, and connect music to various historical and cultural practices. This is crucial for their academic performance and cultural growth.

To create an inclusive and diverse classroom, it is crucial for teachers to adapt their teaching style to meet the needs of their students, rather than expecting them to conform to the lesson. Kelly found that, “the Tanglewood Symposium provided an impetus to expand school music curricula to entice students back into the music classroom and was integral in connecting music in the greater society to music in the schools.”⁶ With so many different learning styles and abilities in a single classroom, it is crucial to integrate multiple methods of lesson delivery to ensure that every student can engage with the material in a way that works best for them. By being intentional and thoughtful in the approach, music instructors can create a safe and inclusive learning environment that empowers all students. As determined by Kelly, “public

⁴ Steven N. Kelly, *Teaching Music in American Society: A Social and Cultural Understanding of Music Education* (Florence: Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), 50.

⁵ Kelly, *Teaching Music in American Society*, 55

⁶ *Ibid.*, 56.

schools in the United States are mandated to instruct all students, regardless of ability or disability. The No Child Left Behind Act (2002) implemented by the George W. Bush administration requires that all students achieve the same minimum standard.”⁷ Tailored instruction is a necessary component of the learning process for all students, especially in urban band classrooms. Urban music instructors must use a diverse set of instructional methods to address the various learning differences of music education students. To ensure effective learning, it is essential to group music students based on their musical abilities and performance levels. This approach allows for a safe and inclusive learning environment that empowers all students to succeed. Kelly suggests that “the goal is to prepare all students to function equally in society and have an equal opportunity to obtain a vocation after graduation. It is assumed that the universal application of experiences received through the common school model will eliminate social class differences due to everyone having equal access to developing skills, instruction, and resources.”⁸ Arranging brass, woodwinds, and percussion sectionals are critical to ensure every student receives the best guidance in developing their musical abilities. The delivery of musical content in band rehearsals is most useful when musical skill levels and understanding exist. In addition to recognizing that students are at various instrumental levels, diversification also considers the skill levels and capabilities of musical students. Therefore, band directors differentiate and make accommodations to ensure the content is engaging and suitable for all students.

⁷ Kelly, *Teaching Music in American Society*, 72.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 73.

Improving Educational Outcomes for African American Students

Music educators commonly believe in the imperative role that culturally relevant pedagogy plays in urban classrooms, especially for African American students. By incorporating music that aligns with their cultural backgrounds, a more personalized learning experience that enriches their overall understanding and involvement can be delivered. Teachers are unwavering in their commitment to empowering students and creating a secure, supportive environment that cultivates growth and self-assurance. Music educators are resolute in their dedication to ensuring that every student reaches their full potential and attains academic success. John Chubb and Tom Loveless are two scholars in education. Chubb and Loveless found that, “the most promising strategies include focusing on core academic skills, reducing class size, enrolling students in more challenging courses, administering annual achievement assessment tests, creating schools with a culture of achievement and success, and offering vouchers in big-city school districts.”⁹ As a diverse and informed instructor, incorporation of culturally relevant music into teaching strategies is crucial for ensuring the success of all students, regardless of their backgrounds. By prioritizing this approach, music instructors create a safe and welcoming environment where all students can lead, learn, and grow together. Chubb and Loveless note that, “to promote equity, Texas was one of the first states to require that schools annually report disaggregated TAAS scores, allowing for the monitoring of progress by each major ethnic and racial group. That requirement was incorporated into the Leave No Child Behind Act, the federal education legislation signed by President George W. Bush in 2002.”¹⁰ Globalization and support are best fostered through diverse instructional methods and proficiency-based grouping. By providing a

⁹ John E. Chubb and Tom Loveless, eds. *Bridging the Achievement Gap* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), 6.

¹⁰ Kelly, *Teaching Music in American Society*, 72.

range of teaching techniques and catering to individual student needs, instructors can ensure that every student has the opportunity to gain experience and succeed. Proficiency-based grouping allows for personalized instruction, enabling students to progress at their own pace. As stated by Chubb and Loveless, “the gap reduction seen in the 1970s is important in demonstrating that the achievement gap is not immutable but can be changed on a national scale.”¹¹ The, “No Child Left Behind (2002),” was created to reduce the achievement disparity. Doing so, by requiring all states to adopt standards and accountability procedures that would guarantee all children receive a fundamental education. Educator Kelly states that, “today, success for all is used in about sixteen hundred schools in forty-eight states, serving about one million children. Overwhelmingly, these schools are high-poverty, Title I schoolwide projects, and about two-thirds of all Success for All children are African American or Latino.”¹²

As educators of urban African American underprivileged students, it is important for band directors to understand the value of culturally relevant music pedagogy. By prioritizing this approach, instructors can utilize a diverse range of instructional methods to empower their students. Music education not only enhances musical abilities but also provides a platform for students to express their creativity in a broader context. This personalized approach to learning fosters inclusivity and support, ensuring the success of all students. Scherer believes that “as educators, we have the responsibility to educate and inspire the whole child— mind, heart, and soul. By focusing on the following essentials, we can put more joy into students’ experience of going to school and get more joy out of working inside one.”¹³ Socioeconomic backgrounds and

¹¹ Kelly, *Teaching Music in American Society*, 76.

¹² *Ibid.*, 77.

¹³ Marge Scherer, *Engaging the Whole Child: Reflections on Best Practices in Learning, Teaching, and Leadership* (London: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development, 2009), 4.

poverty influence student performance in educational settings. Furthermore, teachers who labor in these environments frequently experience elevated stress.

To achieve educational excellence, it is important to provide a supportive learning environment that educates the whole child. This includes not only academic success, but also cultural competence, critical social consciousness, political activism, and responsibility. By embracing these components of comprehensive culturally responsive teaching, it can be ensured that every student has the tools they need to succeed and thrive in an innovative and diverse world. Scherer suggests that “many educators believe that it is the parents’ job, and not theirs, to instill a sense of responsibility in children. Parents clearly provide an important starting point; their support for developing autonomy in children is crucial particularly for boys.”¹⁴ To promote educational excellence, it is crucial to create a supportive learning environment that addresses the needs of every student. Culturally sensitive teaching aims to remove learning barriers caused by institutional, instructional, or attitudinal constraints. This can be achieved by implementing culturally responsive pedagogy, offering professional development for educators, and providing culturally responsive mentoring services. Urban band directors can play a significant role in this process by building relationships and leadership for students. By promoting and strengthening parent and community engagement, they can address issues affecting African American students in metropolitan areas. With these efforts, every student can access content that was previously unavailable and thrive complex settings.

Statement of the Problem

Music education has a positive impact on students from low-income neighborhoods in urban areas. To ensure that all learners are supported, it is important to use culturally sensitive

¹⁴ Scherer, *Engaging the Whole Child*, 158.

teaching practices. Music educators can offer professional development and mentoring services to create a more inclusive learning environment. In addition, urban band directors can develop relationships and leadership opportunities for students, involving parents and communities, to address issues that affect African American students. With these efforts, every student can access valuable content and thrive in a diverse society. Murrell notes that “African American children, more than their European-American counterparts, begin to experience schools as places that merely control, coerce and demand conformity, rather than as places that encourage learning, inspire creativity, and enable thinking.”¹⁵ There are various advantages to using a student-centered approach. Furthermore, students can learn in ways that connect with them individually, it can help them feel seen and understood when lessons are tailored to their interest. As a result, children may feel that their needs are being met and that they have a place in the classroom. Consideration and successful implementation of activities related to the individual students’ will increase their well-being, classroom participation, and confidence in their talents. As explained by Murrell, “under the banner of multicultural education, teaching for diversity is too easily equated with pedagogy for African American children. But it is sometimes, often, counter to what is pedagogically best for the African American child.”¹⁶

Differentiated Instruction

As stated by Murrell, “the recommendation for teacher preparation is the requirement that teacher candidates develop the collaborative abilities and “know how” to create social climates in their classrooms that promote development and learning.”¹⁷ All learners possess distinct

¹⁵ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 20.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 53.

learning styles. Visual aids work for some, while others prefer an auditory approach. Active participation suits some, while others prefer a passive one. Effective differentiation demands teachers impart knowledge in a manner that caters to each student's individual learning style. Using process-based strategies, teachers can offer targeted support to students who need it, while affording others the freedom to work independently or in small groups. Every student must learn and progress at their own pace, without anyone being left behind. It is obvious that it enhances their academic performance and teaches them valuable life skills. Children gaining access to resources that can help them enhance their musical abilities and cultivate a passion for music, is the goal of music educators.

With differentiated instructional strategies, students can achieve their curricular goals, while urban band directors function as coordinators and facilitators, guiding music students to become self-regulated, trained, and decisive musicians. According to Murrell, "the evidence collectively called the achievement gap should suggest to the thoughtful reader a fundamental problem with the educational process for African American children."¹⁸ Educators wield powerful tools in their arsenal when it comes to the education of their students. By customizing teaching methods to suit the unique needs and preferences of everyone, professors can help students achieve both their academic and personal goals with ease. This is especially crucial in programs that aim to introduce music to underprivileged students residing in urban areas. Instructors in these programs are experts in differentiated instruction, utilizing their vast knowledge to ensure that every student reaches their capacity. By adopting these approaches, students are empowered to become self-reliant musicians and confidently attain their learning

¹⁸ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 20.

objectives. Differentiation is an essential aspect that contributes significantly to the success of individual learning in any educational setting.

Impact of Achievement Disparities

Achievement gaps among African American students persist in schools throughout the United States, regardless of their racial, cultural, or linguistic background. However, educators possess a powerful tool to tackle this challenge: differentiation. By tailoring their teaching methods to address the specific needs and preferences of each student, instructors can unleash the full potential of every learner. This approach is particularly vital in music programs for low-income urban students, where differentiation is skillfully implemented to ensure that each student can thrive. Consequently, differentiation is a crucial factor in instilling confidence and self-reliance in budding musicians, and it plays an essential role in maximizing learning and success in any educational setting. According to Strong, “school quality is an important determinant of academic performance and an important tool for raising the achievement of low-income students”¹⁹ In schools with greater poverty levels, students experience a significant number of obstacles that hinder their ability to learn. Students from all backgrounds and ethnicities have equal chances to learn and advance their knowledge in an equitable learning environment. African American music educators must be culturally competent to obtain the necessary skills to encourage an equitable learning environment. As mentioned by Strong, “a solid planning process is integral to a teacher’s efforts in identifying appropriate curriculum, instructional strategies, and resources to address the needs of all students. Furthermore, teachers’

¹⁹ James Strong, *Effective Teachers=Student Achievement: What the Research Says* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2010), 12.

planning influences the content of instruction, the sequence, and cognitive demands of subject topics, learning activities and students,' and the pacing of allocation of instructional time."²⁰

Socioeconomic restraints are observed in the academic performance of African American students across schools in America. Fortunately, knowledgeable teachers possess a tool to tackle this challenge - differentiation. By personalizing their teaching techniques to cater to the distinct needs and inclinations of each student, teachers can effectively diminish these achievement gaps. In music programs for low-income urban students, instructors adeptly implement differentiated instruction to ensure that every student attains their maximum potential. This approach bolsters students' self-assurance and self-sufficiency and is indispensable in optimizing individual learning and triumph in any academic setting. Scholars Barrett and Webster assert that, "classroom teachers who are required to provide arts instruction and experiences for their students have a strong need for professional development in the arts that can better prepare them to teach arts concepts and skills."²¹

Social-Emotional Learning

Music provides an avenue for cultivating valuable skills such as managing success or failure while performing in front of others, which can aid in overcoming stage fright and improving confidence. It is crucial to recognize the immense advantages that music instruction and performance opportunities offer African American students. Emotional development is also a critical aspect of this process, where students learn to identify and comprehend their emotions, as well as those of others, while gaining an understanding of the socio-cultural factors that influence emotional expression and regulation. Furthermore, the incorporation of a diverse range

²⁰ Janet R. Barrett and Peter R. Webster, *The Musical Experience: Rethinking Music Teaching and Learning* (New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2014), 64.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 112.

of ethnically rich materials in music programs can promote positive outcomes and foster greater unity among students. Encouraging collaborative learning is essential in promoting cooperation, personal accountability, and the advantages of interdependence among students. As stated by Erwin, “the students’ needs are the interpersonal knowledge and skills that enable them to get out of their own way and succeed, not only in school but later in life. They need social emotional learning (SEL).”²² The classroom is the ultimate environment for students to acquire new skills that will boost their productivity, self-awareness, and social consciousness. Self-management is an absolute necessity for social-emotional learning, as it demands active engagement with the emotions to govern actions. Once students master these skills, they can effectively manage their thoughts and feelings, leading to greater success in the classroom.

Statement of the Purpose

The research aimed to discover the most effective techniques for teaching music to African American students who come from underprivileged backgrounds. This study explored various approaches and tactics to make music education more accessible to urban African American students who often face obstacles. It is expected that this research will broaden the scope of music education and provide students with more opportunities to appreciate the beauty of music. By delving deeper into the unique challenges faced by these students, instructors can develop better approaches to teaching music and fostering cultural understanding. It is crucial that urban music educators continue to prioritize and invest in music education for all students. According to Barrett and Webster, “the transformation of teacher practice in arts education and arts integration requires long-term attention, particularly in an urban environment where there

²² Jonathan C. Erwin, *The SEL Solution: Integrate Social and Emotional Learning into Your Curriculum and Build a Caring Climate for All Ebook* (Huntington Beach, CA: Free Spirit Publishing Inc., 2019), 85.

may be minimal arts instruction by specialists, and little is done to help teachers learn to integrate the arts with regular classroom instruction.”²³ Music has been proven to be an incredibly versatile and powerful tool with numerous applications across the globe. Through extensive research, effective strategies have been identified that incorporate music into educational practices, resulting in a more engaging and stimulating learning experience for students. By analyzing the five fundamental elements of educational methods, researchers confidently found that combining music with these strategies can significantly enhance students’ learning journey.

1. Pedagogical Competence in Music Teaching
2. Differentiated Instructional Strategies for Student Engagement
3. Recognition of Low SOCIO-ECONOMIC Inequality identified by (school location, demographics, and school performance grade)
4. Individual and Societal Development
5. Collaborative Performance Opportunities for Student Achievement

Music instructors play a crucial role in the growth and development of students. By fostering a collaborative environment among instructors, parents, and children, musical inspiration can thrive. Effective teaching requires a cheerful outlook, and the use of relevant real-life scenarios. The ideas presented in this text can improve the quality of education provided. To address underachievement, music instructors should implement successful teaching methods while also considering how cultures can shape students’ attitudes, values, and behaviors.

