A QUALITATIVE STUDY AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF JAPANESE AND AMERICAN MUSIC EDUCATION METHODOLOGIES AND PHILOSOPHIES

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Mallory Flory

Liberty University

A THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS IN MUSIC EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study investigated the differences that studies have yet to explore between Japanese and American music education methodologies in terms of teaching music literacy through foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies. This study utilized a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological research design and examined the effects of Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies through data collection and qualitative interviews conducted with nine students whose music education consisted of these elements. The researcher interviewed two Japanese music educators, two American music educators, two Japanese music students, and three American music students. This study helped to provide insight into how Japanese music education methodologies such as the Suzuki method and Course of Study (COS) have affected Japanese students. The specific Japanese music education methodologies this study explored include foundational keyboard skills and Suzuki method/COS repertoire. Furthermore, this study illuminated how integrating Japanese music education techniques (including philosophies and repertoire) in American schools may affect American music students. The specific aspects of Japanese music education that this study explored with the intent to incorporate into American schools are world and cultural music and life enrichment philosophies. The two data collection procedures the study utilized are question-based and written/researcher-based protocols. The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended (see Appendix G). The results of this study will benefit and advance music education by exploring the integration of Japanese music education techniques into American classrooms.

Keywords: music education, praxial music education, aesthetic music education, Suzuki method, COS (Course of Study), curriculum

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I would also like to thank the school of Liberty University. My journey at this God-centered institution has finally come to an end. I have been proud to identify as a Liberty University student from the LU Online Academy to the Graduate School. There is no reward more valuable than receiving a Christ-oriented education. I am eternally grateful for the training I received at this school.

To my family, those who mean the most to me, I thank you for your undying love. I would not be where I am today without your support. It is impossible to put into words how much you have changed my life for the better. To my parents, Matt and Terri, I am forever convinced that there are no two greater individuals to have raised me. Despite my dreams of grandeur, you have continuously stood by me and provided me with a place to call home. To my siblings, Embry and London, I am no one without you two. You do not know the love I carry for both of you. Know that you have changed me for good. I am honored to be called daughter and sister of you four. I love you all.

I also want to thank Jillian Warman, my mentor for almost a decade. You have shown me what it means to be a powerful, unwavering woman for Christ and how to enter a dangerous

industry while maintaining my status as a child of God. You are the most gifted individual I know and there is no one more perfectly suited to spearhead the Christian music ministry.

Finally, I thank God, the rock on which I stand. I dedicate my life to serving You because You are the only constant in this life. You have never failed me, and You never will. My identity comes from You alone, “John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, ‘I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, “Make straight the way for the Lord.”’” (John 1:23, New International Version).

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to the children of America. This nation under God has suffered a severe attack by the enemy, and I hope to contribute to the mission of Christ through the salvation of children's media. The entertainment industry has completely failed the next generation, and it is up to America's educators, researchers, and parents to remedy this injustice. I look to pioneers such as Kirk Cameron, Hayao Miyazaki, and Leigh-Allyn Baker, who strive to improve the state of children's media through quality, age-appropriate content free of hidden agendas. This mission begins with music: the most powerful artistic medium.

List of Abbreviations

ASP	American Student Participant
ATP	American Teacher Participant
CASEL	Collaborative for Academic Social-Emotional Learning
COS	Course of Study
IRB	Institutional Review Board
JTP	Japanese Teacher Participant
JSP	Japanese Student Participant
MEC	Ministry of Education
MENC	Music Education National Conference
MEXT	The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
MIC	Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
MSNC	Music Supervisors National Conference
NAfME	National Association for Music Education
NAMM	National Association of Music Merchants
NASM	National Associations of Schools of Music
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act
SEL	Social-Emotional Learning
TEKS	Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
UIL	University Interscholastic League

Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

From the first Japanese music textbook published in 1882 to the implementation of the modern-day Course of Study curriculum, music education in Japan has changed significantly over the past 100 years. Not only has the curriculum utilized in Japanese classrooms evolved, but its intended purpose has also shifted. Through a brief investigation of the history of Japan's music education methodologies, one may ascertain how far it has come, how it compares to Western methods, and how it has affected Japanese students. Similarly, ideas regarding the implementation of music education in America have also shifted. Unlike Japan, however, music education curriculum and methodologies can vary by classroom. Craig C. Wieczorek investigates the differences between general education in America and Japan:

> While Americans are busy constructing common standards and benchmarks, developing and using more standardized tests for all students, and moving toward standards-based school reform, the Japanese seem to desire just the opposite-deconstructing uniform standards, moving away from the pressures of national exams, and focusing more on the interests and potential of each student, a goal that has often been ignored in Japanese culture and schools.[1]

However, the problem is that literature has not sufficiently addressed how American and Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies differ and how educators may seek to combine them. While scholarly sources that analyze American and Japanese music education techniques are available, there is a gap in the literature comparing the two. This study aimed to investigate the differences between Japanese and American music education methodologies in terms of teaching music literacy through foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies.

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[1] Craig C. Wieczorek, "Comparative Analysis of Educational Systems of American and Japanese Schools: Views and Visions," *Educational Horizons* 86, no. 2 (2008): 99, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42923715.

This first chapter will introduce the study along with its purpose, problem statement, and research questions, which will guide the study. This chapter will also discuss the study's significance and core concepts while defining common terms used throughout the chapter. This study followed a five-chapter format: Chapter One will introduce the study, Chapter Two will present a thorough review of the literature, Chapter Three will highlight the study's methodology and study procedures, Chapter Four will provide a presentation of the results and findings collected, and Chapter Five will conclude the thesis with a discussion of the implications of the findings and how they can influence professional practice.

Background of the Study

The background of the study provides a summary of the history behind the study. Next, this section examines the theoretical positions of researchers from similar studies. Finally, this section discusses the societal background surrounding the issue and its relation to the existing problem. These topics are covered more in-depth in a later chapter.

Historical Background

From the first Japanese music textbook published in 1882 to the modern-day COS curriculum, music education in Japan has changed significantly over the past 100 years, beginning in the *Meiji* Period. The Japanese music education curriculum has evolved, as has its intended purpose. Music education in Japan emerged in the fifth year of the *Meiji* Period (1868-1912). Kensho Takeshi, Director of the Curriculum Center for Teachers at *Tokyo Gakugei University*, writes that perhaps the most influential person in Japanese music education during the *Meiji* Period was Shuji Isawa.[2] Tanaka noted that Isawa studied teacher education in the

[2] Kensho Takeshi, "A Comparative Study of Music Education Between Japanese and American Pedagogical Influences in the Meiji Period (1868-1912)," *Tokyo Gakugei University Repository,* Sect. 5, 53 (2001): 48, http://hdl.handle.net/2309/41638.

United States, where he enrolled in the State Normal School in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, and for a brief time, Harvard University. During his time in Bridgewater, Isawa learned music from Luther Whiting Mason, who later became influential in Japan's modernization and Westernization of music education.

Immediately following World War II, music education in Japan entered its final phases. The philosophy and methodology behind music education underwent a complete transformation. In 1945, *Monbusho* released the first "Tentative Course of Study," which stated that the main objective of music education was to "cultivate aesthetic sentiments and fertile human minds by appreciating the beauty of music."[3]

Despite the inclusion of music education in the very first American schools, there was a difference in musical appreciation in the North and the South. Americans believed music classes were for the upper class only as they modeled their culture after European standards. However, music did not initially hold a secure position in the public education system in America. William Channing Woodbridge and Lowell Mason were among the most influential in incorporating music education into the American school system. Woodbridge spent time overseas studying Swiss and German educators, which inspired him to advocate for music to secure a permanent position in the American education system. Mason, known as "the father of singing among the children," advocated for the importance of music education in a child's life.

In the 1950s, for the first time in American history, the government began to exercise control of the education system. Admiral Hyman Rickover observed differences between the American and European school systems and believed that too many "frills" existed in the American school system. Rickover believed science, math, and literature deserved more

[3] Takeshi, "A Comparative Study," 53.

resources than the arts, including music.[4] Concerned that the Soviet Union would quickly surpass the United States in scientific education, the U.S. government involved itself in the education system.

Theoretical Background

Researchers have observed the positive and adverse effects of the Japanese and American music education systems. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the history, current methodologies, philosophies, and curricula of both countries, as well as the experiences of both Japanese and American music students and teachers, to determine the possible effects and benefits of an education system that incorporates philosophies and methodologies from both.