Recognizing the crucial role that music instructors play in fostering the growth and development of their students is paramount for educational professionals. To achieve this goal,

²³ Barrett and Webster, *The Musical Experience*, 113.

instructors must create a culturally responsive, student-centered education that considers each student's experiences, realities, and interests. Relevant lessons that align with their students' daily lives are essential in establishing an equitable classroom climate that promotes learning for all children. When adopting culturally responsive teaching, teachers must prioritize both instructional methods and multicultural curriculum designs. Urban instructors must invest in their pupils' success and strive for high-level achievement. The development of a community of learners that fosters unwavering faith in their students' intellectual potential is paramount. Teachers must take responsibility for facilitating their development while valuing and preserving their ethnic and cultural identities, without disregarding, belittling, or abandoning them. Academic achievement for students of color is built upon a foundation of cultural affirmation and strength. Therefore, when teaching music pedagogy to urban African American underprivileged students, honing their musical abilities, engagement, collaboration, and creativity is vital. By implementing successful teaching methods and considering how culture can shape students' demeanors, music instructors can significantly improve the quality of education provided.

Significance of the Study

Music instructors are crucial to the growth and progress of students in band. Through music education, students can acquire important disciplinary skills and learn time management techniques. They can also develop the ability to create and maintain a practice routine and understand the importance of practicing outside of class. Overall, this comprehensive approach to music education can provide students with a superior quality education. As determined by Strong, "if we want to improve the quality of our schools and positively affect the lives of our students, we must change the quality of our teaching. This is our best hope to improve education

systematically and dramatically.”²⁴ Musical aspirants stand to gain significantly from a range of pedagogical methods that prioritize the fundamentals of music theory within tailored curricula. Music theory encompasses essential philosophical, conceptual, and practical elements that enable students to grasp the complexities of music. Urban music programs offer a distinct opportunity for learners to hone their reading and performing skills while also equipping them with a shared language system to communicate effectively with their instructors. Students should embrace these varied instructional strategies to attain a comprehensive music education that cultivates discipline, time management, and effective practice habits. Author James Strong demystifies the power and methods of successful teachers as he describes and clarifies the value-added teacher evaluation study that has arisen in the last ten years. Strong found that, “as demonstrated in the TVAAS studies, teacher effectiveness can be captured by measured student achievement gains. Numerous studies found similar effects on student learning for effective versus ineffective teachers.”²⁵ The researcher aimed to identify the specific instructional approaches and techniques that band directors use to offer a comprehensive music education to aspiring musicians. Teachers should engage in pedagogical conscientization, in which their teaching techniques are guided by a critical comprehension of their pupils’ sociocultural backgrounds. Culturally relevant music provides a community of learners who, in turn, will take ownership of the students when teaching and learning is implemented in the classroom.

Research Questions

Music education is not just about learning the art form; it integrates various skills required by students within the program. Recent research reveals how band directors in urban

²⁴ Strong, *Effective Teachers=Student Achievement*, 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

areas instruct their students to achieve academic success through music. This involves teaching the basics of music theory, encouraging effective practice routines, personalizing lesson plans, using diverse teaching methods, enhancing playing, and reading abilities, and fostering discipline and time management skills. Besides, urban music programs offer a unique opportunity for students to interact with their instructors in a common language. As stated by Burton and Snell, “using effective teaching techniques (how) to improve students’ achievement follows the establishment of a solid method.”²⁶ This instruction aims to improve children’s musical capabilities, broaden their interpretive ability, and broaden their understanding of music in general.

For urban band students, method books are incredibly useful resources to build on their foundational knowledge of reading notes and rhythms to become skilled musicians. Reading music theory and notation entails a range of tasks, such as mental preparation for performing, mastering the physical elements of playing, learning a new written and auditory language (music), and developing critical thinking, decision-making, and execution skills. It is important to note that music education is not just about the artistic side of things; it is a comprehensive program that equips students with a variety of skills necessary for academic success. Recent research has emphasized the significance of music education in urban areas, with effective band directors providing vital music theory knowledge, personalized lesson plans, diverse teaching techniques, improved playing and reading abilities, encouragement for productive practice habits, and the promotion of discipline and time management skills. Urban music programs offer a unique opportunity for students to interact with their instructors through the utilization of music. Renowned scholar Sue Cowley stated, “differentiation is an invitation for learners to

²⁶ Burton and Snell, eds., *Engaging Musical Practices*, 65.

participate in lessons and a statement that their needs, wishes and interests are valued.”²⁷ Teacher preparation should be matched to standards-based rubrics, with a curricular framework to deliver dynamic, transformative, and meaningful learning experiences in classroom music sessions for students involved in instrumental programs. This research addressed band directors who teach music to urban students and explored the following questions:

RQ1: What differentiated instructional strategies do urban band directors utilize in the classrooms to encourage students’ learning styles, organize group learning, develop engaging topics, increase musical abilities, and utilize a formative assessment to assess?

Hypotheses

Ho1: To teach music to students in urban areas, one must possess a diverse set of skills, knowledge, and experience. Music pedagogy offers a well-rounded approach to music education that prioritizes practical, intellectual, and application-based learning. This includes music instruction, teaching techniques, and didactics. The main goal of music pedagogy is to help students gain a deep understanding and appreciation for music. By creating a safe and fair learning environment, music pedagogy encourages students to be creative and interpret musical pieces in their own unique way.

This study explored how band directors in metropolitan areas with socioeconomic challenges impact their students’ identities through music instruction. The study examined different teaching methods, student achievement, success rates in shaping students’ identities in music education. Close attention to these factors allows band directors to help students overcome obstacles and reach their full potential. According to Burton and Snell, “effective music instruction requires teachers to teach musical skills and knowledge in a sequential manner within

²⁷ Cowley, *The Ultimate Guide to Differentiation*, 82.

a comprehensive curriculum.”²⁸ Urban music educators possess the necessary skills to differentiate and adapt their instruction to cater to the unique needs of their students, particularly in the field of music. A comprehensive pedagogy in music provides a solid foundation for addressing aesthetic, psychological, and social issues related to the art form, despite its many complexities. Furthermore, music has the potential to support creative, academic, and educational pursuits in a variety of ways.

RQ2: What method books can be used for urban students to build on their fundamentals of reading notes and rhythms to become proficient musicians?

Ho2: To acquire the fundamental knowledge required to begin learning an instrument, method books are frequently utilized. These books are universal for all students in the class, resulting in identical learning and progress. Widely known method books such as the Standard of Excellence and the Essential Elements promote the development of specific techniques and strategies for each instrument, as well as the identification and improvement of musical reading and rhythm skills. For band directors seeking to diversify instruction in the classroom, there are a variety of strategies that can be employed. These may include tailoring lessons to correspond with each student’s individual learning style, grouping students based on shared interests or abilities, utilizing formative assessment to monitor student progress, creating a supportive and secure classroom environment, and altering lesson content as necessary to meet the needs of all students.

Method books are great supplemental materials for students to further develop their fundamentals of reading, playing, and writing notes and rhythms. The method books add to the learning process when teaching music to students. Furthermore, it assures the students are going

²⁸ Burton and Snell, eds., *Engaging Musical Practices*, 66.

through the audiation process before attempting to read visually. Many method books instruct students to select a note or rhythm but fail to instruct the learners on how the musical passage should sound. Learning to produce sound and move logically while using the method books allows students to understand unfamiliar notes, rhythms, and a whole new language of musical notation, and are all compelling reasons to utilize method books in an urban setting. Method books, in other words, are intended to augment traditional musical instruction rather than to encourage self-teaching. As stated by Murrell, “a pedagogy is not merely a blueprint or map for educational practice— but more like a script for accomplished practice that leads to the development and achievement of children— intellectually, socially, and spiritually.”²⁹

Supplemental resources and teaching are crucial in bridging the gaps between student learning and achievement. Method books are an excellent tool to provide students with the necessary information to play an instrument. It is imperative that all students using the same book progress at the same rate to ensure they can play the same songs together when forming a band. Combining method books with other resources is essential in helping students reach their full potential. As claimed by Murrell, “developing one’s pedagogy involves grappling with a trio of concerns for effective teaching— human nature, human institutions, and human values.”³⁰ Academic success for diverse students relies heavily on their sense of validation from society and their inner fortitude. It is not enough to simply earn good grades, they must also feel seen, heard, and supported, regardless of their background or identity. By promoting a culture of inclusivity and support, teachers can unleash the full potential of a diverse student body and

²⁹ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 101.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 102.

ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to thrive. It is imperative that we prioritize this effort to create a truly equitable educational environment.

Professional Development

Understanding the educational norms and obligations of the situation was aided by the research conducted on instructing music to disadvantaged inner-city African American students. As specified by Barrett and Webster, “teacher professional development efforts in the arts should provide teachers the opportunity to develop pedagogical content knowledge in the arts, in collaborative environments that encourage action and reflection. Classroom observation, individual coaching, and peer support should reinforce work in these content areas.”³¹

Understanding the full scope of teaching in different environments is essential. This understanding enables teacher training programs to tailor their instruction in a way that is effective for each specific setting. For instance, traditional music literacy involves the ability to decode musical symbols and translate them into sounds, as well as the capacity to perceive sounds and translate them into symbols. However, true musical literacy extends beyond these fundamental skills. It encompasses a vast vocabulary for describing music, an ability to be stylistically sensitive across diverse musical cultures, the capacity to articulate one’s musical preferences, an understanding of the multidisciplinary nature of music, instrumental and vocal proficiency, creativity, and a well-developed understanding of how music fits into one’s life. Musicality is much more comprehensive than what is typically taught, and music literacy is likely to be much more nuanced. In the opinions of Barrett and Webster, “staff development for all participants, classroom teachers and arts specialists alike, must focus on subject content,

³¹ Barrett and Webster, *The Musical Experience*, 122.

pedagogical knowledge, and methodology to facilitate changes in teachers' habits of practice."³² Educators strive to create an environment that promotes enhanced student learning, and can take place in sociocultural, linguistically, and intellectually practical ways. By incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences into teaching methods, urban instructors can assist students in connecting with the material in a more meaningful way. This not only improves their academic performance, but also prepares them to be more engaged and empathetic members of society. The goal is to create lifelong learners who may navigate and contribute to a rapidly changing world.

Effective professional development is key to acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary to confidently address student learning challenges. This involves careful planning, execution, and evaluation to ensure learning goals are met. Exploring professional development opportunities can bring new perspectives and innovative ideas to the table. By actively engaging in these opportunities, urban band leaders and educators can broaden their knowledge and become more skilled in their craft. Murrell believes that "in order to serve African- children our methods must reflect the best understandings that we have of how they develop and learn biologically, spiritually, and culturally."³³ As our classrooms become more diverse, it is important to choose a band technique that represents a global music perspective. Music educators who teach band often rely on the band method book as their primary source of curriculum material. It is crucial to examine the curriculum building blocks currently available to music educators to determine whether they provide multicultural music content. By using an all-encompassing, student-centered methodology that adheres to education and quality standards,

³² Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 123.

³³ *Ibid.*, 118.

music educators can employ differentiated instruction to maximize the learning of all students in the classroom. This method involves altering the content and approach of teaching to suit each student's needs, rather than adhering to one varied instructional technique.

Observing how band directors adapt their teaching techniques to meet diverse learning styles, ability groupings, and assessment results is crucial. This research is necessary to ensure that underprivileged urban students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds can excel in a secure and supportive learning environment. Utilizing both formative and summative assessments, along with effective classroom management strategies, guarantees that every student receives an impartial and exceptional education. Cowley explains, "having routines for learning is a great way to support because it increases both the level of challenge and the amount of support at the same time."³⁴ As a band director in an urban setting, it is important to acknowledge that every student has a unique approach to learning. To ensure that each student receives the best possible education, it is essential to customize teaching strategies to fit their individual needs and capabilities. This personalized approach is the key to unlocking their potential and achieving success in music. Depending on the student, some may require one-on-one assistance while others may prefer to work independently. It is the instructor's responsibility as the teacher to provide adequate guidance to support each student on their path to success.

As a band director teaching in an urban setting, it is crucial to employ a variety of teaching techniques that cater to each students' intellectual abilities. One effective method to accomplish this is by providing students with multiple options for completing their coursework. It is common knowledge that every student learns differently, and by allowing them to express

³⁴ Sue Cowley, *The Ultimate Guide to Differentiation: Achieving Excellence for All* (Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. 2018), 28.

their comprehension in a way that suits them best, we can enhance their learning experience. By utilizing differentiated instruction, instructors can assist students in their educational journey while simultaneously promoting self-awareness. The guide authored by Billie F. Birnie that focuses on creating an ideal learning environment for children is extremely valuable. Her approach of aiding students in developing a connection with their teacher has the potential to positively influence their academic performance. Birnie claims, “effective instruction requires a teacher to accommodate a myriad of learning styles, interests, interferences, and abilities while at the same time maintaining high expectations and paving the way for every student’s success.”³⁵ By planning meticulously and setting clear standards, urban instructors can provide our students with a comprehensive education that prepares them for the real world. Bringing choice and flexibility into our teaching style can lead to a personalized and engaging experience for each student, resulting in improved learning outcomes. Regular assessment is essential in differentiated instruction to refine the approach and ensure that every student reaches their full potential. Cowley suggest, “although it is the teacher’s responsibility to teach (and differentiate for) the learners, you can plan to get the learners themselves involved with supporting and challenging each other’s learning as well.”³⁶

To effectively teach in urban African American communities, it is essential to understand and cater to the needs of each individual student. One technique that can be particularly useful is incorporating method books into lessons. These resources offer valuable guidance and support for educators, allowing them to tailor their instruction to the abilities, capabilities, and learning

³⁵ Billie F. Birnie, *A Teacher’s Guide to Successful Classroom Management and Differentiated Instruction*. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014), 25.

³⁶ Cowley, *The Ultimate Guide to Differentiation*, 28.

profiles of their students. By utilizing method books, instructors can ensure that lessons are engaging, relevant, and effective, contributing to the students' success both in and out of the classroom. Birnie determined, "the differentiated classroom is therefore characterized by a continuous loop of assessment and instruction, by learning groups that change with students' needs and interests, by a rich variety of resources, and by intense, purposeful activity."³⁷ As a band director in an urban environment, it is important to know the focus groups readiness levels and learning styles. Using pre-assessments can help educators identify important characteristics that can be used to create student categories. By customizing lessons and assignments based on these relevant characteristics, such as readiness, interests, or learning styles, catered lessons can help students' progress towards understanding. Collaborating with peers who have similar academic needs can also be beneficial, as it allows students to work together towards their goals. Birnie states that, "any teacher who attempts to differentiate instruction will find, as Norma did, that students' "ownership" of their learning is a key ingredient in the process. That "ownership" will contribute immeasurably to the ambiance of the classroom and to the speed with which students achieve desired results."³⁸ Implementing differentiated instruction in the classroom is a highly effective approach to ensure that all students are able to learn in the best conceivable way. This technique involves utilizing various teaching strategies to encourage student participation and modifying assignments to cater to individual needs. In addition, regular assessments and feedback are provided to monitor their progress. This creates a supportive and secure environment for students, where each one can excel. As determined by Dorfman, "teachers

³⁷ Birnie, *A Teacher's Guide*, 26.

³⁸ Jay Dorfman, *Theory and Practice of Technology-Based Music Instruction: Second Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2022), 27.

determine learning objectives for their students through a process of diagnosis, adherence to curriculum guidelines, and sometimes through input from the students themselves.”³⁹ Music educators successfully integrated the creative process of music creation into their teaching strategies, resulting in significant improvements in their students’ creativity, inventiveness, and consideration in music lessons. Band directors in urban areas implemented purposeful learning experiences with immense success, ensuring that students’ needs were met while adhering to curriculum standards. With the unwavering support of their music instructors, students can attain and surpass expectations on their journey towards musical excellence. Urban band directors can benefit from the research findings, which provide valuable tools for evaluating their students’ musical skills. Music educators must have a comprehensive understanding of the psychological, cultural, and environmental factors that shape human musical behavior to help their students reach their full potential, especially those who have a passion for music and want to excel in this field.

To fully understand this study, one must learn specific terms and phrases used in music. These include the following:

Definition of Terms

Beat: “A beat is a pulsation that divides time into equal lengths.”⁴⁰ Beats are rhythmic musical patterns. They are employed to establish a consistent rhythm that keeps the listener interested and aids in creating a feeling of flow in a song.

Dotted Half Note: “Occasionally, you come across a note followed by a small dot, called an augmentation dot. This dot indicates that the note’s value is increased by one half of its original

³⁹ Dorfman, *Theory and Practice of Technology-Based Music Instruction*, 67.

⁴⁰ Michael Pilhofer and Holly Day, *Music Theory for Dummies* (Newark: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2019), 31.

value. The most common use of the dotted note is when a half (minim) note is made to last three quarter (crotchet) note beats instead of two.”⁴¹ When you add a dot, you add half the value of the half note (half of two equals one) to the original value (two for the half note). As a result, a dotted half note is a note (worth two) plus half of two (one), which equals three.

Flag: “The flag is the little line that comes off the top or bottom of the note stem. Eighth (quaver) notes and shorter notes have flags.”⁴² In instrumental music, a single eighth note always stems with a flag, but two or more are frequently beamed in groups.

Half Note: “It’s simple logic what comes after whole (semibreve) notes in value — a half (minim) note, of course. You hold a half (minim) note for half as you would a whole (semibreve) note.”⁴³ A musical note with the temporal value of two-quarter notes or half a whole note.

Half Rest: “If a whole (semibreve) rest is held for four beats, then a half (minim) rest is held for two beats.”⁴⁴ Half note rest: also known as a half or minim rest, this rest covers half of a 4/4 bar. It is half the length of the complete rest. A half rest is directly above the middle line on a five-line musical staff.

Head: “The head is the round part of a note. Every note has one.”⁴⁵ A notehead in music is the component of a note, elliptical, whose location on the staff denotes the pitch and to which variations convey duration.

⁴¹ Pilhofer and Day, *Music Theory for Dummies*, 40.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 32.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 32.

Quarter Note: “Divide a whole (semibreve) note, which is worth four beats, by four, and you get a quarter (crotchet) note with a note value of one beat. Quarter (crotchet) notes look like half (minim) notes except that the note head is filled in.”⁴⁶ A quarter note is one-fourth (or one-quarter) of a whole note. For example, crotchet is one-fourth of a semibreve. A quarter note takes the same amount of time as a complete note.

Rests: “These silent “notes” are called, quite fittingly, rests. When you see a rest in a piece of music, you do not have to do anything but continue counting out the beats during it.”⁴⁷ Notes indicate sounds (or pitches) audience hear, whereas pauses represent sounds the audience does not hear. Rests denote the lack of a sounding note, yet they are an essential music component.

Stem: “The stem is the vertical line attached to the note head. Eighth (quaver) notes, quarter (crotchet) notes, and half (minim) notes all have stems.”⁴⁸ Stems are defined in musical notation as thin vertical lines that are directly connected to the [note] head. Stems can point either up or down.

Tie: “Ties connect notes of the same pitch together to create one sustained note instead of two separate ones. When you see a tie, simply add the notes together.”⁴⁹ One note held for two beats equals a quarter (crotchet) note connected to another quarter (crotchet) note.

Whole Note: “In 4/4 time, a whole (semibreve) note lasts for an entire four beats. For four whole beats (semibreves), you do not have to do anything with that one note except play and hold it.”⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Pilhofer and Day, *Music Theory for Dummies*, 37.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 35.

In instrumental music, a single eighth note always stems with a flag, but two or more are frequently beamed in groups.

Whole Rest: “Just like a whole (semibreve) note, a whole (semibreve) rest is worth four beats (in the most common time signature, 4/4.”⁵¹ This symbol denotes a musical pause, the duration of a whole note. For example, a complete rest in a 4/4-time signature instructs the player to pause for the whole bar. A complete rest is below the fourth line on a five-line musical staff.

Chapter Summary

Urban band directors found innovative ways to ensure that their music instruction is accessible and engaging for all students, regardless of their diverse levels. By providing opportunities for music education and performance, African American students can develop important behavioral and social identities. This approach to learning empowers students to maintain their independence while also reaping the benefits of collaboration and teamwork. The study’s significance lies in its ability to cultivate the musicianship of students who participate in urban ensembles. By observing, imitating, and practicing in their social environment, students can acquire musical knowledge and skills. It is important to examine different pedagogical techniques, including the foundations of music theory, in a content-specific curriculum to improve differentiated planning and instruction. As a result, student learning is enhanced in social, linguistic, and cognitive domains.

Urban band directors may adapt their conventions and established practices in a classroom setting. Educators must recognize the diversity in their classrooms and adapt their instruction accordingly. Effective professional growth enables educators to obtain the knowledge and skills required to address the learning challenges of their students. As explained by Barrett

⁵¹ Barrett and Webster, *The Musical Experience: Rethinking Music Teaching and Learning* (New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2014), 45.

and Webster, “professional development programs should be flexible in design, to counter the negative effects of urban policy churn, and should provide long-term support for teachers who are engaged in efforts to change beliefs and habits of practice as they learn to include the arts in the curriculum.”⁵² As a music educator, the opportunity to tailor a teaching approach to suit the unique needs and interests of each of the students is readily available. One effective tool for achieving this goal is Bruce Pearson’s Standard of Excellence Books 1-3, which provide various avenues for students to attain their learning objectives and fulfill subject standards. When teaching music, it is essential to engage and support all students, regardless of their background or current skill level. Music can also serve as a means of celebrating and exploring important cultural events and traditions, fostering unity, and promoting mutual respect among students from diverse backgrounds. As mentioned by Barrett and Webster, “when educators recognize the critical need for relationships in order to bring about change, they can then look to parents and community members as authentic partners in bringing about meaningful and positive change.”⁵³

To truly reap the positive benefits of music involvement on personal and social development, it is imperative that the experience is enjoyable and satisfying. The quality of instruction plays a crucial role in determining the extent of perceived achievement and whether the experience will remain positive over time. To optimize music education, it is essential to assess each student’s unique requirements and adapt the course material and learning methods, accordingly, including the desired outcomes. This is where creative thinking, trial, and error come into play for music teachers. Music has a profound impact on our self-perception and our perception of the world. In urban schools, teaching music has a significant positive impact on

⁵² Barrett and Webster, *The Musical Experience: Rethinking Music Teaching and Learning* (New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2014), 122.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 42.

academic performance, student success, participation, and enthusiasm. The intensive learning involved in music education also cultivates critical skills and abilities that are essential for future success. The key to effective instruction lies in the teacher's ability to continually evaluate the specific aspects they aim to teach and assess student understanding. This requires a thorough consideration of the step-by-step processes that students must follow, the identification of areas where clarification may be needed, and addressing any misconceptions. By doing so, teachers can successfully customize education to better meet the needs of their students.

Music education is undeniably a fantastic way for students to cultivate a strong work ethic and discipline. Through the process of learning an instrument or singing, students come to realize that hard work, persistence, and a cheerful outlook are all critical components to achieving success in any field. As Barrett and Webster has astutely pointed out, these qualities necessitate continuous practice and effort. By dedicating countless hours to study and practice, students can enhance their musical abilities and develop important life skills that will serve them well beyond the practice room or performance stage. As claimed by Barrett and Webster, "by adopting an anthropological perspective and ethnographic research approaches, it is possible for students to embark on a journey of inquiry to discover or rediscover a music culture in their community. This approach to learning about different world musics engages students in research about cultural beliefs and values embedded in a local community's musical practices."⁵⁴ The unifying force of music is truly remarkable, transcending cultural barriers and academic disciplines. It is fascinating how a single melody can elicit the same emotional response from people all over the globe. Regardless of whether one is a music student or a physics major, the

⁵⁴ Barrett and Webster, *The Musical Experience*, 129.

power of music remains indisputable. It is a language that resonates with us on a spiritual level, bringing boundless happiness and fulfillment to our lives.

It is essential to understand that a student's potential is not solely measured by their academic intelligence. For example, music is an area where even students who may struggle with traditional academics can excel. Interestingly, students who may have difficulty in math can often easily grasp complex rhythmic patterns. To help students reach their creative potential, urban band directors use a combination of teacher-led instruction, student practice, and feedback. Since each student is unique, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to learning. In terms of instrumental music, students use both self-regulation and music practice strategies. Self-regulation is a purposeful problem-solving approach that adapts to the given situation. Students who are self-regulating learners are motivated and monitor their performance with feedback.

Method books are an invaluable resource for those looking to learn music. With clear instructions on instrument set-up, labeled instrument photos, posture advice, and historical background, students are given everything they need to get started. The books also include standard techniques and rudiments in percussion pieces, which is essential for those who want to take charge of their own learning and assess their progress. All theory adheres to standard music terminology found in method books, ensuring that students learn the correct information. It is essential to note that teaching music with a multiethnic consciousness is crucial in providing a fuller understanding of "what makes music tick" to our students. Teaching music pedagogy to urban African American impoverished pupils is about understanding the sounds we hear in our favorite songs. The method for teaching fundamental parts of music allows musicians to interact with each other. Working in groups to create musical compositions is a wonderful way to experience the power of collaboration. However, incorporating a multiethnic consciousness and

encouraging collaboration will enhance the learning experience. For years, music teachers have been using these books to provide effective and instrument-specific education.

In music education for urban African American children participating in music programs, a framework has been developed to promote transformative change. The framework includes musical comprehension of musical concepts, skill development, personal and societal growth, opportunities for student collaboration, and academic achievement. This study emphasizes the need for awareness and change in urban music education. It highlights the importance of creating a collaborative platform for student engagement, and fostering an inclusive teaching environment that caters to diverse learning styles. It is crucial to recognize the impact of poverty on the students and resources available to educators in urban areas.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This study aimed to explore best pedagogical competencies, differentiated techniques, etc. when instructing African American students in band settings. Students from socially and economically disadvantaged communities face many daily obstacles that impact their ability and willingness to learn directly and tangentially. This study explored the recognition of low-socio-Economic inequality, and individual and societal development. Music participation builds students, identities, musical awareness, and self-esteem. Lastly, the study focused on the experiences of participants who instruct in urban areas, working in high-poverty school environments, and the achievement and success of African American children in urban areas. As claimed by Murrell, “understanding music is more like knowing a person than knowing a fact, it is knowledge by direct acquaintance; knowledge of rather than knowledge about”⁵⁵ Music education is, without question, a crucial component of our lives. Music education is, without a doubt, an essential part of our lives. Instructors must learn how to motivate their students’ goals and best interests in music and grasp other cultural teaching approaches. Urban band directors must be able to create a learning environment that promotes teaching and learning. Music allows students to communicate emotions through instrumental playing abilities. As urban music educators, we recognize music’s importance in future generations’ that promote musical discovery among African American students who participate in music programs in urban areas.

Pedagogical Competence in Music Teaching

Music pedagogy encompasses all practical, application-oriented, and intellectual work targeted toward teaching and learning. Music pedagogy duties centers on the skill, knowledge, experience, comprehension, and interpretation of music. Murrell offers visibility into merging

⁵⁵ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 130.

the historical, cultural, ideological, and contextual implications of the African American experience into a unified instruction system, emphasizing existing approaches connected to contemporary concepts concerning effective implementation in African American communities. As stated by Murrell, “the unity of reflection and activity is a way of thinking about pedagogy and particularly important for effective instruction with African American children.”⁵⁶ The interpretative framework of African-centered pedagogical approaches assists the teacher in incorporating the cultural patterns of African American students and constructing educational experiences that offer cognitive underpinning for underprivileged students.

As an educator, it is vital to consider the cultural and social background of the students. The African-centered pedagogy framework can serve as a useful tool in organizing students’ experiences within a familiar and supportive societal context. When teaching music to students from lower-income families in urban areas, it is essential to acknowledge the potential for increased critical literacy abilities, such as developing an ear for rhythm and expanding the diversity of sounds. By including music throughout the curriculum, teachers can aid students in achieving academic success, enthusiasm, and commitment in urban schools. Additionally, it is crucial for teachers to recognize and appreciate the various cultures represented in the classroom and to incorporate culturally relevant activities whenever feasible. As indicated by Barrett and Webster, “It is clear that classroom teachers faced with district and state mandates to provide arts instruction must personally experience meaningful artistic growth to provide effective arts instruction.”⁵⁷ For teachers to truly succeed in their classrooms, they must acknowledge and include the various cultures represented by their students. An important aspect of band class

⁵⁶ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 33.

⁵⁷ Barrett and Webster, *The Musical Experience: Rethinking*, 122.

should be the promotion of collaboration, with the goal of forming a tight-knit community where everyone is accountable for each other's progress. Instructors should take into consideration their students' ethnic backgrounds to ensure a well-rounded evaluation of their performance and growth. Urban music education is all about empowering students as a cohesive unit, fostering music literacy and an overall appreciation for music that can translate into academic success.