Despite the common roots of the American and Japanese education systems, the methodologies and philosophies have diverged over years of development, cultural influence, and political impact. Nevertheless, underlying commonalities remain in the two school systems' curriculum and music education standards. This study examined the practices of the Japanese music education system. It compared them to that of the American music education system, namely, the praxial and aesthetic philosophies utilized in many classrooms.

Firstly, Japanese music education classrooms emphasize world music, introducing students to traditional Japanese music and genres from other Asian and Western countries. Introductions to music of other Asian and Western cultures begin in elementary school. Viktor Granström, Orchestra Manager, Conductor, Composer, and Technical Sound Designer, writes in his study on Japanese music education, “The focus is seemingly that individual student should be able to assess themes within music and to be able to relate these themes with not only themes

[4] Mark and Gary, *American Music Education,* pg. 385.

from their own country but also other countries and their culture to further allow the student to expand not only their musical knowledge but cultural and historical knowledge as well."[5]

Despite the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) standards in America, world music incorporation is minimal. In 1972, the NASM revised its criteria to "include a non-Western requirement for programs leading to a baccalaureate degree in music."[6] This requirement only applies to programs leading into a college-level course; it does not address elementary or even high school-level programs.

Life enrichment philosophies also differ between Japanese and American music educators. Kitayama provides an example of the acknowledgment of music's life enrichment qualities in the current COS, "This 'Tentative Course of Study' stated, essentially, that the main objective of music education was to cultivate aesthetic sentiments and fertile human minds by appreciating the beauty of music."[7] Comparatively, David J. Elliott, author of *Music Matters, 2nd Edition*, states, "There's no qualitative, quantitative, or pragmatic evidence to support the theoretical claim that music listening, music making, or school music 'educates feelings.'"[8]

Societal Background

In the early stages of music education, aesthetic qualities were rarely considered or appreciated. Before the Japanese Emperor invited Mason to his country, the Japanese government utilized music education primarily for non-musical purposes. Takeshi writes, "Historically, however, the aesthetic proposition of music education has not necessarily been

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[5] Viktor Granström, "Music Education in Japan: An Observational and Comparative Analysis" (Bachelor Thesis, Stockholms Universitet, 2015), pg. 13.

[6] Portia Maultsby, "Toward a Multi-Cultural Music Education Curriculum," The College Music Society.

[7] Kitayama, "Historical Changes," 34.

[8] Elliot and Silverman, *Music Matters, 2nd Edition,* Ch. 2.

accepted by music educators in Japan. Before World War I, many Japanese music educators focused on non-musical values for teaching music, such as spiritual elevation or loyalty and patriotism. The lyrics of textbooks reflected the Japanese governmental attitudes of duty, obligation, morality, and patriotism."[9]

Similarly, in 19th century America, pragmatic administrators were not interested in aesthetic values. Mark and Gary state, "As the nation began to forge a business society, school boards, and administrators began to favor subjects that reflected new mechanization."[10] It was not until music education pioneers such as Mason emphasized the importance of an aesthetic education. However, researcher Daniel M. Stamm disagrees with the widely maintained "illusion of rigor" regarding Japanese education:

> The reality is, however, that rigor plays no part. For the Japanese, the preparation for geometry in the eighth grade began in the first grade and continued at levels appropriate for the students' developmental stages throughout elementary school. Not surprisingly, they outperformed the U.S. in the fourth grade, too, ranking 3rd against our 12th place. In the 8th grade, the rankings were 3rd and 28th, respectively. There is clearly a difference between our systems, but it has nothing to do with rigor.[11]

Summary

American music education is highly underdeveloped, while Japanese music education is considered rigorous despite its historical commonality with America. Some educators believe that the Japanese education system has shifted too far from its American roots, while others state that it is no longer as challenging as it once was. Together, the Japanese and American school systems highlight the unique qualities of a well-rounded education. To improve the education

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[9] Takeshi, "A Comparative Study," 52.

[10] Mark and Gary, *American Music Education,* pg. 186.

[11] Daniel M. Stamm, "Illusion of Rigor," *Nonpartisan Education Review* 14, no. 4 (2018): 3-4, https://www.nonpartisaneducation.org/Review/Essays/v14n4.htm.

system in America, educators and researchers must explore the success of the Japanese school system and implement the correlating methodologies and philosophies.

Problem Statement

Music education in the American school system has significantly evolved over the years. In 1986, the MENC recommended that schools implement comprehensive music education programs at all levels. Nevertheless, even in the 21st century, music education still warrants a position in students' curricula in American schools. Bennett Reimer states that music education and the arts as a whole "have been almost totally ignored in the present education reform movement."[12] American music education methodologies and philosophies, such as David J. Elliott's praxial and Bennett Reimer's aesthetic method, are heavily debated among educators. According to Elliott, the praxial philosophy of music education is a well-rounded, in-depth process through which students can learn about music in a "purposeful, contextual, and socially embedded" way.[13] In contrast, the defining characteristic of aesthetic education is that music expresses emotion. Elliott writes, "Art transcends referential content through its form, and that transcendence yields meanings 'deeper and more basic' than the meanings of the content it incorporates, meanings specifically and characteristically 'aesthetic.'"[14]

Thus, the problem is that these disagreements leave music education in American schools inconsistent and lacking proper student preparation. Conversely, Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies, such as foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies, seek to provide well-rounded music

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[12] Bennett Reimer, *Seeking the Significance of Music Education,* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), pg. 247.

[13] David J. Elliott, *Praxial Music Education,* (Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), pg. 13.

[14] Reimer, *Seeking the Significance*, pg. 34.

education for Japanese students. However, the problem is that literature has not sufficiently addressed how American and Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies differ and how educators may seek to combine them. While scholarly sources that analyze American and Japanese music education techniques are available, there is a gap in the literature comparing the two.

The time at which educators introduce specific music education topics plays a significant role in a student's abilities and music appreciation. For example, Oshio Satomi, Professor of Musicology at Miyagi University of Education, suggests that the earlier a curriculum exposes a student to traditional music, the less likely they are to hold a negative, preconceived notion about it. Satomi writes, "If they had opportunities to familiarize themselves with traditional music at an earlier age, perhaps they wouldn't have held baseless negative conceptions."[15] In addition, authors Rita J. Hartman, Elizabeth Johnston, Jennifer N. Calito, and Liston W. Bailey discuss the effects of early exposure to music education on children. The researchers selected eight individual career professionals to be the subjects for this study. These eight test subjects received music education in grades K-12 or college. The findings of this study "support the importance of the inclusion of music education into early life experiences to enhance and enrich the personal and professional lives of individuals."[16]

Japanese pianist Josephine Yang discusses the music education system, curriculum, expectations, and the requirements for becoming a music educator in Japan: "All music students

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[15] Oshio Satomi, "Traditional Music and World Music in Japanese School Education," *Min Su Qu Yi,* no. 203 (2019): 76, https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/traditional-music-world-japanese-school-education/docview/2218249986/se-2?accountid=12085.

[16] Rita J. Hartman et al., "Career professionals' reflections on early exposure to music education: a narrative inquiry," *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 39:4, 388-401, https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370.2020.1790681.

are expected to have basic competence in piano playing. Most courses in music schools cover Western classical music subjects; however, to receive certification as school music teachers in Japan, students are required to enroll in Japanese traditional and folk music in addition to the general music curriculum."[17] Furthermore, the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) provides a list of ten instruments suggested for young musicians to learn first. While the list includes the piano, the NAMM recommends the recorder as the optimal beginner's instrument, "The recorder is easier than other wind instruments and is the ideal introductory instrument."[18] In contrast, Dr. Natsumi Takai includes a statement in her doctoral dissertation from the Japan Society of Research on Childhood Care and Education, which hosts a comprehensive national conference every year, "Presentations on piano class curriculum appear frequently since the certificate exam for pre-school and kindergarten teachers includes piano proficiency exams."[19]

There are shortcomings in the Japanese and American music education curriculums. This study sought to determine the two's strengths, weaknesses, and standard practices. Satomi suggests future research at the end of his article, exploring the lack of traditional music incorporation into Japanese schools. He writes, "The future development of teaching traditional

[17] "Music Education in Japan," Music Education, Loudmouth, published July 7, 2016, https://musictrust.com.au/loudmouth/at-the-coalface-the-knowledge-economy-is-a-fantasy-music-education-in-japan/.

[18] "Top 10 Instruments for Children to Learn to Play Music," National Associate of Music Merchants, March 11, 2020, https://www.nammfoundation.org/articles/2020-03-11/top-10-instruments-children-learn-play-music.