To effectively guide students in their musical journey, one must possess a vast knowledge of music and proficiency in playing various instruments. This is essential in providing practical guidance that is grounded in factual musical knowledge. In addition, innovative teaching tools revolutionized the way education is delivered. Such tools are helpful in addressing issues such as differentiation, humanization, and creating unique educational viewpoints that are student-centered. These advancements improved the quality of education and made it more accessible to learners of all levels. Dorfman states that, "teachers cannot know everything. We should be as prepared as possible when class begins, but questions and problems will always arise to which we do not know the answers."⁵⁸ Students will be able to engage in reflective teaching and engaging by skill development of learning and performing music. Murrell explains, "African-centered pedagogy consist, in part, of building a community that systematically introduces these moments of profound change and discovery, rich with new meanings and interpretations of the world that contest and contradict those based in their experience outside of the school context."⁵⁹ Recognizing and addressing the unique challenges of teaching underprivileged students in urban areas is paramount for a music teacher. Students' diverse backgrounds, abilities, and capabilities

⁵⁸ Jay Dorfman, *Theory and Practice of Technology-Based Music Instruction: Second Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2022), 69.

⁵⁹ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 35.

must be factored in when creating lesson plans and evaluating progress. To establish a positive learning environment, it is essential to break down concepts or misunderstandings that may exist in urban classrooms. By implementing innovative teaching frameworks of music pedagogy, urban music educators can empower their students to thrive as growing musicians. Staying adaptable and incorporating various instructional techniques enables music instructors to meet the needs of all students.

Differentiated Instruction Strategies for Student Engagement

Differentiated instruction is a combination of numerous educational methodological approaches, rather than a unified force. This all-encompassing, student-centered methodology comprises several of education's quality standards. Diversified instruction is a method of teaching where teachers alter the content and approach to maximize the learning of all students within the classroom. As a result, rather than adhering to one varied instructional technique, music educators can use numerous strategies that employ a combination of differentiated instructions. Karlsen and Väkevä stress the importance of diverse teaching techniques in music classrooms. Educators must consider students' backgrounds to create effective lesson plans and promote success. Breaking down power dynamics and implementing innovative frameworks can empower students to reach their full potential. Flexibility is key in meeting the needs of students in any setting. As mentioned by Karlsen, and Väkevä, "in informal learning, the teacher relinquishes this control and enters into a more flexible and dynamic relationship with the learner, yet a plan for instruction must still be negotiated between teachers and students."⁶⁰ In Sue Cowley's research, it has been revealed that band directors use differentiated instructions

⁶⁰ Sidsel Karlsen and Lauri Väkevä, *Future Prospects for Music Education: Corroborating Informal Learning Pedagogy* (Cambridge Scholars Publisher, 2012), 119.

based on the learning styles of their students. This approach ensures that every student receives the necessary support and guidance to thrive and succeed in their musical endeavors. Cowley determined, “each student has a teaching strategy, and effective differentiation requires giving content to each style: visual, aural, tactile, and verbal.”⁶¹ While some students may profit from one-on-one engagement with the instructor or classroom assistance, others would be able to advance on their own. Teachers can improve student learning by aiding depending on specific capabilities.

When instructors diversify teaching methods, they can reach students at their intellectual level using various modes of reinforcement and teaching resources. One way to differentiate within the curriculum is to offer students choices for completing assignments. Since students learn differently, it is beneficial to allow them to demonstrate their learning in a way that is authentic to them. This approach also encourages students to take ownership of their learning and discover their identity through their work. Music can aid in both their learning progress and their self-awareness of that growth. As music instructors, a modification in how cognitive differentiation is developed, can be made by manipulating and further explaining concepts covered previously. The successful implementation of music into the education of urban underprivileged students, is related to the instructor’s ability to develop an organized plan to encourage learning and teaching, as well as prioritizing choice, adaptability, continual evaluation, and inventiveness, in the classroom. By doing so, music instructors can create a safe and encouraging classroom environment for all students and guarantee that every student receives the necessary support and guidance to excel in their musical pursuits.

⁶¹ Sue Cowley, *The Ultimate Guide to Differentiation: Achieving Excellence for All* (Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. 2018), 20.

Research has unequivocally demonstrated that all students are expected to meet identical standards and objectives in music education. However, proficient African American band directors excel at customizing their instruction to address each student's unique requirements, accommodating their level of readiness, preferences, and learning style. This method can be highly beneficial in assisting students in discovering their talents, expressing themselves, and cultivating self-assurance through singing, playing an instrument, or joining a school band. This personalized approach allows for multiple paths to achieving the defined learning goals and objectives for students. To ensure that differentiated teaching is effective, assessments are employed before, during, and after instruction to track student progress. Specifically, formative, and summative assessments serve as a basis for band directors to differentiate classroom instruction. Murrell believes that "the community teacher is as mindful of children's development as human beings, as cultural beings, and critical thinkers as he or she is about their school lessons."⁶² Whole-class, small-group, and individual explorations are used in differentiated classrooms. Urban band students of mixed preparation collaborate in environments that capitalize on their talents. Karlsen and Väkevä believe that "formal instructional settings, a preordained series of instructional steps allows teachers to control learning and efficiently identify problems in the process. In informal learning, the teacher relinquishes this control and enters into a more flexible and dynamic relationship with the learner, yet a plan for instruction must still be negotiated between teachers and students."⁶³

⁶² Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 35.

⁶³ Sidsel Karlsen, and Lauri Väkevä, *Future Prospects for Music Education: Corroborating Informal Learning Pedagogy* (Cambridge Scholars Publisher, 2012), 119.

In the subject of music, differentiated teaching aims to meet each student where they are may maximize their development. Urban band directors use various techniques and resources to differentiate teaching, but differentiation can look different in each classroom. To be effective, differentiated instruction must be supported by a welcoming and supportive environment for urban band students. Effective African American band directors are skilled at customizing their instruction to meet each student's individual needs, including their current level of preparedness, interests, and learning profiles. This personalized approach allows for multiple paths to achieving the defined learning goals and objectives for students. Assessments are used before, during, and after instruction to track student progress, and formative and summative assessments serve as a basis for band directors to tailor classroom instruction. A wide range of pedagogical abilities allows for active and effective integration of these skills through differentiated training to increase the effectiveness and purpose of education.

Recognition of Low Socio-Economic Inequality

Education is the driving force behind creativity, progress, and the ability to achieve. Unfortunately, because of a history of housing and employment bias, urban populations are disadvantaged in school funding through local taxes, accounting for most of the educational disparity among lower-income urban schools and their rural equivalents. Fixing the problem is an essential step toward tackling a significant cause of income disparity in the United States and breaking the cycle of inequality that now affects many lower-income households. Scholars Breault and Allen suggest, "in the school as the focus of reform school as the focus of reform and argues that all stakeholders (students, faculty and staff, administrators, parents, and community members) need to be involved in successful teaching and learning. Furthermore, Breault and Allen share that, "in urban areas, the gaps become more and more prominent

because they are coupled with the compromised social structure of city systems.”⁶⁴ It is crucial to address income inequality in the United States, and fixing the issue of low-income households in urban education is a critical step. However, before discussing the importance of educators in this matter, it must first be addressing that two fundamental issues exist. These issues are the reach and goal of the American educational system and the link between education and income in the United States. These factors put families and children at an economic, social, and educational disadvantage. Low socioeconomic status (SES) significantly impacts students’ ability to receive a well-rounded education, including access to information, monetary resources, self-esteem, and overall academic success.

A grant program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, Title 1, is sponsored by the federal government and is a part of the Beaumont Independent School District. According to the Texas Education Agency, “Beaumont Independent School District is a member of the System of Great Schools network and has committed to engaging in innovative school models and continuous improvement planning aligned to the Effective Schools Framework.”⁶⁵ To ensure that all students receive an excellent education that will enable them to meet the state’s academic performance criteria, Title I, Part A provides supplementary funding for resources to support schools with high concentrations of students from low-income families. Effective practices and evidence-based instructional methodologies must be used in Title I schools.

Working in an urban setting displays the knowledge of how these connections may and should function, as well as how teachers’ roles evolve as the neighborhood in which the school is

⁶⁴ Donna Adair Breault and Allen Louise Anderson, *Urban Education: A Handbook for Educators and Parents: A Handbook for Educators and Parents* (ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2008), 12.

⁶⁵ <https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/2021-2023-title-i-1003-esf-217-beaumont.pdf>

located changes. The degree to which total income is distributed unevenly among a population is referred to as income inequality (or income disparity). In many examples of economic inequality, money flows disproportionately to a small group of already wealthy individuals. Socioeconomic consciousness is an education approach used in large heavily populated areas with different ethnicities. It can relate to the settings and needs that define teaching and learning in major cities. Value education and income are intricately linked. Education is frequently referred to as a human capital investment. People invest in human capital for the same reasons they invest in financial assets, including the desire to profit. In general, people with a greater level of education make more money.

Collaboration between families and schools is crucial for promoting stronger relationships, enhancing a student's intellectual path, and improving educational equality. Employing a multilevel strategy can lead to successful collaborations among families, schools, and communities. Effective and positive communication is key to removing obstacles to successful partnerships. It is crucial for families, caregivers, and educators to work together towards improving the overall well-being and success of the student. Children need ample opportunities to gain experience and comprehensive support to ensure their holistic development. Cowley suggests "if an approach isn't working, in the sense that the learners are not learning what you had intended, then you need to develop the ability to adapt what you had planned at the moment."⁶⁶ Collaboration between families and schools can help overcome injustices and inequalities and enhance children's education, especially in urban areas. Effective communication is essential for successful partnerships, and a multilevel strategy is crucial for

⁶⁶ Sue Cowley, *The Ultimate Guide to Differentiation: Achieving Excellence for All* (Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2018), 81.

achieving this. By working together, families, caregivers, and educators can improve students' well-being and success rates by openly communicating the student's scholastic needs. Holistic development requires comprehensive support and many opportunities to gain experience for children.

Individual and Societal Development

Classroom music participation offers numerous benefits for students' personal and social development. Students who engage in musical activities not only enhance their self-discipline, coordination, and artistic abilities but also improve their analytical thinking, effective listening, and individualism. These skills are essential for students to fully benefit from school opportunities and gain a greater awareness of themselves. Furthermore, detecting variations between tonal and rhythmic patterns and associating them with signifiers translates into heightened phonological awareness. Music students can utilize their sense of identity, optimism, and perseverance to enhance a performance with others. Band directors who are African American customize their music instruction to cater to the specific needs of their students. This method aids in the identification of individual talents, the development of confidence, and the cultivation of social skills through participation in musical groups. Urban students who participate in ensembles necessitate the development of trust and confidence, as well as self-discipline, social and societal development, and collaborative opportunities for student achievement. Music's involvement in promoting language abilities aids in developing reading capabilities. Underprivileged urban student's sociocultural growth naturally encourages crucial social and emotional abilities such as self-regulation, self-confidence, leadership skills, social skills, and socio-emotional intelligence. Participating in music allows students to hone their emotions, fine motor skills, discipline, rigor, and perseverance. Green discovered "the main approach was to help pupils, firstly through observing their actions and diagnosing their needs,

then demonstrating, or modelling, in order to foster learning by watching, listening and imitation, rather than explaining, naming or insisting.”⁶⁷

Improving a student’s educational experience in a band context has been highly recommended through the use of modeling. This involves training beginner instrumentalists to differentiate between correct and incorrect musical examples. Educators must be mindful of how they use these examples. Modeling is a musical activity used by instructors in the instrumental classroom as an example for students to imitate or emulate. Its primary goal is to encourage an imitative learner’s reaction or behavior. Modeling is a vital tool for music instruction, as it helps clarify and enhance instruction. Specific activities can help students critically listen, strengthening their basic understanding of music aspects with discernment of correct and incorrect performances, while displaying musicianship. Imitation is a complex and holistic process in music instruction, engaging pupils’ sight, hearing, and touch senses as they follow. It helps students expand their repertoire of pitches, rhythms, meters, tempos, and dynamics, leading to a better understanding of essential music materials for their instruments. Therefore, modeling is an effective and necessary method for improving a student’s musical education in a band context.

While learning in other fields may frequently focus on developing a single skill or ability, learning music engages numerous skill sets. Cornea synchronization, rhythm, intonation, symbol identification and interpretation, attention span, and other qualities that characterize synthesis components of human intellect are all required for music. Furthermore, music education reinforces analytical reasoning, decision-making, and collaborative opportunities for students.

⁶⁷ Lucy Green, *Music, Informal Learning, and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy: A New Classroom Pedagogy* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 36.

Music education instructors can significantly influence students' identities by fostering and encouraging awareness of talents amongst urban students. A noteworthy scholar is Sean B. Yisrael. Yisrael offers valuable strategies to educators on how to overcome the challenges that urban band directors face. Regardless of whether the teacher is a beginner or an experienced veteran, they can learn techniques for maintaining control over the classroom environment, overseeing the most severe student misbehaviors, and building a relationship with students and parents. According to Yisrael, "Students from such families have different needs, disabilities, environmental issues, and learning barriers that are in direct contrast to students who come from average rural, middle-class, or affluent families."⁶⁸ It is important for teachers to acknowledge and incorporate each student's unique musical traditions and preferences while adhering to the educational system. By utilizing various teaching styles and pedagogical methods, teachers can motivate students to strive for musical excellence. However, students and parents must also take responsibility for practicing regularly outside of class to achieve their desired level of musical proficiency.

Musical identity is a complex construct that encompasses numerous components, including personal, social, emotional, and musical skills. The self-concept of students plays a significant role in how they engage in the learning process. As urban band directors, it is important to consider the home and school setting to enhance students' knowledge of music. By fostering a musical culture, discovering potential and aptitude, and extending children's musical experiences outside the band room, urban music educators can help students develop a strong musical identity. Music can also help foster community among parents and caregivers. It is

⁶⁸ Sean B. Yisrael, *Classroom Management: A Guide for Urban School Teachers* (R&L Education, 2012), 311.

essential to remember that music education should be more than just a collection of exercises. Identity is shaped by a person's values, which influences their decisions. Creating an identity involves discovering and developing one's potential, determining one's life purpose, and finding opportunities to use that potential and purpose. Parents and friends also play a role in shaping identity during childhood and adolescent exploration. Everyone strives to cultivate ideals and make decisions that align with their genuine self. Reflecting on one's ideals can lead to positive change and a more fulfilling life.