[19] Natsumi Takai, "Ten Years of Japanese Piano Pedagogy (2009-2018) Through a Survey of Educational Resources" (PhD diss., University of South Carolina, 2021), 16, Scholarly Commons, https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd/6325.

music and world music will require collaboration among music teachers, music researchers, and musicians."[20]

Purpose Statement

The study aimed to investigate the differences that studies have yet to explore between Japanese and American music education methodologies in terms of teaching music literacy through foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies. This study utilized a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological research design. Additionally, the study examined the effects of Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies through data collection and qualitative interviews with nine participants whose music education consisted of these elements. The researcher interviewed two Japanese music educators, two American music educators, two Japanese music students, and three American music students.

These interviews helped to provide insight into how Japanese music education methodologies such as the Suzuki method and COS have affected Japanese students. The specific Japanese music education methodologies this study explored include foundational keyboard skills and Suzuki method/COS repertoire. Dr. Masafumi Ogawa, a professor of music education at Yokohama National University, describes the music education curriculum currently implemented in Japan, also known as the COS curriculum:

> The Course of Study (COS) is a set of national curriculum standards for kindergarten, elementary, middle, and high school, and schools for the handicapped and is issued by the MEXT. All schools, public or private, are required to follow these standards. No other curriculum is allowed. Therefore, in Japan, the COS is the law through which the government controls all educational actions. The COS was first issued in 1947 and has been revised seven times".[21]

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[20] Satomi, "Traditional Music and World Music," 97.

[21] Masafumi Ogawa, "Music Teacher Education in Japan: Structure, Problems, and Perspectives," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 12, no. 2 (2004): 139, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/176664.

These qualitative interviews also illuminated how integrating Japanese music education techniques (including philosophies and repertoire) in American schools may affect American music students. The specific aspects of Japanese music education that this study explored with the intent to incorporate into American schools were world and cultural music and life enrichment philosophies. Japanese teachers emphasize world music, introducing students to traditional Japanese music and genres from other Asian countries and Western countries. Music appreciation in Japan is highly advanced, while music appreciation in America is underdeveloped and often neglected, depending on which method is implemented (aesthetic versus praxial, etc.).

Atsuyasu Kitayama, professor of music education and saxophone at Shizuoka University, describes the current Course of Study implemented in Japan, "This 'Tentative Course of Study' stated, essentially, that the main objective of music education was to cultivate aesthetic sentiments and fertile human minds by appreciating the beauty of music."[22] Comparatively, David J. Elliott, author of *Music Matters, 2nd Edition*, states, "There's no qualitative, quantitative, or pragmatic evidence to support the theoretical claim that music listening, music making, or school music 'educates feelings.'"[23] Similarly, the Bible comprises many verses about music, many of which equate music-making with joy, "speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19).

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[22] Kitayama, "Historical Changes," 34.

[23] David J. Elliot and Marissa Silverman, *Music Matters, 2nd Edition,* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), Ch. 2.

Significance of the Study

The aesthetic and praxial methods of music education have been the center of debate among music educators for decades. While the praxial approach emphasizes an education incorporating music's political, cultural, and social implications, the aesthetic method encourages a pure enjoyment experience separate from worldly concerns. Nevertheless, most music educators are trying to answer the same question, no matter their philosophy, "What of all that can be taught is most worth teaching? In other words, there is always more to teach than time and resources permit, and not all of what can be taught or learned is equally valuable to all students or to society."[24]

Wayne Bowman, the author of *Music as Ethical Encounter*, dislikes the terms "praxial" and "aesthetic" as he believes they too narrowly categorize philosophers and researchers, "'Praxial' and 'aesthetic' have become badges, categories into which we sort people, rather than analytical or intellectual tools. The unfortunate result is that the terms frequently curtail rather than enable thought. Accordingly, I try to avoid the labels in order to keep the discussion focused on the ideas being explored."[25] Rather than debating which rigid philosophy educators should implement, music educators should integrate values and ideas from both and develop a curriculum that fits their classroom while also taking the time to learn from educators of the past and from around the world.

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[24] Thomas A. Regelski, "Implications of Aesthetic versus Praxial Philosophies of Music for Curriculum Theory in Music Education," *Didacta Varia* 8, no. 1 (2014): 63, http://maydaygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Regelski-Implications.pdf.

[25] Wayne Bowman, "Music as Ethical Encounter," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education,* no. 151 (2001): 19, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40319113.

Shinichi Suzuki, the creator of the world-renowned Japanese music education methodology, the Suzuki method, states, "Musical ability is not an inborn talent but an ability which can be developed. Any child properly trained child can develop musical ability, just as all children develop the ability to speak their mother tongue. The potential of every child is unlimited."[26] Utilized since the twentieth century, the Suzuki method of music education is a well-rounded, hands-on approach to teaching music. Furthermore, according to the Talent Education Research Institute, approximately 400,000 children worldwide are learning to play music via the Suzuki method.[27] Especially prominent in the United States music education classrooms since the 1950s, the Suzuki method is a fantastic example of how American schools can integrate Japanese music education techniques into their curriculum to improve the learning experiences of American students.

However, like any education method, the Suzuki method includes its detractions as well. In this article, Taichi Akutsu, a Japanese violinist, teacher, and researcher who graduated from the Tokyo College of Music, writes about contemporary issues in the Suzuki method compared to its traditional form. Akutsu states, "In short, although there have been a few positive changes in the contemporary Suzuki Method in Japan, including a gradual emphasis on technical aspects, it is discouraging that the method has become so technical and has lost the improvisational style of Suzuki's teaching and playful family atmosphere, in the past 50 years."[28]

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[26] "About the Suzuki Method," The Suzuki Twinkler, Suzuki Association of the Americas, Inc. 1998, https://suzukiassociation.org/about/suzuki-method/.

[27] Eri Hotta, *Suzuki: The Man and His Dream to Teach the Children of the World* (New York: Harvard University Press, 2022), 1, ProQuest Ebook Central.

[28] Taichi Akutsu, "Changes after Suzuki: A retrospective analysis and review of contemporary issues regarding the Suzuki Method in Japan," *International Journal of Music Education* 38, no. 1 (2020): 18-35, https://doi.org/10.1177/0255761419859628.

Finally, in his book, author Warren W. Wiersbe discusses the beauty of genuine, biblically based worship, "I'm a unique person to Him, and He wants me to have a unique experience. To be sure, all worship experiences have some elements in common, but they also have their own special features that may not be duplicated in the lives of others. Each of us is different, and our worship experiences are bound to be different."[29] Like the unique worship experience Wiersbe describes, educators must also curate music education for each student.

Qualitative Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological research approach. David J. Creswell defines qualitative research as "an approach for exploring and understanding the meanings individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem."[30] The research questions within this study were open-ended, "Qualitative interviews use open-ended questions, which are questions that a researcher poses but does not provide answer options for."[31]

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

RQ1. How have Japanese music education methodologies such as the Suzuki Method and COS (Course of Study) affected Japanese students?

— Sub-question: What are the effects of teaching students music literacy skills through foundational keyboard skills as taught in Japanese music education?

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[29] Warren W. Wiersbe, *Real Worship,* (2000), Liberty University Online Bookshelf, Retrieved from: https://libertyonline.vitalsource.com/#/books/9781585582686/.

[30] John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches, 5th Edition*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2018), Ch. 1.

[31] Matthew DeCarlo, *Scientific Inquiry in Social Work* (Open Social Work, 2018), 13.2.

— Sub-question: How do the Suzuki method and COS (Course of Study) repertoire affect Japanese music students?

H_1: Music education is considered essential in Japan, thus creating well-rounded students. Furthermore, Japanese music education curricula and philosophies, such as the Suzuki method and COS, ensure that students receive an all-encompassing music education by including aural skills, music theory, and cultural music in their studies. Atsuyasu Kitayama, professor of music education and saxophone at Shizuoka University, summarizes the ultimate objective of music education in Japanese schools, "The general objective of music education, however, was stated as follows: 'To enrich children's musical experiences, to develop their sense of music, and to cultivate their aesthetic sentiments.'"[32]

RQ2. How might integrating Japanese music education techniques (including philosophies and repertoire) in American schools affect American music students?

— Sub-question: To what degree should schools seek to incorporate world and cultural music into students' education?

— Sub-question: How might incorporating Japanese music education life enrichment philosophies affect American students?

H_2: In 1986, the MENC recommended that schools implement comprehensive music education programs at all levels. Nevertheless, even in the 21st century, music education is not secure in students' curricula in America. The two primary methodologies in American music education are the praxial and aesthetic methods. David J. Elliott, the developer of the praxial method of music education, believes that music has multiple dimensions. In contrast,

[32] Kitayama, "Historical Changes," 35.