Collaborative Performance Opportunities for Student Achievement

Academic performance is a simple concept: many assume that test scores, grades, and intelligence quotient determine a student's intellectual capabilities. Academic achievement, on the other hand, can entail much more. Classroom interaction and involvement, critical reasoning, and cognitive abilities are all acquired in school and are critical predictors of future success. Based on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development assumptions, "as important as access to education is, in terms of providing equitable learning opportunities, learning outcomes, which show what students can do and the quality of learning they are receiving in school, matter even more."⁶⁹ It is no secret that academic performance can vary greatly from one student to the next. A few factors come into play, including intelligence, work ethic, and the environment in which the students reside. When it comes to learning music, the process is complex and requires a great deal of discipline, patience, and determination. Students who possess these qualities are much more likely to succeed in their musical endeavors. And the benefits of learning music go far beyond just being able to play an instrument or sing. In fact, music can play a vital role in a student's overall development. Studies show that music helps

⁶⁹ OECD, *Educational Research, and Innovation Educational Opportunity for All Overcoming Inequality throughout the Life Course* (OECD Publishing, 2017), 77.

students acquire language skills and can even improve their math abilities. When it comes to urban music education, students are given the opportunity to engage their intellect and emotions in meaningful ways that can shape their identities. Overall, music is an incredibly valuable tool for students who are looking to grow and thrive both inside and outside of the classroom.

It is well known that students who study music develop a wide range of valuable skills. As student musicians, they are constantly adjusting pace, tone, style, rhythm, phrasing, and feeling judgments. This teaches the brain to coordinate and conduct multiple operations simultaneously, resulting in exceptional attention skills, intellect, and the ability to know and express oneself. Paying attention is crucial for academic success, and music can help students develop this skill. In addition to improving conduct, music can positively impact a student's academic progress. Music groups also encourage relationship building among members and provide an immersive experience, creating a sense of community for students. Overall, music is an excellent tool for promoting academic achievement and success among students. As mentioned by Barrett and Webster, "the transformation of teacher practice in arts education and arts integration requires long-term attention, particularly in an urban environment where there may be minimal arts instruction by specialists, and little is done to help teachers learn to integrate the arts with regular classroom instruction."⁷⁰

Encouraging students to explore and collaborate in music has a multitude of benefits. Not only does it promote unity and cooperation in the classroom, but it can also serve as a recruiting and retention strategy for the program. Live performances can bring musical enthusiasm to potential students, parents, administrators, and the community, creating a sense of support for the program. By allowing students to freely explore and collaborate, they can develop

⁷⁰ Barrett and Webster eds., *The Musical Experience: Rethinking Music Teaching and Learning* (New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2014), 113.

a setting that they are familiar with, conversant in, or even intrigued by. This is especially important for underprivileged students, who may not have had the opportunity to participate in music before. By participating in ensemble rehearsals, they can actively engage in collaborations while maintaining prominent levels of musicianship. Collaborative creativity can lead to more noteworthy results than independent efforts, as group members can build off each other's ideas and create something unique. The emergence of performance music leads to an untraceable source of generated ideas, resulting in a higher collective output. African American band directors tailor their music instruction to meet the specific needs of their students, identifying individual talents and fostering confidence and social skills through participation in musical groups.

Music Education in Urban Schools

The concept of “urban” can be defined as pertaining to, distinguishing from, or encompassing aspects related to the city. Urban education can take on different forms depending on the context. For this study, urban education is focused on schools that have a high percentage of students who come from low-income families. As music educators in urban settings, it is important to ask ourselves: what causes some students to struggle while others thrive? Research in urban settings has given rise to various subtopics, including teacher support, satisfaction, individual traits, and experiences, which may contribute to successful outcomes in such environments. As determined by Barrett and Webster, “educators involved in urban reform efforts are attempting to reinvent schools in the most difficult of environments, endeavoring to create something vital and engaging in the midst of a status quo that presents enormous challenge.”⁷¹ Music instructors music recognize the cultural backgrounds of all students. By

⁷¹ Barrett and Webster eds., *The Musical Experience: Rethinking Music Teaching and Learning* (New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2014), 104.

doing so, urban educators can close the achievement gap by creating a learning environment that fosters inclusivity. As mentioned by Murrell, “similarly, for the African-centered pedagogical practice of identity development, the activity includes providing the material and symbolic arrangements that will encourage and elicit productive self-exploration and self-definition from your students.”⁷² Efficient urban educators can manifest meaningful teaching and learning for urban African American underprivileged students. By analyzing classroom management and identifying success factors, educators can work towards improving music education and providing equal resources.

Teacher Expectations

Acknowledging the fact that expectations play a vital role in student success is crucial. However, it is unfortunate that some students are subjected to cultural biases and stereotypes based on their ethnicity or race, leading to lowered expectations. This not only impedes their learning abilities but also affects their attitude and motivation, resulting in self-fulfilling prophecies. To tackle this problem, chronic achievement gaps must be eradicated. It is imperative that every teacher consistently and consciously displays the same specific, observable, and measurable behaviors and practices towards all students, irrespective of their academic abilities. As mentioned by Barrett and Webster, “what is desperately needed are new ways to conceptualize and execute music teaching that respect past achievements but also look forward to new paradigms for our field.”⁷³

⁷² Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 101.

⁷³ Barrett and Webster eds., *The Musical Experience*, 1.

Benefits of Urban Music Education

Music education is an essential part of a child's education, as it helps them to become informed and critical thinkers. By encouraging students to take ownership of their education, they can cultivate a sense of responsibility and independence that will benefit them overall. Unfortunately, when the creative expression of art is replaced with a lack of educational stimulation, it can have a detrimental effect on a child's growth. Children who are exposed to music through singing, listening, and movement reap significant benefits when they transition to more formal education settings. Music offers numerous advantages, especially for school-aged children. By enabling children to view the world from new viewpoints, music fosters empathy and helps advance knowledge of musical awareness. Moreover, music has long-term advantages on students, including improved language and math skills, better auditory comprehension, and improved cognitive development. These benefits make a significant impact on a child's academic and personal success, making music education an essential component of any school curriculum.

Student-Centered Instrumental Abilities

Teaching students the basic fundamentals of playing an instrument is an essential part of reading notes and rhythms. When children take music classes, they can express their creativity, learn how to write music, improve their listening abilities, and appreciate a variety of musical genres. It is important for primary school music classes to develop a foundation that can lead to lifelong developmental strides by using a holistic approach that includes instrument playing, improvisation, exploring, and assessing. Young children benefit from music instruction by gaining new skills and enjoying their studies. Therefore, any primary school curriculum should include music and be treated as such. Music instruction also helps to develop children's creative skills, which sparks their imaginations and ignites their love of sound. Furthermore, the study of

music in schools enables urban band directors to research how music education affects the student population, and how the unique environment and regular opportunities to engage in musical activities can help to balance evolutionary trajectories and promote musical development and awareness.

Drills and Exercises

Learning to play an instrument involves more than just reading notes and rhythms. It is important to focus on accurate embouchure, posture, hand position, breathing, and articulation to develop good tone, technique, range, flexibility, and musicality. Music classes not only allow children to express their creativity and explore a variety of musical genres, but they also teach them how to write music and improve their listening abilities. To ensure student engagement during ensemble skill development, it is important to communicate the goals behind each exercise and provide positive feedback as they work towards achieving them. Additionally, hearing individuals and small groups, asking questions, and allowing students to serve as examples for the rest of the ensemble are all effective ways to maintain an elevated level of engagement. Whether young or old, beginner or advanced, establishing a daily drill or pattern of individual playing and ensemble skill development is critical for success in any band.

Bruce Adolphe's book presents a unique approach to stimulating the musical imagination and inspiring creativity. The exercises provided in the book are quite helpful in improving one's ability to read and envision music in silence using the "mind's ear." The author also shares innovative ideas and valuable tools that can be beneficial to professional performers and composers. Moreover, the book contains games and activities that severe listeners can engage in to improve their musical comprehension and level of involvement with music in numerous ways. According to Adolphe, "the Mind's Ear provides portals to creativity. The exercises encourage musicians to react intuitively to varied dramatic and emotional situations, to play spontaneously,

to be in the moment, to shake free of stale conventions, and to find personal ways to be inspired easily and often. The ultimate goal is for musicians— performers and composers— to be truly themselves in their music- making.”⁷⁴

Music educators in low-income urban schools have a crucial role in prioritizing the well-being and happiness of their students. They should focus on inclusive, innovative, and student-centered music education. To promote responsibility and independence, directors must meet the individual needs of their students. Therefore, it is the director’s responsibility to ensure that students can enjoy these rewards. Through this approach, urban band students can learn the fundamentals of music, such as notation and rhythm, while also developing critical thinking skills and emotional intelligence. This can inspire instructors to employ music as a tool to help students achieve academic success and excitement in urban schools. Overall, incorporating innovative and diverse instructional techniques can create safe and compassionate learning environments that challenge and inspire students to reach their full musical potential. It is essential to differentiate in education to ensure every student’s perspective is heard, which helps them find their own identity. Music can play a significant role in this process as it aids students in developing self-awareness and growth. To achieve differentiation, it is crucial to have a well-planned goal and benchmark to guide learning and teaching. Music classes provide a creative platform for children to explore various musical genres, compose music, and improve their listening abilities. Teachers can keep students engaged during ensemble skill development by explaining the goals of each exercise, offering positive feedback, and encouraging participation in group activities.

⁷⁴ Bruce Adolphe. *The Mind’s Ear: Exercises for Improving the Musical Imagination for Performers, Composers, and Listeners* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2021), 15.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The research focused on gaining a deeper understanding of the demographics and experiences of band directors who teach music pedagogy in schools where most students come from disadvantaged backgrounds. To achieve this goal, I will be conducting observations and interviews, as well as gathering data through surveys and discussions with music leaders. Specifically, my investigation will examine the teaching and practice of music in urban middle schools. Through these various methods of data collection, I hope to gain valuable insights that will inform future efforts to improve music education in these settings. As claimed by researchers LeCompte and Schensul, “it is at the initial design stage that collaborations with people in the field become especially crucial.”⁷⁵ Interviews are relevant because they helped to clarify, better understand, and investigate the research subjects’ viewpoints, attitudes, perceptions, and phenomena of the participants.

This study examined the demographics and experiences of band directors who teach music pedagogy in institutions where most students are underprivileged. Froehlich Hildegard and Carol Frierson-Campbell’s research offers a valuable perspective on research conventions that extend beyond music to other disciplines within the arts and humanities. Their sequential approach to topic formulation, information literacy, reading and evaluating research studies, and planning and conducting original studies within accepted guidelines is a useful resource for students and scholars alike. By following their guidelines, researchers can ensure that their work meets the highest standards of academic excellence. As mentioned by Froehlich and Frierson-Campbell, “researchers who use qualitative research methods do so based on a belief that reality

⁷⁵ Margaret D. LeCompte and Jean J. Schensul, *Designing and Conducting Ethnographic Research: An Introduction* (Ukraine: AltaMira Press), 136.

is socially constructed, complex, diverse, and not reducible to mutually exclusive, ‘objective’ observations.”⁷⁶ This study presents an explicit framework for the classification and interpretation of the results, specifically investigating a group of band directors who demonstrate aptitude for developing effective teaching strategies that are rooted in their academic and personal profiles. The focus is on how these individuals successfully construct and implement their methods within the unique setting of the band room. A brief but precise explanation of the planning and conducting of research projects, as well as looking at data from different angles to gain insight into an analysis can be found in a book, “The Fundamental Principles of Qualitative Research,” by Johnny Y. Saldana. To help inform choices on the emerging research design Saldana, expert teacher, and quantitative data analyst, provides readers with a comprehensive overview of major categories of Qualitative Research as well as components of Participant Observation, Interviewing and Other Data Collection Techniques.

Music has been recognized as an educational building block due to its ability to provide a foundation for learning skills and aid in their development. Music has a unique way of engaging individuals and can be used as an effective tool for education. Through musical practice, individuals can develop mathematical and communicative knowledge, as well as critical thinking and critical thinking skills. Furthermore, music education often involves the study of the historical and cultural contexts of various musical traditions, which helps students develop a broader perspective and appreciation for diverse cultures and their contributions to music. This interdisciplinary approach to music education can foster a deeper understanding of the connections between music, history, culture, and other academic subjects. In summary, music

⁷⁶ Froehlich Hildegard and Carol Frierson-Campbell, *Inquiry in Music Education, Concepts and Methods for the Beginning Researcher* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2022), 145.

education can be a valuable tool for fostering the development of a wide range of skills and knowledge and can contribute to a more well-rounded education for students.

Design

The study's research plan involves evaluating effective urban music instructors who use a comprehensive approach to teaching students in urban music programs. This approach includes utilizing contextual information, differentiated instruction strategies, method books, and a literature repertoire. study of high-quality band literature, rehearsal, and frequent performance allots students with little or no instrumental experience the opportunity to gain core instrumental skills, aesthetic musical awareness, and foundational music literacy. The study emphasizes the importance of teaching music notation principles, sound production, instrument care and maintenance, and personal and group practice tactics to develop students' technical skills and overall musicianship. Additionally, the study emphasizes the development of students' physical and social competencies, including teaching proper breathing, posture, instrument skill, music reading abilities, and group social competencies. By incorporating these elements into instruction, the study aims to assess the effectiveness of a comprehensive approach to teaching urban music that can help students develop a broad range of skills and competencies.

The study aimed to address the socioeconomic needs of underprivileged students in the context of music education. However, before examining the role of educators in addressing income inequality, the study addressed two fundamental issues. The first issue addressed is the goals of the American educational system. This involves examining what the educational system seeks to achieve and how it aligns with the needs of various student populations, including underprivileged students. This examination is crucial in determining the potential for music education to meet the needs of underprivileged students. The second issue addressed is the relationship between education and income in the United States. This involves examining how

educational opportunities impact income levels and how income inequality affects access to education. This examination is essential in understanding the larger societal context in which the study takes place. By examining the goals of the American educational system and the relationship between education and income in the United States, the study can contextualize the role of educators in addressing income inequality in music education.

The study can help identify the potential impact of music education on underprivileged students and how educators can use music education to support and empower these students. By providing underprivileged students with access to quality music education, educators can help them develop a range of skills and competencies that can increase their chances of success in school and beyond. Furthermore, the study can help educators identify effective strategies and practices for teaching music to underprivileged students. This includes developing instructional approaches that are tailored to the needs and backgrounds of these students, as well as creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that promotes engagement and participation. Overall, by addressing these fundamental issues, the study can provide valuable insights and guidance for educators seeking to use music education as a tool for addressing income inequality and supporting underprivileged students. To effectively address these inequities, teachers must first acknowledge and understand them. This includes recognizing the historical and systemic factors that contributed to racial disparities in education and being aware of their own biases and assumptions. This includes incorporating diverse perspectives and cultural experiences into the curriculum, creating opportunities for students to share their own experiences and perspectives, and using instructional strategies that are responsive to the needs and backgrounds of all students.