Bennett Reimer, creator of the aesthetic method, argues that music should be a pure experience, free of any outside influence.

There are many possible benefits of the integration of Japanese music education philosophies in American schools. One is to allow music education to have a permanent place in American curricula. Music education is considered essential in Japan. A second possible benefit is parents' involvement in their children's education. This philosophy is central to the Suzuki method, a Japanese music education technique.

Core Concepts

This study identified several core concepts related to exploring and comparing Japanese and American music education methodologies and philosophies. First, American schools have considered music education inferior to other subjects such as math, science, and literature for centuries. Beginning in the eighteenth century and continuing throughout the twentieth century, American leaders have deemed music education extra-curricular and frivolous. Although political agendas were the catalysts of many decisions, the Japanese school system has consistently incorporated music education into its curriculum since the nineteenth century. As a result, research indicates that Japanese musicians are among the most skilled in the world due to the quality of their country's music education. For example, Frank B. Abdoo observed that Japanese schools had significantly more stable funding for their music programs, as educators highly regard music as a core subject.[33]

Furthermore, 99 percent of Japanese high-school graduates are proficient in reading sheet music regardless of their chosen career specialization. In contrast, American high school

[33] Frank B. Abdoo, "Music Education in Japan," *Music Educators Journal* 70, no. 6 (1984): 54, https://www.jstor.org/stable/3400796.

graduates are not commonly proficient in music if they have not taken private music lessons. Finally, despite the Westernization of the Japanese school system over the past centuries, the music education curriculum in Japan has swayed from American philosophies. While the courses are more rigorous and consistent, researchers state that some Japanese educators have potentially minimized creative opportunities in the class versus American classrooms, which tend to emphasize music appreciation and creativity over theory. This study examined how these methodologies have affected Japanese and American music students.

In addition to its educational benefits, the Bible indicates that music is a form of communication or social practice, "speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19). Elliott discusses this concept as well in *Music Matters,* "Thomas Turino emphasizes that musics are prime examples of expressive public practices, and, therefore, primary ways 'that people articulate the collective identities that are fundamental to forming and sustaining social groups, which are, in turn, basic to survival.'"[34] Finally, Hebrews 2:12 perfectly summarizes the importance of music education, "I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters; in the assembly, I will sing your praises." God created His people to sing His praises.

[34] Elliott and Silverman, *Music Matters,* pg. 62.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The history of Japanese and American music education curricula, methodologies, and philosophies are intertwined. The American music education system inspired the Japanese government, which wished to inherit its qualities. However, despite the relations between the two countries' education systems, researchers observe a shift back to traditional approaches. For example, American music education techniques emphasize a creative, freeform approach, while traditional Japanese music education is infamously known by researchers as strict and uniform, allowing for minimal individualistic expression. Researchers have observed the positive and adverse effects of the Japanese and American music education systems. The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine the history, current methodologies, philosophies, and curricula of both countries, as well as the experiences of both Japanese and American music students and teachers, to determine the possible effects and benefits of an education system that incorporates philosophies and methodologies from both.

Japanese Music Education

History

The *Meiji* Period

From the first Japanese music textbook published in 1882 to the modern-day COS curriculum, music education in Japan has changed significantly over the past hundred years, beginning in the *Meiji* Period. Not only has the Japanese music education curriculum evolved, but so has its intended purpose. Music education in Japan emerged in the fifth year of the *Meiji* Period (1868-1912). In 1872, an American educator and foreign employee of the *Monbusho* (the Ministry of Education) and Fujimaro Tanaka were instrumental in reforming the Japanese

education system. Not only did Murray and Tanaka advocate for including women and young girls in schools, but they also urged the government to include the arts in the education system.[1] During their time in Japan, Murray and Tanaka occasionally visited America, where they closely observed the education utilized in the schools to further their theories regarding incorporating the arts into Japanese curricula. However, major Japanese public schools did not offer music lessons despite their research. Only at the *Tokyo Joshi Shihan Gakko* (Women's Normal School) was music education a part of the core curriculum.[2]

Kensho Takeshi, Director of the Curriculum Center for Teachers at *Tokyo Gakugei University*, writes that perhaps the most influential person in Japanese music education during the *Meiji* Period was Shuji Isawa.[3] Tanaka suggested that Isawa study teacher education in the United States, where he enrolled in the State Normal School in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, and for a brief time, Harvard University. During his time in Bridgewater, Isawa learned music from Luther Whiting Mason, who later became influential in Japan's modernization and Westernization of music education.

Isawa worked closely with Mason, who is responsible for the authorship of the "first graded music textbook series and creation of the first program to train classroom teachers to supervise elementary-school teaching."[4] A report of Mason's works, including his teacher training curriculum titled *The National Music Teacher*, was submitted by Isawa to the Music Investigation Committee in Japan. Hoping to Westernize the Japanese school system, the

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[1] Takeshi, "A Comparative Study," 53.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications invited Mason to join as a faculty member.[5] Michael L. Mark and Charles L. Gary, authors of *A History of Music Education*, write, "He served in Japan for three years with the title' governmental music supervisor,' teaching what they called 'Mason Song' to Japanese music teachers, and American music education has influenced Japanese culture since the last part of the nineteenth century."[6]

After recruiting Mason, Isawa returned to Japan from the United States in 1878.[7] Upon his return, he realized how minimal the formal music education in Japan was. In 1887, the Ministry of Education formed a new department named the *Tokyo Ongaku Gakko* (Tokyo Music School). Isawa was appointed the *Goyo Gakari* (the person responsible) of this new committee/school, which had three purposes:

1. to compose new songs, which were a compromise between the West and East,
2. to train teachers who would promote Japanese music in the future,
3. to teach music in schools.[8]

Finally, in 1882, the MIC published the first Japanese music education textbook, the *Shogaku Shokashu* (Primary Songbook). Following its publication, additional songbooks written for various grades, including kindergarten and junior high, emerged, one of which was the *Meiji Shoka* (Meiji School Songs). Atsuya Kitayama, Professor of Music Education and Saxophone at Shizuoka University in Japan, notes the influence of political influence in the schools during the *Meiji* Period. Earlier in the *Meiji* Period, before the Westernization of the Japanese school system, *shoka* (school songs) were seen as inseparable from *shushin,* which is the subject that

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[5] Takeshi, "A Comparative Study," 48.

[6] Mark and Gary, *American Music Education*, pg. 199.

[7] Takeshi, "A Comparative Study," 48.

[8] Ibid.

"cultivates patriotic morals by teaching the virtues of loyalty and filial piety in order to enhance the authority of the nation and society."[9] Kitayama writes, "And *shoka,* during the Meiji period, was intended to reinforce the teaching of these virtues with the words of songs. In the cradle of the modern nation, music education was seen as an effective means of controlling the moral development of the people."[10] However, upon the arrival of Mason's contributions, there was an attempt to redefine *shoka* according to the models of the Western school system. Still, the Fundamental Code of Education shelved the implementation of *shoka* because of the recent reformation of the educational system. *Shoka* would not be reintegrated into the school system until later in the *Meiji* Period.

The *Taisho* Period

With the commencement of the *Taisho* Period, music education in Japan continued to evolve as it expanded with the creative movement. Still, the underlying political influence remained, rebranded as "character building," a concept that would become highly prevalent in the following era.[11] During World War II, the ideas behind *shoka,* the incorporation of politics in school songs, transitioned into *Geino-ka Ongaku,* which were school songs that instilled ideas of militarism and loyalty. According to Kitayama, "The main objective of *Geino-ka Ongaku* was to implant the thought of ultranationalism and militarism in children's minds, using the words of songs."[12] One example of musical gifts applied in military settings was the ability to distinguish the roar of planes at the battlefront and the sounds of machines in armament factories utilizing

[9] Kitayama, "Historical Changes," 33.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., 34.

perfect pitch.[13] Due to the government's total control of the subject, music education influenced Japanese schools more than ever.

The Post-War - Modern Era

Immediately following World War II, music education in Japan entered its final phases. The philosophy and methodology behind music education underwent a complete transformation. In 1945, *Monbusho* released the first "Tentative Course of Study," which stated that the main objective of music education was to "cultivate aesthetic sentiments and fertile human minds by appreciating the beauty of music."[14] Since 1945, the COS has continued to evolve, shifting focuses between academic achievement, political influence, and aesthetic appreciation. In the following years, the government administered a new Course of Study. The primary objectives of this new COS were to cultivate the aesthetic sentiments and human minds of school children, develop harmonious personalities within them, and enhance children's cultural knowledge so that they may become desirable members of society through experiences in music.[15] Dr. Masafumi Ogawa, a professor of music education at Yokohama National University, describes the music education curriculum currently implemented in Japan:

> The Course of Study (COS) is a set of national curriculum standards for kindergarten, elementary, middle, and high school, and schools for the handicapped and is issued by the MEXT. All schools, public or private, are required to follow these standards. No other curriculum is allowed. Therefore, in Japan, the COS is law through which the government controls all educational actions. The COS was first issued in 1947 and has been revised seven times.[16]

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[13] Kitayama, "Historical Changes," 34.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ogawa, "Music Teacher Education," 139.

Methodologies and Philosophies

Music education in Japan is divided by grade level into two categories: music-making and music appreciation. The music-making category consists of singing, playing instruments, and creative music-making.[17] In an interview with *Loudmouth,* Josephine Yang, a world-renowned Japanese pianist and violinist, recounts her experience in the Japanese music education system. She states that music education is a required subject from the age of six to fifteen.[18] In primary school (elementary), students learn to play the recorders and sing, while lower-secondary students (junior high) learn to play traditional Japanese instruments.

Furthermore, Yang states, "100 percent of students in both public and private schools have been exposed to Western classical music."[19] In upper-secondary school (high school), music education becomes an optional elective. It includes a significant number of performance and in-person sessions after school hours.[20] Before participating in music education at a college level, music students must complete a performance audition, an aural skills test, and be proficient in the piano:

> The music education program leading to graduation with the license to teach at schools in Japan must include: solfege, vocal and instrumental ensemble (choir, instrumental ensemble, piano accompanying), conducting, music theory, composition and arrangement, Western music history, and Japanese traditional and folk music — in addition to general education degree requirements.[21]

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[17] Satomi, "Traditional Music and World Music," 76.

[18] "Music Education in Japan."

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

Primary School

Music education in Japan begins in primary school, from years one through six, corresponding to first through sixth grade in American schools. According to Gloria J. Kiester, featured author in the *Music Educators Journal* in 1993, music education at the primary level in Japan consists of both activity and movement. Music lessons consist of singing, playing instruments, movement, and occasionally, writing songs.[22] The movement portion of learning may include traditional or improvised dances, song games, jumping rope with singing, drawing with singing, and hand-play songs.

Furthermore, primary students learn a basic repertoire of Japanese and American songs.[23] Dr. Oshio Satomi, professor of Musicology at Miyagi University of Education, states that The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) guidelines require all grades in primary school to share common materials.[24] One of these common materials is a traditional Japanese children's song unique to each primary grade level (See Appendix D).

For music appreciation, the MEXT defines non-traditional songs that are proper for the classroom, "music that apparently gives pupils comfort with a physical response such as children's songs and play songs, marching music, and dance music of our country and other foreign countries."[25] Kiester notes that the most popular songs in Japanese primary schools were Stephen Foster's songs, spiritual pieces, and "It's a Small World," translated into Japanese.[26]

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[22] Gloria J.Kiester, "A Look at Japanese Music Education," *Music Educators Journal* 79, issue 6 (1993): 44, https://web.s.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=1b0f3167-e1e4-4e84-9f5cae0236069281%40redis&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=9705143804&db=.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Satomi, "Traditional Music and World Music," 76.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Kiester, "A Look at Japanese Music Education," 44.

In the first year of primary school, students learn to read sheet music with pictures, symbols, and solfege. Children also learn part singing early; by their sixth year, they can sing in three parts.[27] In addition to singing, primary students learn to play at least two instruments, most commonly, the harmonica and pianica, a keyboard aerophone with a "hose-like" mouthpiece that the students blow into while playing the keyboard.[28] Older students often play recorders and electronic keyboards. In ensemble performances, Kiester states that students frequently combine these instruments with glockenspiels, xylophones, accordions, and percussion instruments.[29]

Lower-Secondary School

Lower-secondary school in Japan covers grades seven, eight, and nine. The overarching goal for music education in lower-secondary schools, as provided by the MEXT, is to "deepen understanding of music culture."[30] For singing, the MEXT states that lower-secondary students must learn to "use suitable vocalization for the musical genres that are sung and to consider the characteristics of the language used in the song."[31] To achieve this level of understanding, the MEXT requires students to learn specific materials, "For this purpose, teaching materials should include items for students to get a sense of the characteristics of traditional vocalization, and the choice of traditional vocal genres such as folk songs and *nagauta* should take into account the circumstances of the region, the students, and the school."[32] The MEXT also requires common

[27] Kiester, "A Look at Japanese Music Education," 44.

[28] Ibid., 45.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Satomi, "Traditional Music and World Music," 81.

[31] Ibid., 82.

[32] Ibid.

singing materials in lower-secondary schools. Common materials include Japanese songs composed in Western style, but not traditional and world music.

Regarding music appreciation, Satomi writes, "Its goal directs that students appraise the characteristics of music in relation to the culture, history and other arts that comprise its background and that they sense its diversity and appreciate it through learning the characteristics of Japanese music—including traditional and regional music—as well as musics from other Asian countries."[33] The MEXT also provides specific guidelines for instrumental instruction. The MEXT requires students to learn traditional Japanese instruments, string instruments, wind instruments, percussion instruments, keyboard instruments, electronic instruments, and instruments from various world cultures, as needed for well-rounded instruction. Satomi states the first half of Japanese instrumental textbooks often include directions for instrument carriage, basic playing techniques, and a few short, beginner-level pieces. The latter half of the textbooks introduce music scores of ensemble pieces. The MEXT guidelines also require students to experience the value of the traditional music of Japan and the local area through music-making activities for one or more types of instruments over the three grades.[34] While Japanese curricula do not address movement exercises in the same way in lower-secondary school as in primary school, students continue to learn the connection between language and music, posture, and how to use one's body.[35]

Finally, Kiester writes that lower-secondary classrooms develop individual responsibility and critical thinking. She observed that groups of children would present a two-part in front of

[33] Satomi, "Traditional Music and World Music," 82.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

the class and receive critiques from their classmates. Another time, students would practice their pieces in groups of two, with one student as the vocalist and one as the keyboard accompanist. Kiester noticed that in some cases, the students would lead the lesson, providing critiques for each other while the teacher stood on the side of the class, observing.

Upper-Secondary School

Upper-secondary school in Japan correlates to grades ten, eleven, and twelve in American schools. According to Frank B. Abdoo, some upper-secondary schools in Japan only require students to take one music class, while others categorize music as an elective and not a requirement. However, Abdoo notes that at this point in a student's education, they are already well-grounded in the tools needed to understand, appreciate, and enjoy music from their previous education.[36] While some upper-secondary schools specialize in preparing students for a career in music, such as Kunitachi Music High School near Tokyo, most schools focus on preparing students to pass the university entrance exam.[37] At most, a music class in a non-specialized school will consist of two weekly classes. These classes may include conducting, music history, arranging, composition, ear training, and listening to various musical styles.[38]

Kiester writes that about half of the upper-secondary music instructional time is devoted to music appreciation. Favorite songs in upper-secondary music classrooms include Foster's "Beautiful Dreamer," "Edelweiss," "White Christmas," "Annie Laurie," "Caro mio ben" (an Italian art song), "Voi che sapete" (from Mozart's Marriage of Figaro), and similar vocal literature by Japanese Western-style composers such as Rentaro Taki and Kosaku Yamada.[39]

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[36] Abdoo, "Music Education in Japan," 54.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Kiester, "A Look at Japanese Music Education," 46.

Furthermore, textbooks include units on various musical styles, such as Western opera, Japanese gagaku, Chinese opera, and Indonesian music. In addition to textbooks, upper-secondary teachers use recordings and videotapes to enhance their lessons. Occasionally, the students also study vocal technique, solfege, recorder, and guitar.

Like lower-secondary students, upper-secondary students are encouraged to join a band or choral club in addition to their regular music studies. However, Japanese band directors seldom play every band instrument. Thus, band clubs rely on older students to teach younger students.[40] Nevertheless, all secondary school teachers are specialists in vocal and instrumental music, and they play the piano.[41] Often, these teachers are former piano majors as well. In elementary-level schools, there are no specialized music teachers. Instead, classroom instructors will also teach music unless it is a specialized elementary music school like the ones in Tokyo and Yokohama.