The transformation required in urban music education is not simply about making music a core component of the curriculum. Instead, it involves ensuring that culturally relevant music is a driving force behind urban education reform. This means incorporating music that reflects the diverse cultural experiences of students in urban areas and using it as a tool for engaging and empowering students. In addition, effective urban music educators employ strategies such as formative assessment to check student understanding throughout lessons and adjust lesson plans as needed to ensure that every student can achieve knowledge. This requires teachers to be flexible and responsive to the needs of individual students, as well as the needs of the group. By using culturally relevant music and employing effective teaching strategies, urban music educators can help to transform the educational experiences of students in urban areas, empowering them to achieve their full potential and become active and engaged members of their communities. Based on the research, music literacy is a critical component in enhancing students' understanding of music theory and its practical applications across various domains. The research focused on the dynamics of interactions and behaviors between music teachers and students in urban music programs. With this knowledge, the aims addressed issues of inequality and improve educational opportunities for African American underprivileged students.

Participants

The study involved the participation of all directors of their respective band programs. The school district was approached for their involvement, and permission was obtained once an email was sent to them. Three highly skilled directors led the band programs observed. The participants consisted of two male educators and a female educator. All the directors were above the age of forty and had at least three years of experience. They were all African American and worked in either public or private schools. Furthermore, all the directors operated in metropolitan settings. To ensure the smooth running of the programs, each director was allocated various roles

under the supervision of the “Director of Bands.” The directors’ responsibilities included Beginning Band- 4th to 8th Grade, Advanced Band, Marching Band, Symphonic Band, and Jazz Band.

Setting

This research was conducted in the Beaumont Independent School District in Beaumont, TX, with a focus on urban underprivileged schools located in economically underprivileged neighborhoods. The BIS district band programs were chosen to model environments for the study due to its location in high-poverty schools within the district. Teaching music to underprivileged students in an urban band setting yields remarkable results. Music education promotes growth in cognitive, social, and personal areas. Teachers should establish clear goals, offer positive feedback, and encourage collaboration to maintain classroom engagement. Actively listening, posing questions, and allowing students to function as role models are effective ways to help students thrive. The Beaumont Independent School District has a program called Title I, which is intended to provide additional funding to schools that serve high concentrations of low-income children. This program is federally funded and is part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. Title I aims to reform and reduce the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students, assist students in meeting high academic standards, and improve academic achievement. Additionally, Title I helps to focus educators on the needs of special student populations and provides supplemental education to children who are qualified for services. “Beaumont Independent School District” is a member of the System of Great Schools network and has committed to engaging in innovative school models and continuous improvement planning aligned to the Effective Schools Framework.”⁷⁷

⁷⁷ <https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/2021-2023-title-i-1003-esf-217-beaumont.pdf>

The Beaumont Independent School District was formed in 1983 by merging the old Beaumont School District (founded in 1883) and South Park Public Schools founded in 1891). The citywide district covers 153.34 square miles in Jefferson County, Texas, and has 16,760 pupils registered. As determined by the U.S. News & World Report, “there are 17,128 students enrolled in twenty-nine schools in the Beaumont Independent School District. In the schools that the Beaumont Independent School District serves, there are 8.5% Caucasian, 59.6% African American, 2.8% Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander students, 26.4% Hispanic/Latino students, 0.3% American Indian or Alaska Native students, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders. Furthermore, 2.2% of students identify as belonging to two or more races, while 0% had not indicated their race or ethnicity.”⁷⁸ Additionally, 51% of students are male and 49% are female. There are 12.8% of students in the Beaumont Independent School District who are English language learners, while 58.4% of students are eligible to participate in the federal free and reduced lunch programs. To serve African American children our methods must reflect the best understandings that we have of how they develop and learn biologically, spiritually, and culturally.”⁷⁹ In the Beaumont Independent School District, all teachers are certified, and 77.2% had three years or more of experience. The student-to-teacher ratio is higher than the state average, at 15:1.

Instrumentation

Observations and interviews were the main methods used for data collection. Throughout the data collection process, the research employed a range of methods, placing particular

⁷⁸ “U.S. News & World Report,” *Beaumont Independent School District*, 2023, URL. <https://www.usnews.com/education/k12/texas/districts/beaumont-isd-106288>.

⁷⁹ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 118.

emphasis on qualitative interviews. These proved to be an invaluable means of eliciting in-depth insights from participants through open-ended questioning. The wealth of information obtained from the interviews provided valuable insight into the experiences and ideas of those under investigation. The researchers used genuine and credible contextual information, drawing on a conceptual framework as well as their own expertise and experience in teaching music to underprivileged African American students. The information collected was entirely relevant to the research topic, allowing the researchers to assess hypotheses and respond to submitted study topics. The interviews were conducted in a regulated fashion, with official questions asked and documented in Zoom. Additionally, the researcher observed the participants' behavior in their natural environment, providing further insight into their experiences.

Procedures

The procedures used for this qualitative case study were carefully selected to provide flexibility in applying the findings to random facts and future research. The Zoom sessions enabled the researcher to conduct individual interviews with each director, averaging 45 to 60 minutes each. The one-on-one interviews provided detailed information about each director's schedule and targeted insight into their perspectives, ideas, and ideologies. Following the individual interviews, a day was set aside to observe the band directors in their natural settings, followed by individual discussions. This gave a broader perspective and framework for the data covered in the one-on-one interviews. The open-ended questions in the surveys were designed to elicit ideas, experiences, and narratives on teaching music to urban African American underprivileged students. The observations of the urban band directors provided data on beliefs, attitudes, preferences, and actions, as well as their relationships. By asking specific questions, the interviewer generated replies that offered a clear picture of the band directors' attitudes, habits,

perceptions, and actions. Overall, this methodology was effective in providing a comprehensive understanding of the band directors' backgrounds, teaching practices, and student achievement.

Data Analysis

The approach involved asking open-ended questions, which allowed participants to provide thoughtful and insightful responses. During our Zoom meetings, the researcher took note of important contextual details, training methods, practice routines, personal anecdotes, and understanding of the topics and highlighted the demographic data of the participants such as their experience and expertise. Through observations and interviews, the researcher gained a better understanding of their emotions and motivations. The urban band directors' interviews were highly informative. Their detailed responses provided a clear glimpse into their backgrounds, perspectives, and thoughts, which assisted me in comprehending their motivations and emotions. The one-on-one interviews with the directors provided an in-depth look at their perspectives, ideas, and beliefs regarding the education of urban music. The upcoming chapter will delve into the themes that were uncovered in the qualitative case study.

Chapter Summary

This qualitative research study yielded valuable insights into the musical awareness of underprivileged African American students in urban areas. The one-on-one interviews with the directors provided a detailed depiction of their viewpoints, thoughts, and philosophies regarding the education of urban music. Saldana notes that, "from the vast array of interview transcripts, fieldnotes, documents, and other forms of data, there is this instinctive, hardwired need to bring order to the collection—to not just reorganize it, but to look for and construct patterns out of it."⁸⁰ Urban band educators harbor extensive knowledge and provide diverse instruction to their

⁸⁰ Johnny Y. Saldana, *Fundamentals of Qualitative Research* (Cary: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2011), 91.

students. The research themes included organizing and structuring data through the phases of coding (whether deductive or inductive), organizing these codes, and then generating themes. After reorganizing the jumbled qualitative data, a clear and compelling narrative was formed through the identification of key themes. By analyzing the data and drawing connections between various responses, the researcher constructed a story that accurately represented the perspectives and experiences of those involved.

The study was conducted on the band programs in economically underprivileged urban schools of the Beaumont Independent School District. All directors of their respective band programs were actively involved in the study, which was initiated by reaching out to the school district for their participation. Permission was granted upon receipt of an email. The research employed various data collection methods including observations and interviews. Interviews proved to be particularly useful as they allowed for open-ended questions that elicited detailed responses from the participants. These insights will be useful in developing strategies and approaches to improve the musical education of these students and help them realize their full potential. Clearly, there is more work to be done in the area of urban music education, but with the right resources and support, band directors can make a positive difference in the lives of African American underprivileged students. As mentioned by Murrell, “The main point about culturally responsive education is that the skilled teacher is able to configure the cultural world of the classroom so that there is a continuity of experience between home and school for African American children and children from other nonmainstream cultural communities.”⁸¹

⁸¹ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 107.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The research study is commendable for its thoroughness. The results and data analysis are presented separately, which allows for a clear and organized understanding of each case. The data findings from multiple rounds of data collection, including participant surveys, observations, and interviews, were also noteworthy. All these elements added depth and credibility to the study. The findings from each of the three data collection phases were examined and are presented under appropriate overarching subjects, such as course design and elements of music teaching and learning, with subthemes and categories. One of the key findings of this research is that teaching music to underprivileged African American students allows instructors to reinforce positive conduct while changing or suppressing negative behavior. Instructors can identify learning objectives, specify desired musical skills, develop sequential and ability-appropriate instructional strategies, and design appropriate learning assessments to help build students' musical skills. Moreover, the research reveals that successful music instructors who incorporate formal extracurricular skill-learning methodologies into the music curriculum can contribute to an educational model that positively impacts students' emotional literacy in a band setting. This is a significant finding that underscores the vital role of music education in promoting social and emotional learning among students, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds.

Urban instructors and students possess the power to foster positive behavior and suppress negative conduct based on their experiences, as revealed by an extensive and praiseworthy research study. The study provides separate results and data analysis for clarity, with an impressive inclusion of participant background and demographics. The study's credibility is reinforced by multiple rounds of data collection, such as surveys, observations, and interviews,

which provide a comprehensive and thorough analysis. To achieve this, band directors must provide clear learning objectives, specify the desired musical skills, offer essential materials, develop sequential and ability-appropriate instructional strategies, and design appropriate learning assessments for student-centered success. Incorporating musical abilities into a student's academic music competencies is justifiable and commendable when lessons had clear objectives, focused skills, techniques, and objective learning evaluation. Furthermore, successful music instructors who implement formal extracurricular skill-learning methodologies into the music curriculum can contribute to an educational model that positively impacts students' emotional literacy within a band setting.

Participants

The research found that urban instructors and students can promote positive behavior while discouraging negative actions based on their own experiences. To accomplish this, band directors must establish clear learning objectives, specify desired musical skills, provide necessary materials, utilize sequential and age-appropriate teaching strategies, and design suitable assessments to ensure student-centered success. Incorporating musical abilities into a student's academic music competencies is justifiable and commendable if lessons have clear objectives, focused skills, techniques, and objective learning evaluation. Additionally, successful music teachers who incorporate formal extracurricular skill-learning methodologies into the music curriculum can contribute to an educational model that positively impacts students' emotional literacy within a band setting.

The band directors observed and interviewed had diverse educational backgrounds, abilities, expertise, and teaching experiences, resulting in varied teaching styles. Their expertise in instructing instrumental ensembles included preparation, engagement, and execution of classroom instruction, along with strategic planning and preparation. To address the achievement

gap among African Americans, it is recommended to utilize instructional strategies and innovations that promote effective classroom practice. Furthermore, Murrell suggests that “the other implicit meaning in the phrase African-centered knowledge-in-practice is the emphasis on a community of practice as the framework for understanding the appropriate mix of the cultural, familial, and social foundations of a child’s education.”⁸² The following narratives give a brief overview of each participant and their method for instructing underprivileged African American students living in urban areas.

Participant 1 (Observations)

As the band director at School A, the contributor has an extensive amount of experience and expertise teaching the band. In addition to playing in jazz band, concert band, and marching band, through the profession, she also learned new skills such as playing the piano. To ensure that students could listen to one another, the music educator divided her students into sectionals. The participant implemented a round-robin system where one section played for a specific number of measures before another section began playing. Billie F. Birnie’s work entitled, “A Teacher’s Guide to Successful Classroom Management and Differentiated Instruction,” offers practical and straightforward advice to teachers on two critical aspects of their job. As believed by Birnie, “differentiated instruction is teaching that accommodates all of the learning needs of all of the children in a class, enabling each child to attain the desired academic results.”⁸³ This led to a sound pyramid effect. The researcher had the privilege of witnessing an outstanding music teacher in action. The urban music educator was exceptional at providing her students

⁸² Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 102.

⁸³ Billie F. Birnie, *A Teacher’s Guide to Successful Classroom Management and Differentiated Instruction*. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014), 26.

with clear and concise instructions, enabling them to understand how to notate Concert F accurately, even if their instruments were tuned in different keys. Throughout the rehearsal, the associate used call-and-response exercises to engage the students and help them respond positively to the teaching techniques. The focus of the rehearsal was on reading notes, counting rhythms, and playing as an ensemble, with the teacher constantly emphasizing balance, blend, and posture.

The researcher witnessed an exceptional music educator who excelled in providing clear and concise instructions. Her approach enabled her students to understand how to notate Concert F accurately, even if their instruments were tuned in different keys. Throughout the rehearsal, the teacher skillfully engaged her students with call-and-response exercises, resulting in positive responses to her teaching techniques. She focused on reading notes, counting rhythms, and playing as an ensemble, emphasizing balance, blend, and posture. As a result, the students exhibited impressive control of their embouchures, producing clear, quality tones from every section of the ensemble, playing together as a cohesive unit. The students' feedback was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the teacher's expertise that created a well-rounded and highly accomplished ensemble.

The teacher stressed the importance of proper technique, including sitting up straight, holding the instrument correctly, breathing properly, listening to tone, and supporting the air stream. Her dedication to proper technique was evident and contributed to the success of the ensemble. As stated by Murrell, "developing one's pedagogy involves grappling with a trio of concerns for effective teaching— human nature, human institutions, and human values."⁸⁴ The topics demonstrated included pieces from the study of repertoire including, "We Wish You A

⁸⁴ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 102.

Merry Christmas” and “Jingle Bells.” For example, the participant created a thorough practice plan that included a warmup, sectionals, full band rehearsal, partner work, and a warm down.

Participant II (Observations)

The individual contributing to this study, who holds the position of assistant director at school B, possesses a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the field of music instruction. With years of experience under their belt, they had developed a deep understanding of the intricacies and nuances of music, positioning them as a true expert in this area. The contributor takes immense pride in guiding students towards success, leveraging their experience to offer valuable insights and advice that can help students achieve their goals and reach their full potential. This educator, having previously held the position of principal tuba player in the wind ensemble and led the choir, possessed a vast amount of expertise and experience that they were able to impart to us in a manner that was both comprehensible and practical. Moreover, they were always available to attend and tried to connect with each of their pupils on a personal level.

The assistant director of bands at School B displayed an impressive level of expertise and experience in music instruction. The music educator masterfully deconstructed the intricate concepts of understanding key signatures into easily digestible and manageable segments, resulting in a profound comprehension among the students. The instructor emphasized the crucial significance of recognizing notes and rhythms, employing a slow and meticulous approach to teach students how to identify positions with pinpoint accuracy. The participant went beyond in providing vivid and detailed explanations of signature identification. By the end of the class, the students had entirely mastered the concept of signatures, including the importance of flats or sharps and the correct placement of accidentals, and were able to flawlessly apply these lessons to their playing.