American Music Education

History

The New World

Music education first appeared in America in 1350, in what is now known as Peru, and was only offered in the schools for children of the royal family and the nobles of the empire.[42] It was a four-year course of study that did not include instruction from writings but through oral examinations and participations.[43] However, what most educators consider "American music

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[40] Kiester, "A Look at Japanese Music Education," 46.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Michael L. Mark and Charles L. Gary, *A History of American Music Education,* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., 2007), pg. 45.

[43] Ibid.

education" began in New England with the Pilgrims and Puritans. According to Michael L. Mark and Charles L. Gary, the first New England schools in America included music education, "What is important to remember is that these Americans saw to it that music was taught in the first schools they organized."[44]

Despite the inclusion of music education in the very first American schools, there was a difference in musical appreciation in the North and the South. Like the first music education classes in early America (1350), music was considered for the upper class only and modeled their culture after European standards. Thus, many European instructors migrated to southern America to teach music, performance, and dance and found great success. However, as time progressed, the market became oversaturated with instructors, as music lessons were only available to children of the wealthy. For this reason, singing schools of the north soon migrated to the south and expanded in popularity.[45]

New England Roots

In 1723, Reverend Thomas Symmes pitched the idea of "singing schools," where people of all social statuses could gather a few times a week after work and learn to sing psalms from a qualified instructor.[46] From the establishment of singing schools came two great awakenings in New England, making music education more accessible to people of all statuses, in both the North and the South, and considering music education as essential from an academic and religious standpoint. Additionally, singing schools allowed African American participants as well. Mark and Gary write, "As late as 1854, the Revered Hanks conducted a singing school for

[44] Mark and Gary, *A History of Music Education,* pg. 50.

[45] Ibid., pg. 61.

[46] Ibid., pg. 77.

blacks in a Wilmington, North Carolina, church with a mixed congregation, and at the same time a singing school for whites in a church with a white congregation."[47]

A New Period

In the last few years of the eighteenth century, the American nation underwent significant changes, including introducing the public school system. The idea of a public school, often referred to as a "pauper school," was met with some great hesitancy, as many Americans refused to admit the need for a free education. Nevertheless, Thomas Jefferson and other American leaders felt a standard schooling curriculum was necessary for a growing nation. More specifically, they speculated that a public education system that was "secular and free of religious influence" was crucial to preserve the democracy the American leaders had built.[48] Finally, two months before the completion of the U.S. Constitution, the Continental Congress passed the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which shared several terms with the Declaration of Independence, including every person's right to a formal education. In turn, "one section (640 acres) of every township of six square miles for schools" was reserved.[49]

Music did not initially maintain a secure position in the public education system in America. William Channing Woodbridge and Lowell Mason were among the most influential in incorporating music education into the American school system. Woodbridge spent some time overseas studying Swiss and German educators, which inspired him to advocate for music to secure a permanent position in the American education system. Mason, known as "the father of singing among the children," advocated for the importance of music education in a child's life.

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[47] Mark and Gary, *American Music Education,* pg. 99.

[48] Ibid., pg. 117.

[49] Ibid., pg. 121.

Mason and Woodbridge were crucial in integrating music into American public schools.[50] In 1870, after music was elected a core subject in the school system, Luther Whiting Mason composed one of the first music education textbooks called *The National Music Course.* However, at the start of the nineteenth century, music textbooks slowly began to change following the establishment of the Music Supervisors National Conference (MSNC).

The Twentieth Century

The commencement of the twentieth century brought about significant changes to the music scene in America, along with the introduction of an emphasis on music appreciation, the radio, concerts aimed at younger generations, the development of school bands, and cinema. Furthermore, teacher education needed reform due to the "decline of vaudeville and the introduction of talking movies." As the need for musicians diminished in the cinematic profession, many musicians turned to academic positions.[51] The MENC also expanded its reach, covering additional topics such as music education, political advocacy expertise, and the business side of music education—the music industry.[52]

After 1950-Present

For the first time in American history, the government began to exercise control of the education system. Admiral Hyman Rickover observed differences between the American and European school systems and believed that too many "frills" existed in the American school system. Rickover believed science, math, and literature deserved more resources than the arts, including music.[53] Concerned that the Soviet Union would quickly surpass the United States in

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[50] Mark and Gary, *American Music Education,* pg. 152.

[51] Ibid., pg. 329.

[52] Ibid., pg. 377.

[53] Ibid., pg. 385.

scientific education, the U.S. government involved itself in the education system. The Cooperative Research Branch of the U.S. Office of Education distributed 10 million dollars each year from 1956 to 1961 for 407 research projects.

The National Science Foundation also awarded millions of dollars to teacher improvement institutions, which included music educators. Still, the amount was significantly smaller than that given to science, math, and literature institutions.[54] Music educators' fight for sustainable funding continued through the rest of the twentieth century, although they made some progress in the latter half.

Lastly, as music education gained a newfound respect in the twenty-first century, the subject entered a philosophical era. Bennett Reimer introduced his method of music education, which emphasized the aesthetic benefits of music in the classroom. Soon after, competing perspectives emerged, such as David J. Elliott's praxial method. These methods are among the most prominent in American music education classrooms.

Methodologies and Philosophies

Unlike teachers in other countries, teachers in the United States have significant freedom in their material selections if their students meet the national and state standards of accomplishment for their grade level. Thus, classrooms within the same school may have differing methodologies and philosophies. The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) provides the standards for schools in America. However, individual states may also enforce their own additional criteria. Prominent philosophies utilized in the American music classroom include David J. Elliott's praxial, Bennett Reimer's aesthetic, Thomas A. Regelski's

[54] Mark and Gary, *American Music Education,* pg. 386.

musicianship, and Orff Schulewerk's Orff approach. This study investigates these philosophies in further detail in a subsequent section.

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are the state standards for each subject and grade level in Texas. The TEKS states that music education must begin in elementary school because it establishes a child's foundation in the subject:

> Students are involved in active music-making. They sing, play instruments, and move to music from various cultures. They read, write, and reproduce rhythmic and melodic patterns. Students emerge as independent music-makers and begin to engage in part-work. They learn to listen; focus on what they are listening to; use correct vocabulary; and identify, describe, and categorize myriad sounds. The elementary music foundation also includes learning to create and improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns and identify voices and instruments from various cultures. Students learn to relate music to history and culture and to connect it to other academic disciplines.[55]

Elementary School

In most states, music education begins in elementary school, from pre-kindergarten to grade five. Music educators in elementary schools are often required to teach various musical topics, while middle and high school educators tend to be specialists.[56] Music lessons in elementary schools tend to be titled "General Music." Other standard course titles at the elementary level include "Concert Band," "Choir," and "Orchestra" or "String." While individual lessons and courses in music technology at the elementary level are typically not offered in schools, these extra-curricular activities are available outside of the schools. However, music educators such as David Rosen, a post-doctoral researcher at Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research, argue that grades K-12 should include music

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[55] "Music: Elementary," Fine Arts TEKS, Texas Gateway for Online Resources, accessed on August 10, 2023, https://www.texasgateway.org/resource/music-elementary.

[56] Kenneth Elpus, "The Status of Music Education in the Public School," Give a Note Foundation, 2017, https://www.giveanote.org/media/2017/09/The-Status-of-Music-Education-in-US-Public-Schools-2017_reduced.pdf, pg. 3.

technology to provide a "point of entry for non-trained music students to express their musical sensibilities, without the need for a formal music education."[57] Rosen writes, "We posit that music technology classes serve as an excellent environment for creative development, self-awareness of one's creative process, experiential flow learning, critical thinking skills, and the ability to integrate teacher and group feedback to refine a creative product."[58]

Early in their music education, students learn the concept of a beat, its subdivisions, and rhythm. Students also explore their voices by producing and recognizing high and low sounds. As they gain experience, they learn melodic lines and how to match them vocally and rhythmically through guided practices in chanting, singing, playing, moving, reading, writing, improvising, and creating. The TEKS states that leaving out even one element shortchanges students from learning the multi-faceted discipline of music.[59] Standard instruments in the elementary classroom may include the recorder, piano, xylophone, and boom whackers, which are especially prevalent in an Orff-minded classroom.

The NAfME and the TEKS list strands of musical understanding that form the unifying structure of acceptable music education. According to the TEKS, the four strands of music education are music literacy, creative expression, historical and cultural relevance, and critical evaluation and response.[60] The NAfME subdivisions of music standards are creating,

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[57] David Rosen, Erik Schmidt, and Youngmoo E. Kim, "Utilizing music technology as a model for creativity development in K-12 education," Proceedings of the 9th ACM Conference on Creativity & Cognition (2013): 1, https://dl.acm.org/doi/abs/10.1145/2466627.2466670.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] "Music: Kindergarten," Subchapter A: Elementary, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, last modified August 2019, https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/laws-and-rules/sboe-rules-tac/sboe-tac-currently-in-effect/ch117a.pdf.

performing, responding, and connecting. The NAfME also provides steps for each standard to assist teachers in achieving these goals in the classroom (See Appendix E).