Participant 3 (Observations)

As the director of bands for school C, the participant has accumulated a wealth of experience and knowledge in the field of music education. His training in choral singing and instrument performance has provided the individual with a solid foundation in both theory and practice, which enables me the person to effectively guide his students. The associate is deeply enthusiastic about music, and this passion was initially kindled by the contributor's mother, who performed in a high school ensemble. As a trained practitioner, the participant has performed in bands in both elementary, secondary school, and college, which has provided a solid foundation in both theory and practice. The participant is committed to helping students develop the same level of understanding and stresses the importance of technique, particularly breaking down music into smaller chunks. These approaches allowed the participant to provide differentiated instruction, which is essential to building a solid foundation in reading music. As determined by Cowley, "differentiation is in part about planning and thinking through the options for teaching and learning before a lesson takes place; it is also very much about reacting to what happens in a classroom situation."⁸⁵ During the ensemble rehearsal, the participant shared his educational background and discussed the importance of strong musicianship and the ability to read music at sight. He skillfully emphasized the critical role of musicality and endurance when playing through his exceptional singing. The music educator emphasized fingerings, releasing of notes, and balance among the ensemble. The key components of music, including rhythm, tonality, and intonation, were exhaustively explained to ensure that all students had a strong grasp of the essential concepts.

⁸⁵ Cowley, *The Ultimate Guide to Differentiation*, 81.

The participant discussed the difficulties, which include low academic success, high dropout rates in the upper grades, a lack of desire and involvement, poverty, and a shortage of resources. The participant added that urban children were equally or more likely than other students to come from households that exhibited traits that has been demonstrated to enhance positive educational outcomes, such as high parental educational attainment, grand expectations for their children's education, and regularity communication about school. However, there were a few significant outliers. For example, students are less likely to have family structure, financial stability, and stability most strongly linked to positive educational results.

Music Exercises in the Classroom

The participants displayed a wide range of musical expertise and abilities in instructing students during ensemble rehearsal. It was impressive to witness each participant provide differentiated music instruction which enabled students to develop music proficiency. The session was inclusive, and everyone felt encouraged to participate, learn, and grow musically. The music educators, who were referred to as participants 1, 2, and 3, expressed their eagerness to teach music daily. The music instructors emphasized the importance of fingerings, note release, and ensemble balance, as well as the critical role rhythm, tonality, and intonation implemented in music. The participants displayed their impressive instructional strategies for teaching music to African American underprivileged students. Participant 1's teaching method effectively incorporates the basic fundamentals of music to enhance musicianship. Participant 2 integrated music exercises, such as long tones and Remington exercises into his lessons. Participant 3 prioritized building muscle memory to enhance students' notated sheet music. The music educators offered personalized and tailored music lessons to their students. These strategies were effective in enabling students to hone their musical abilities.

Significance of Incorporating Music Pedagogy into Lessons

The diverse strategies that each contributor utilized were truly captivating. Participant A believed that it was important to break down the theoretical concepts for student comprehension, as children may find music compressed, too much, or moving too quickly. Participant B emphasized that some students need to be guided through the step-by-step process, while Participant C stressed the importance of comprehending the basic fundamentals of music. As mentioned by Participant C, note accuracy can be improved with effective practice habits. The educators were true experts in the field of music, highlighting unique and remarkable teaching approaches for the paramount principles of music. Overall, it was an enlightening experience that highlighted the valuable insights gained from such a gathering of distinguished professionals.

Differentiated Instructional Strategies for Student Success

In the realm of music instruction, it is fascinating to observe how each participant had their own unique approach. Participant A mentions how crucial it is for music educators to implement a rubric for band students. The contributor stresses the importance of student growth in performing music. Music educator B, states that, “students have to be able to develop effective practice habits in order to become better musicians.” Participant B incorporates an instructional strategy of verbalizing questions for understanding and clarification. Participant C focuses on teaching students how to identify, apply, and assess theoretical concepts of music. For music students, mastering the foundational aspects of music theory and notation is crucial. To ensure success and growth, it is important to use differentiation instructional strategies. These strategies include direct activities, visual aids, and collaborative learning. By using these methods, students can identify and apply the key concepts of music theory and notation, giving everyone the opportunity to thrive.

Chapter Summary

When examining the impact of music education in different societies around the world, it becomes clear that community, schooling, and decolonization are crucial factors to consider. The environment created through the power of music is known to create a sense of unity and break cultural barriers. Additionally, access to quality music education in schools can lead to personal and academic growth for students. However, it is important to approach music education from a decolonized perspective, recognizing and addressing the cultural biases and power dynamics that have historically influenced music education. By prioritizing these concerns, we can ensure that music education is a positive and inclusive force in societies worldwide. To truly grasp the core concepts of music theory and notation, it is crucial to acknowledge the significant connections between music education and society. To fully comprehend the fundamental principles of music theory and notation, it is essential to acknowledge the crucial links between music education and society. Through this recognition, we can gain a more profound insight into how music influences our culture and how it can be utilized to express our individuality and foster social connections. Frierson-Campbell and Froehlich believe that “the mosaic that represents research in music education ranges from issues specific to the learner, the music, and the individual teacher to queries that focus on the dyadic or triadic relationship between these three interacting agents.”⁸⁶

To gain a better grasp of music theory and notation, it is crucial to recognize the significant connections between music education and society, especially in urban settings. This investigation examined certain aspects of incorporating music education in these environments,

⁸⁶ Frierson-Campbell and Carol Hildegard C. Froehlich, *Inquiry in Music Education: Concepts and Methods for the Beginning Researcher* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2012), 63.

illuminating how music can influence our culture and promote social connections while allowing for personal expression. The study revealed that instructors can dedicate more time to planning lessons, leveraging their expertise to instruct students effectively. The three volunteers who participated in the research are superb music educators who also integrate music into other subjects like math and science. With their collective teaching experience, they actively encourage students to participate and engage in music education. Furthermore, music can serve as a culturally sensitive and relevant tool for learning in classrooms with diverse populations. As stated by Browning, “essential questions foster not only a sense of the centrality of discrete bits of information or isolated skills but also require students to dig into the core of the topic or discipline.”⁸⁷

Music education is a vital tool for urban students to thrive in their studies. Having dedicated instructors who value urban students as individuals and understand their diverse backgrounds is crucial to their success. Music education is an extremely powerful tool in achieving this goal, enabling students to excel and express themselves in unique and meaningful ways that may not be possible in other subjects. This type of instruction can also serve as a motivator, providing students with a sense of purpose and engagement during their school day. With the right techniques, resources, and environment, effective teaching can lead to improved student outcomes. Music education promotes perseverance, which fosters learning and achievement through leadership, motivation, and tenacity. Instructors who prioritize their students’ success and understand their diverse backgrounds are essential to this. Incorporating music exercises in the classroom, Music Pedagogy, and differentiated instructional strategies are crucial components of music literacy. Music illiteracies can help achieve holistic disciplinary

⁸⁷ Birch P. Browning, *An Orientation to Musical Pedagogy: Becoming a Musician-Educator* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2017), 127.

learning in the subject of music. Stephanie L. Standerfer's practical guide combines years of pedagogical knowledge to improve music learning experiences. Her lesson plans feature well-known songs and a range of instrumental accompaniments to help students learn music conceptually by internalizing sound and sensation before learning musical symbols. With the right techniques, resources, and environment, music education can motivate students, foster perseverance, and lead to improved academic outcomes. According to Standerfer, "teaching songs by rote to develop auditory skills is a critical piece of the process toward reading musical symbols."⁸⁸ To guarantee urban students' success, instructors must be fully committed to valuing them as individuals and acknowledging their diverse backgrounds. Music education is an extremely potent tool in this regard, enabling students to flourish and express themselves in ways that may not be possible in other subjects. For urban students to succeed, their instructors must prioritize their individual worth and cultural backgrounds. Music education is a powerful tool that can enable these students to thrive and express themselves in ways that other subjects cannot. It can also serve as a powerful motivator, giving students a sense of purpose and engagement throughout their school day. Through music education, students can learn perseverance, which can promote learning and achievement through leadership, motivation, and tenacity. The key change needed in urban music education is not simply to make music the center of the curriculum, but rather to make culturally relevant music a creative force at the center of reform in urban education.

⁸⁸ Stephanie L. Standerfer. *Line by Line: Progressive Staff Method Arrangements for Elementary Music Literacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2019), 24.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Summary of Study

The qualitative research study provided the framework that supports various hypotheses, ideologies, and perspectives. The chapter presents valuable insights based on the extensive literature review, participants, analysis, and results. Additionally, the research included crucial implications, constraints, questions, and suggestions for further research. The study's central themes focus on the benefits of incorporating music in a student's education. The findings demonstrate that students who engage in music experience a creative release and are exposed to a different area of study that provides a perfect balance to the sciences and humanities. The study has emphasized the significance of music in a comprehensive education. It is intriguing to delve into the relationship between music instruction and achievement, as it can offer valuable insights into how society behaves and interacts with each other. Thus, exploring this connection can prove to be worthwhile.

Summary of Findings and Prior Research

There are many reasons why students leave or join music programs, including financial difficulties, personal interests, and time constraints, to name a few. However, the participants in the recent study emphasized the importance of further research into music education and the benefits of music integration in urban schools. Their insights helped the researcher understand how to bridge the gap between theory and practice in incorporating music into the curriculum, allowing students to achieve success in the band room. The participants also discussed the value of integrating music into other subjects such as science and math, as it can help students understand concepts and learn about diverse cultures. Overall, music education can provide a valuable learning experience for students in urban classrooms. As explained by Cowley, "on the plus side, differentiation is about a belief in what learners can achieve. It is about respecting the

learners – the diversity of who and what they are now and who and what they will become in the future. Differentiation is an invitation for learners to participate in lessons and a statement that their needs, wishes, and interests are valued.”⁸⁹ It has been found that students are more inspired and engaged when they participate in what they are learning. By conversing with their classmates and asking questions, they can interact and draw connections, leading to a deeper understanding of the material. One effective way to facilitate this type of learning is through discussions that advance comprehension. Additionally, scholars have learned from several participants about the benefits of instrumental instruction for students learning to play an instrument or advancing their skills.

According to these experts, integrating music into the curriculum can boost students’ interest, involvement, and educational attainment. And while music is often associated with youth and popular culture, it can be effectively utilized in the classroom to incorporate that cultural element. Music allows students to integrate their intellectual capabilities into the lessons, making the learning experience more enjoyable and effective. Overall, the study found that applying music increases students’ engagement, interest, and academic success, while also bridging gaps in language, culture, tradition, economic status, gender identity, and generational differences. Participants described how incorporating music delivery into the classroom boosts student’s enthusiasm and engagement. Students who were indifferent in their courses, for example, may engage with music in a way that brought the content to life. Furthermore, when instructors use diversified education in urban band room situations, students may form meaningful relationships, absorb topics more effectively, think creatively, and speak in a variety of ways. As explained by Cowley, “use lots of repetition –ask the learners to repeat back what

⁸⁹ Cowley, *The Ultimate Guide to Differentiation*, 82.

you asked before you set them off to do it, especially where you are giving a longer list of instructions, back up your instructions with lots of visual cues and clues, e.g. a hand gesture of the learners joining together, to indicate that you want them to work in a group, or three fingers in the air when you want them to answer three questions.”⁹⁰

It is widely believed that students are more engaged in their studies when they are interested in what they are learning. Moreover, music has been found to promote brain growth, enhance memory and recollection, and aid in the development of emotional and sensorimotor domains in the brain, which is especially beneficial for children’s cognitive abilities. In a recent interview, all three study subjects highlighted the advantages of music for the brain, particularly at an early age. It is interesting to note that core subjects like science and math have recognized music as a valuable tool that promotes diversity, inclusion, and cultural studies in the classroom.

The integration of music in education can be an effective way to enhance learning and promote growth. As stated by Cowley, “take your learners out of the school environment and to places where they can be immersed in different real-life contexts: When you are thinking about the most appropriate trips to go on, consider what kind of experiences learners with the highest levels of need might have missed.”⁹¹ I’ve always believed that when students are interested in what they’re learning, they tend to put more effort into studying. It is fascinating to learn that music can promote brain growth, improve memory and recollection, and aid in the development of the brain’s emotional and sensorimotor domains. This is especially beneficial for children’s cognitive abilities. In fact, students can bring their culture to the classroom through music, which is a crucial part of their identity. This helps them bridge the gap between home and school, while

⁹⁰ Cowley, *The Ultimate Guide to Differentiation*, 85.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 87.

also sharing their knowledge with their classmates. It is impressive to see how music can be integrated into education to enhance learning and promote growth. Even core subjects such as science and math have recognized music as a valuable tool that embraces diversity, inclusion, and cultural studies in the classroom.

Limitations

As with any research, this study had certain limitations that must be acknowledged. These restrictions primarily related to participant diversification, study size, research bias, and unexpected occurrences. For instance, the availability of band directors and students, time constraints, and student abilities (playing instruments) posed significant challenges. Additionally, classroom management (student behavior) was a factor to consider, as well as the varying targets for articulation and tone, which experts emphasized more during rehearsals of concert music. Following closely behind these were tempo and rhythm accuracy, and targets for dynamics (which included blend and balance). However, despite these limitations, the study's findings suggest that band directors who instruct underprivileged urban pupils in instrumental music can expand their "toolbox" of strategies and improve their ability to identify problems and recommend resolutions. As suggested by Cowley, "I argue that the efficiency and purpose of teachers working with African American children in under resourced communities can be dramatically enhanced with a greater consciousness about, and understanding of, the intersection of parent, teacher, and cultural communities."⁹² The common perception of an urban band director is one of a robust and committed individual who invests all of their time in the band room working endlessly to enhance the lives of the students they teach.

⁹² Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 122.

Recommendations for Future Study

It is important to note that the study had certain limitations that should be considered. These limitations included participant diversification, study size, research bias, and unexpected occurrences. For example, there were challenges related to the availability of band directors and students, time constraints, and student abilities when it came to playing instruments. Classroom management and the varying targets for articulation and tone were also factors to consider. Despite these limitations, the study's findings suggest that including music in all subject areas in urban schools can have significant benefits in terms of increasing motivation and engagement among students. By doing so, teachers can expand their strategies and improve their ability to identify problems and recommend solutions. There is no doubt that music education has an impact on students' academic success. The benefits of music education, including improved cognitive abilities, enhanced creativity, and better academic performance, have been widely documented. However, more studies are needed to understand the specific ways in which music education can enhance academic success, particularly in urban settings. Urban school band directors play a crucial role in providing music education to students in these settings.