Middle School

Middle school in America comprises grades six, seven, and eight. As students enter middle school, teachers begin to utilize self- and peer-assessments to help students develop, "At the middle school level, teacher-, peer-, and self-assessments help students identify what they have done well, what they can improve, and what strategies may help them make improvements. Thoughtful self-assessment stimulates personal achievement and encourages students to assume responsibility for their learning."[61] First-year middle school students in Texas must select from one of the following courses: General Music 6, Middle School 1 Band, Middle School 1 Choir, Middle School 1 Orchestra, Middle School 1 Instrumental Ensemble, or Middle School 1 Vocal Ensemble.[62] In band settings, directors often expect students to select a primary instrument, including violin, trumpet, piano, flute, tuba, etc.

The four TEKS strands of musical understanding remain the same for middle school. However, their definitions change to match a higher standard. In middle school, students must have a working knowledge of music literacy skills such as rhythmic and tonal terminology, musical forms presented aurally, vocal and body health, symbol identification referring to notation, inner-hearing skills, and clef knowledge.[63] Students also demonstrate creative expression by singing or playing an instrument, alone and in groups; and performing a variety of

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[61] "Music: Middle School," Fine Arts TEKS, Texas Gateway for Online Resources, accessed on August 10, https://www.texasgateway.org/resource/music-middle-school.

[62] "Music: Middle School," Subchapter B: Middle School, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, last modified August 2019, https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/laws-and-rules/sboe-rules-tac/sboe-tac-currently-in-effect/ch117b.pdf.

[63] Ibid.

unison, homophonic, and polyphonic repertoire. The student also explores a varied music repertoire representing various styles and cultures.[64] For Texas' music historical and cultural branches, students perform music from diverse cultures, including American and Texas heritage. They also identify the relationships of music concepts to other academic disciplines, such as the relationship between music and mathematics, literature, history, and the sciences.

Finally, students and teachers often discuss music-related vocations and avocations. Students demonstrate their knowledge in formal and informal performance settings for critical evaluation and response. These performances allow the student to process self-evaluation and personal artistic improvement.[65]

High School

American high school spans four years, from grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve. According to the TEKS, students must fulfill a fine arts requirement to qualify for graduation. Students may select from music levels I, II, III, and IV or music studies courses.[66] These numbered classes do not necessarily refer to grade level but to ability. Thus, music courses may contain students of multiple grades. The TEKS states, "Because students in secondary level performance classes often have differing skill and experience levels, performance expectations are individualized."

Additionally, the difficulty level of each course may vary by year, "For example, each of the four levels of choir has its own lesson plans and materials. As teachers analyze and choose literature, they consider the skills and techniques needed to build student proficiency while making selections that represent a broad range of cultures, time periods, and genres."[67] To assist

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[64] "Music: Middle School."

[65] Ibid.

[66] "Music: High School," Fine Arts TEKS, Texas Gateway for Online Resources, accessed on August 11, https://www.texasgateway.org/resource/music-high-school.

teachers in selecting appropriate repertoire for their classes, these TEKS provides the following questions:

- Will teachers be team teaching?
- Do students' developmental levels vary significantly?
- How much individualized instruction will beginners need?[68]

Unlike elementary and middle school levels, the NAfME does not provide specific lesson goals for music education proficiency levels in high schools. Instead, starting in grade nine, they sort students into three tiers of musical understanding: proficient, accomplished, and advanced. However, the NAfME does provide two categories for students who have decided to specialize in the arts before high school: Novice (typically a grade five student) and Intermediate (typically a grade eight student).

Students in the proficient tier have developed the foundational technical and expressive skills and understandings in an art form necessary to solve problems or prepare assigned repertoire for presentation.[69] With some support from their instructors, they also make appropriate choices and may be prepared for active engagement in their community. They understand art as an essential form of personal realization and well-being and make connections between art form, history, culture, and other learning. The NAfME states that this level of achievement is possible for most students who participated in music courses in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade.

Students at the accomplished level solve problems within the arts based on their particular purpose and interests with minimal teacher assistance.[70] Accomplished level students also

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[67] "Music: High School."

[68] Ibid.

[69] "Appendix A: Descriptors for High School Performance Levels," Proficiency Levels Explanation, NAfME, accessed on August 11, 2023, https://nafme.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Proficiency-Levels-Explanation-Novice-Intermediate-and-High-School-2014-Standards.pdf.

[70] "Appendix A: Descriptors for High School Performance Levels."

conduct research to inform decisions. An accomplished student also creates musical products such as performances and presentations demonstrating technical proficiency, personal communication, and expression.[71] Students must also use their musical ability outside the classroom for personal realization and development. The NAfME states that this level of achievement is attainable by most students who complete a rigorous sequence of high school level courses (or equivalent) beyond the Proficient level.[72]

Students at the Advanced level solve challenging musical problems without supervision. Students resolve these issues based on their interests or specific purposes and engage their creativity and insight to find a solution.[73] Students at this level also participate in either honors or college-level courses or demonstrate the technical and expressive level of proficiency for these courses. In addition, these students act as leaders in their artistic field. The NAfME states that this level of achievement is rigorous and requires an extraordinary effort that surpasses the Accomplished level.[74]

[71] "Appendix A: Descriptors for High School Performance Levels."

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

Comparative Analysis

While this study focuses primarily on the philosophical differences between Japanese and American music education systems, technique and course content differences also exist. For example, Josephine Yang mentions that Japanese students learn solfege differently than American students, "Solfege is taught with the fixed-do system, unlike most American institutions that teach movable-do."[75]

One similarity between American and Japanese teaching methods is the incorporation of performance. American high school music classes typically involve band performances, recitals, etc. Author David J. Elliott states that music is a "performance art." He writes, "Music is an interpretive and social art in which 'people join together in the communal and ritual actions of listening, watching, and participating empathetically as music makers bring forth unique musical events and experiences.'"[76]

Furthermore, music lessons were often movement-based in early American and Japanese education, a technique practiced by Orff and Dalcroze instructors. Authors Heidi Westerlund and Marja-Leena Juntunen write, "Movement involved in music-making also increases so-called bodily knowledge. 'Bodily knowledge' refers to improved knowing in and through the body, which, in turn, has a direct connection to senses and bodily awareness, as well as to abilities, skills, and action."[77] In middle and lower-secondary schools, music education becomes more comprehensive.

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[75] "Appendix A: Descriptors for High School Performance Levels."

[76] Elliott, *Praxial Music Education,* Ch. 4.

[77] David J. Elliot, *Praxial Music Education: Reflections and Dialogues*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), pg. 119.

Methodologies and Philosophies

Despite the common roots of the American and Japanese education systems, the methodologies and philosophies have diverged over years of development, cultural influence, and political impact. Nevertheless, underlying commonalities remain in the two school systems' curriculum and music education standards. This study examined the practices of the Japanese music education system. It compared them to that of the American music education system, namely the praxial and aesthetic philosophies utilized in many classrooms.

First, Japanese music education classrooms emphasize world music, introducing students not only to traditional Japanese genres but also to genres from other Asian and Western countries. Introductions to music of other Asian and Western cultures begin in elementary school. Viktor Granström, Orchestra Manager, Conductor, Composer, and Technical Sound Designer, writes in his study on Japanese music education, "The focus is seemingly that individual student should be able to assess themes within music and to be able to relate these themes with not only themes from their own country but also other countries and their culture to further allow the student to expand not only their musical knowledge but cultural and historical knowledge as well."[78]

Since 2008, the MEXT required all elementary students to take an ungraded English class once a week, beginning in fifth and sixth grade. Initially, the goal was not to teach the students English but to introduce "international awareness."[79] However, in 2011, the government altered this objective to encourage all elementary students to "communicate with English-speaking

[78] Granström, "Music Education in Japan," pg. 13.

[79] Atsuko Ikegashira, Yumi Matsumoto, Yoshiko Morita, "English Education in Japan: From Kindergarten to University," *Reinelt R. Teaching Into the Next Decade 2nd Ed.* (2009): 21, http://web.iec.ehime-u.ac.jp/reinelt/raineruto1/02RD2.pdf.

people."[80] In contrast, foreign language studies typically begin in middle or high school in the United States. Researchers are noticing a "steep decline" in foreign language studies at the college level, "At the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, for instance, officials announced plans to eliminate thirteen majors– including French, German, and Spanish – as part of an effort to cut costs."[81] The noticeable difference between foreign language incorporation at the elementary level mirrors American school systems' lack of ethnomusicology/world music classes.