By teaching students how to read music theory and notation, they are helping them develop important skills that can translate to academic success. However, there is a need for further research into the instrumental development skills of secondary urban pupils. Qualitative studies highlighted the importance of music education in public-school ensembles in metropolitan regions. However, more research is needed to understand the specific ways in which music education can benefit students in these settings. By continuing to study the impact of music education on academic success, we can ensure that all students have access to the benefits of this important form of education.

Music has been shown to have a positive impact on cognitive development and academic success. However, more research is needed to fully understand the extent of this impact and how it can be utilized in educational settings. Studies on the development of musical skills in urban school settings would be particularly valuable, as urban schools often lack resources for music education. Additionally, qualitative studies can provide insight into the best methods for teaching music theory and notation to secondary urban pupils. Overall, continued research in this area could have significant implications for improving academic outcomes in urban schools. Murrell believes, “the purpose of African-centered pedagogy in these settings is to design education specifically for the needs of African American learners. In these settings, the goal of education is not to prepare children to fit within the present system, but to revolutionize the system toward the promise of democracy articulated in the documents (but not the deeds) that shaped America.”⁹³ Qualitative studies show the importance of musical skill development, particularly in middle public-school ensembles in metropolitan regions. Further research in this area can educators create more effective music programs that support pupils’ academic success. Rury asserts that, “rapid urban development ushered in a new political atmosphere, and this helped to shape urban education during the opening decades of the twentieth century.”⁹⁴

Music has long been considered a beneficial addition to a student’s education, but the exact impact of music on success remains understudied. Urban school band directors can play a crucial role in helping learn how to read music theory and notation. However, the establishment of band programs in urban settings is hindered by a lack of research into the instrumental development skills of secondary urban pupils. Qualitative studies highlighted the need for further

⁹³ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 117.

⁹⁴ Rury, *Urban Education*, 137.

research, especially in middle public-school ensembles in metropolitan regions. By conducting more research, we can better understand the benefits of music education and improve access for all students.

Implications for Practice

The study conducted on the significance of teaching music to disadvantaged students is an accurate recognition of its benefits. Effective techniques should be utilized, while still allowing for individual perspectives and instructional styles was found to stimulate student retention. To fully comprehend the impact of music education in urban school programs, the influence of culturally relevant teaching on student involvement must be examined. It is crucial for teachers to be aware of successful teaching techniques used by other educators, while keeping in mind that every student is unique and may require a different approach. Incorporating music-based learning into everyday activities not only encourages engagement and motivation, but also creates an environment that is conducive to learning. In a society that is becoming increasingly diverse, music can serve as a powerful tool to unite people from diverse backgrounds. Music education promotes involvement and personal development by encouraging learning practices, curiosity, and common sense. Furthermore, by teaching children patience and self-discipline through music, we are equipping them with skills to succeed in today's diverse communities. Shelley Jagow's comprehensive guide is an indispensable resource for all band directors, regardless of their experience.

With over forty chapters tackling every aspect of teaching instrumental music, this book offers practical tools and advice from some of the most accomplished educators in the industry. From curriculum planning to recommended websites, Jagow's work is an essential read for anyone aiming to enhance their teaching abilities and establish thriving music programs. According to Jagow, "the aim of music education should be to develop independent learners with

a motivation to learn and to continue life-long learning. We need to establish an environment that is conducive to independent learning while providing the student with the basic “vocabulary” to achieve mastery learning. Knowledge is of worth when it enables individuals to see the cause-and-effect relationship between their choices and their consequences.”⁹⁵ Music education is incredibly valuable for children in so many ways. It is not just about learning how to play an instrument or sing; it is also about developing important life skills like teamwork, concentration, and self-discipline. When children are exposed to music at an early age, they are given the opportunity to explore their creativity and express themselves in ways that can benefit them throughout their lives.

Chapter Summary

This study presents an opportunity for educators to expose fresh innovative ideas to enable students unleash their artistic and emotional expression. It is a chance to discover new methods and approaches that can be effective in how students approach creativity and self-expression. By learning from this study, educators can create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment that fosters creative growth and emotional intelligence. It is essential to allow students to express their cultural and personal preferences within the classroom. It is crucial to acknowledge and value their cultural identity, as it is a vital aspect of their individuality. By doing so, we can create a respectful and inclusive environment, laying the foundation for positive interactions. Moreover, music can be a powerful tool to motivate and inspire students to excel academically, particularly in urban classrooms where language barriers may exist. Strong states that, “student achievement is not just subject to teacher effects alone;

⁹⁵ Shelley Jagow, *Teaching Instrumental Music (Second Edition): Developing the Complete Band Program* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2020), 7.

achievement also is impacted by family background and many other factors.”⁹⁶ The current state of urban music education needs a major overhaul. Simply including music as a core subject in the curriculum is not enough. We need to focus on providing culturally appropriate music that resonates with students and their communities. This shift in approach can truly transform education and help students connect with music in a meaningful and impactful way.

As an urban music educator, it is imperative to equip fellow educators with resources that cater to their students’ preferred learning styles. Being aware of students’ wants and needs is critical in delivering relevant information and creating meaningful experiences. To achieve this, teachers can implement a predetermined sequence of instructional stages in formal learning environments, providing them with the ability to manage the learning process and identify issues rapidly. On the other hand, informal learning requires teachers to relinquish some control and develop a more flexible and fluid rapport with their students, while still integrating instructional techniques into the lessons. Through music literacy, students can gain a better understanding of music theory and apply specific principles to areas such as musical performance, note reading, or a combination of both. Kadhira Rajagopal asserts that, “the CREATE model asks for their students. Culturally responsive (or relevant) teaching has been described as “a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes.”⁹⁷

In the realm of music education, it is essential to provide fellow educators with resources that cater to their students’ preferred learning styles. Understanding students’ wants and needs is

⁹⁶ Strong, *Effective Teachers=Student Achievement*, 14.

⁹⁷ Kadhira Rajagopal, *Create Success!: Unlocking the Potential of Urban Students* (Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development, 2011), 22.

crucial in delivering relevant information and creating meaningful experiences. One way to achieve this is by engaging students in a critical dialogue about music's substance and methodology without taking away from the enjoyment of listening to and experiencing it performed. By creating a forum for discussion and setting a critical tone, teachers can encourage students to reflect thoughtfully and start fruitful discussions in the music classroom. To structure their assessment of the efficacy and applicability of their teaching and material, teachers must critically engage with the literature on cultural variety in music education. If teachers interpret the standards to embrace ethnic variety, options, and flexibility are available. This opens the possibility for rich programs that are responsive to and influenced by how local and international musicians create music when curiosity and openness are present. Existing programs can be reinforced and extended using more critical, socially-just methods without sacrificing the enjoyment, the chance to develop talent, or the happy purpose at the center of music education.

It is important for music educators to cater to students' preferred learning styles. Encouraging students to contribute to group discussions using their prior knowledge can enhance their learning experience. To achieve this, teachers can take a distinct approach to classroom reading and create a forum for critical dialogue. This can help students engage in fruitful discussions without detracting from the enjoyment of music. Along with this, it is crucial for teachers to address improper conduct and promote inclusive teaching practices that can have long-term benefits for their students. Urban music educators have a unique and positive impact on their students' lives through careful and inclusive teaching that extends beyond the classroom. By engaging with literature on cultural diversity in music education and interpreting standards to embrace ethnic variety, teachers can create responsive and enriching programs that celebrate the diversity of music students.

As educators, it is important to acknowledge the varying learning styles of our students and provide resources that cater to their preferences. Encouraging students to contribute to group discussions using their prior knowledge is an effective way to facilitate learning. One way to achieve this is by taking a unique approach to classroom reading and creating a platform for critical dialogue. In addition, it is essential for teachers to address inappropriate behavior and strive for inclusive teaching practices that benefit their students in the long-term. Implementing ethnically responsive teaching methods is a recommended step towards making fundamental changes in the educational system. Teachers who set clear expectations for their students and believe that all children can learn, regardless of their background or setting, are effective instructors. They can also convey this conviction to their pupils, which is critical in both teaching and teacher education. Researchers and educators continue to explore what makes successful teachers and effective teaching in urban schools, where poverty impacts not only the students but also the buildings and resources available to the staff. Although these activities are specifically related to music education, they serve as a fundamental building block for developing these skills in a different format. According to Rajagopal, “teachers believe that students are capable of learning and that they, their teachers, can teach them. Each teacher must assume responsibility for the fate of the students in his or her classroom; a teacher who truly is rigorous and enthusiastic about getting results equates student failure with his or her own failure.”⁹⁸

Teaching music to underprivileged African American students requires specific circumstances and managerial expertise within a flexible paradigm. As a result, band directors must put much effort into the managerial processes that support music education. It is important to acknowledge the varying learning styles of these students and provide resources that cater to

⁹⁸ Rajagopal, *Create Success*, 42.

their preferences. Encouraging critical dialogue through group discussions and reflection is an effective way to facilitate learning without compromising their enjoyment of music. Effective instructors set clear expectations for their students and believe that all children can learn, regardless of their background or setting. Researchers and educators continue to explore what makes successful teachers and effective teaching in urban schools, where poverty impacts not only the students but also the buildings and resources available to the staff. Although these activities are specifically related to music education, they serve as a fundamental building block for developing these skills in a different format. As explained by Murrell, “according to the teaching for understanding framework, it is important to frame generative topics— topics that elicit interest because they go to the core of what is worth knowing about a subject area.”⁹⁹ Furthermore, qualitative data gathered through individual interviews was used to thoroughly understand African American students’ perspectives and experiences in school-based band and orchestra programs. This data was gathered to highlight differences in musical exposure, experiences, and performance that reveal social, cultural, and conceptual influences on music performance for African American kids in school-based band programs.

Successful teachers who believe in the potential of every child are essential for creating a positive and effective teaching environment. Overall, these strategies are essential for promoting academic achievement and personal development in urban music education. As stated by Murrell, “moreover, African American children already possess many of the cultural resources for writing, speaking and oratory. Children need not be attracted to what is fun, but they do need to see activity as worth doing or participating in. This is both a conceptual task and a

⁹⁹ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 132.

motivational task for the teacher— and this pedagogical.”¹⁰⁰ It is worth noting that some students may encounter difficulties and frustration when it comes to comprehending music theory. The aid of this user-friendly audio platform, both educators and students can unlock their artistic potential and establish a creative learning environment for urban African American underprivileged students residing in urban areas.

¹⁰⁰ Murrell, *African-Centered Pedagogy*, 137.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of Consent for Interview

Date: _____

Dear: _____

I am a graduate student at Liberty University, where I am pursuing a Master of Music Education degree. I am researching The Significance of Teaching Music to Urban Underprivileged Students for the purpose of doing research on an instructional subject as part of a significant assignment for our program. I believe your understanding and experience will shed light on this topic.

I am obliged to submit a thesis on this study as part of the Master of Music Education Program. Dr. Thomas Goddard, this year's course instructor, is aiding me with my study. Dr. Monica Taylor is my research editor, and she will proofread my research. This provision's goal is to acquaint us with a variety of testing procedures. Analyses, interviews, and questionnaires were used to collect my data. I would appreciate it if you could interview me at a convenient time and location for you. I may do the interview in your workplace or home, in a public place, online, or wherever else you like.

This interview's material will be used for my assignment, which will include a final article. I would not include your name or any other identifying information in my published work, oral speeches, or journals. This detail will be kept private. My study supervisor and course mentor will be the only ones who will have access to my assignment. You have the right to

change your mind and withdraw at any moment, even though you have agreed to join. You have the option of declining to answer any relevant questions. There are no defined threats or advantages to your participation in the project, and I will send a copy of my notes to you to ensure consistency.

If you want to be interviewed, please sign the attached form. The second copy will be held for your notes. Thank you so much for your assistance.

Researcher name: _____

Phone number: _____ Email: _____

Instructor's Name: _____

Email: _____

Research Supervisor's Name: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Appendix B: Consent Form

I agree that the subject of this interview was clarified to me and that any questions I had were answered satisfactorily. I recognize that I may cancel at any time without incurring any penalties.

I have read Mr. Tyreese Pleasanton's letter and accept to engage in an interview for the reasons specified.

Signature: _____

Name (printed): _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Questions for an Interview

1. How long have you worked as a band director in an urban school setting?
2. What are some of the difficulties you face as an urban band director?
3. What prompted you to begin using music as a teaching aid?
4. How long have you been incorporating music into the curriculum?
5. What is the significance of incorporating music pedagogy and curriculum into your lessons?
6. What musical experience do you have?
7. How do you use music exercises to teach in your classroom?
8. Will you give me an example of a lesson where you used cross-curricular music implementation?
9. What have been some of the difficulties you encounter by using music as a sensitive pedagogy in your teaching?
10. What support do you have in the school for your band program (from other band directors, administration, or the community)?
11. How do you assess your pupils by incorporating music into the curriculum?
12. How is music considered to affect student interest, inspiration, and achievement?
13. What is the best way to motivate and support students during challenging times?
14. Describe a time where you recognized your students' developmental needs and successfully created a method to teach/train them?
15. Tell us about a time when you used a new medium for band pupils, such as "Smart Music" or "Note Flight," to introduce music pedagogy?

Appendix D: Institutional Review Board Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

February 14, 2023

Tyrese Pleasanton
Tommy Goddard

Re: IRB Approval - IRB-FY22-23-382 The Significance of Teaching Music to Urban African-American Underprivileged Students

Dear Tyrese Pleasanton, Tommy Goddard,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This approval is extended to you for one year from the following date: February 14, 2023. If you need to make changes to the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit a modification to the IRB. Modifications can be completed through your Cayuse IRB account.


Your study falls under the expedited review category (45 CFR 46.110), which is applicable to specific, minimal risk studies and minor changes to approved studies for the following reason(s):

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,


Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

Appendix E: Master's Thesis Defense Approval

MA: Ethnomusicology / MA: Music Education / MA: Music and Worship

Defense Decision

The thesis Advisor and Reader have rendered the following decision concerning
the proposal decision for

Tyreese Pleasanton

on the Thesis

The Significance of Teaching Music to Urban African American Underprivileged Students
as submitted on April 17, 2023

Full approval to proceed with no proposal revisions.

The document should be prepared for submission to the Jerry Falwell Library.



x



Provisional approval pending cited revisions.

The student must resubmit the project with cited revisions according to the established timeline.

Redirection of project.

_____ The student is being redirected to take ETHM/MUSC/WRSP 689 again, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project.

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