The MEXT requires using traditional and non-traditional songs in the classroom, starting as early as primary school, for application in music games. In America, despite the standards of the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), world music incorporation is minimal. In 1972, the NASM revised its criteria to "include a non-Western requirement for programs leading to a baccalaureate degree in music."[82] This requirement only applies to programs leading into a college-level course; it does not address elementary or even high school-level programs. Portia K. Maultsby, an American ethnomusicologist and Professor at Indiana University Bloomington, notes that a few curricular changes have occurred since the NASM's revision. However, many K-12 and college music programs continue to exclude serious studies of American music traditions and most non-Western world traditions.[83] Maultsby writes that the reasons for these exclusions include:

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[80] Ikegashira et al, "English Education in Japan," in *Teaching Into the Next Decade,* 21.

[81] Kathleen Stein-Smith, "Foreign Language Classes Becoming More Scarce," American Academy of Arts & Sciences, February 6, 2019, https://www.amacad.org/news/foreign-language-classes-becoming-more-scarce.

[82] "Toward a Multi-Cultural Music Education Curriculum."

[83] Ibid.

1. Non-Western musics have not entered the curriculum of music education programs in colleges and universities.
2. Our artistic evaluation of non-Western musics often reflects the aesthetic standards of Western Europe rather than those of the producing culture.
3. Educators think a multicultural approach to education would require more classroom time and money.[84]

Life enrichment philosophies also differ between Japanese and American music educators. Kitayama provides an example of the acknowledgment of music's life enrichment qualities in the current COS, "This 'Tentative Course of Study' stated, essentially, that the main objective of music education was to cultivate aesthetic sentiments and fertile human minds by appreciating the beauty of music."[85] Comparatively, David J. Elliott, author of *Music Matters, 2nd Edition*, states, "There's no qualitative, quantitative, or pragmatic evidence to support the theoretical claim that music listening, music making, or school music 'educates feelings.'"[86]

While there is much debate circling music education philosophies in American classrooms, most educators agree that music enriches students' lives, one way or another, "Every subject worthy of study, including music, embodies a diversity of values, all deserving our attention. Some of the values seem so important as to warrant our deepest devotion. One task of a philosophy of music education is to illuminate what those might be, so that in pursuing them, our effects on our students can be as beneficial as music is capable of making them."[87]

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[84] Maultsby, "Toward a Multi-Cultural Music Education."

[85] Kitayama, "Historical Changes," 34.

[86] Elliot and Silverman, *Music Matters, 2nd Edition,* Ch. 2.

[87] Reimer, *Seeking the Significance of Music Education,* Ch. 1A.

> The MEXT website lists the first three main objectives of the Japanese music curriculum:
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> 1. To cultivate an interest in and respect for sound and music, and to foster an attitude of brightening and enriching one's life through music, by experiencing the joy of musical activities.
> 2. To perceive the richness and joy of various types of musical expression, acquire basic skills for music-making, and foster the ability to make music in a creative and original manner.
> 3. To savor the value and beauty of various types of music and foster a wide-ranging and independent ability for appraising.[88]

These objectives emulate the aesthetic benefits of music. Bennett Reimer, author of *Seeking the Significance of Music Education,* writes that according to the aesthetic philosophy, music expresses emotion, "art transcends referential content through its form and that that transcendence yields meanings 'deeper and more basic' than the meanings of the content it incorporates, meanings specifically and characteristically 'aesthetic.'"[89] However, Japanese music philosophies are not strictly aesthetic. The MEXT uses terms such as "music-making," and "various types of music."

The TEKS also incorporates the term "music-making" in the same way as David Elliott's praxial method of music education. Reimer writes, "praxialism emphasizes the process—the doing, the acting, the creating involved in music—as being the essence of music."[90] The praxial philosophy uses the term primarily as a verb: "musicing."[91] Like their application of "music-making," the TEKS's requirements regularly reflect praxial music education philosophies. Elliott describes the praxial method of music education compared to the aesthetic method. In chapter 3,

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[88] "Chūgakkō gakushū shidō yōryō kaisetsu," Education, MEXT, accessed on August 2, 2015, http://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/micro_detail/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2011/01/05/1234912_007.pdf.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Reimer, *Seeking the Significance of Music Education,* pg. 82.

[91] Ibid.

he writes, “Musical praxialism ‘combines an interest in aesthetic appreciation with an interest in the productive aspect of artistic practice and the cultural (including extra-aesthetic) contexts in which the arts are created, deployed and enjoyed.’”[92]

While the MEXT music education standards reflect more aesthetic principles and American standards reflect praxial principles, the results do not always reflect the intention. Frank B. Abdoo, a music educator with a degree from the University of Southern California, examines the differences between the American and Japanese music education systems. Abdoo writes, “It has moved from its American beginnings toward a more intellectual or technical approach, especially in the area of Western music, whereas U.S. programs have moved toward a more creative approach.”[93]

In the early stages of music education, aesthetic qualities were rarely considered or appreciated. Before the Japanese Emperor invited Mason to his country, the Japanese government used music education primarily for non-musical purposes. Takeshi writes, “Historically, however, the aesthetic proposition of music education has not necessarily been accepted by music educators in Japan. Before World War I, many Japanese music educators focused on non-musical values for teaching music, such as spiritual elevation or loyalty and patriotism. The lyrics of textbooks reflected the Japanese governmental attitudes of duty, obligation, morality, and patriotism.”[94]

Similarly, in 19th century America, pragmatic administrators were not interested in aesthetic values. Mark and Gary state, “As the nation began to forge a business society, school

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[92] Elliott, *Praxial Music Education,* Ch. 3.

[93] Abdoo, “Music Education in Japan,” 56.

[94] Takeshi, “A Comparative Study,” 52.

boards, and administrators began to favor subjects that reflected new mechanization."[95] It was not until music education pioneers such as Mason emphasized the importance of an aesthetic education.

Abdoo's observations of the countries' education practices do not reflect their standards. While Japanese music education standards seem to advocate for the aesthetic, life-enriching appeals of music, American standards focus more on milestone achievements. Abdoo notes that many Japanese music educators believe the strict standardization of music education is partially at fault for the lack of creative freedom:

> Related to the lack of a creative approach in music education is the process of textbook selection and standardization. Every music educator interviewed at the elementary, secondary, and university levels agreed that government textbook standardization was a negative factor. Every administrator held the opposite view and stated further that the only way quality could be maintained was through this standardized approach.[96]

Furthermore, Kitayama writes, "They should reconsider the prospects for the future of Japanese music education by reaffirming the central purpose of music education: cultivation of aesthetics through an appreciation of the beauty of music."[97] Furthermore, Wieczorek states, "An ongoing issue is student creativity, flexibility, or individual expression. Critical thinking is not a concept that has been highly valued in Japan. Japanese students are regimented and geared toward perseverance and self-discipline."[98] However, researcher Daniel M. Stamm disagrees with the widely maintained "illusion of rigor" regarding Japanese education:

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[95] Mark and Gary, *American Music Education,* pg. 186.

[96] Abdoo, "Music Education in Japan," 56.

[97] Kitayama, "Historical Changes," 36.

[98] Wieczorek, "Comparative Analysis," 105.

> The reality is, however, that rigor plays no part. For the Japanese, the preparation for geometry in the eighth grade began in the first grade and continued at levels appropriate for the students' developmental stages throughout elementary school. Not surprisingly, they outperformed the U.S. in the fourth grade, too, ranking 3rd against our 12th place. In the 8th grade, the rankings were 3rd and 28th, respectively. There is clearly a difference between our systems, but it has nothing to do with rigor.[99]

Stamm argues that despite the widespread belief that Japanese classrooms are overly unforgiving, it is for the opposite reason that these classrooms have more success. Stamm presents two core methodologies in Japanese classrooms that aid in the success of their teachings: 1) a marked lack of pressure on students during their classes and 2) frequent, substantial periods of vigorous physical activity between classes.[100] In addition, these teaching methods account for the learning needs of all children, "This is reflected in the number of pages of text covered in a period, which may range from one half to one page in the first grade, to from one to one and a half pages from grades two through six (MCLSG, 2009). This strikingly low rate is intended to ensure the understanding of all students, who are taught in mixed ability classrooms using whole class instruction."[101]

In contrast, the American education system does not ensure a proper music education for all students. Wieczorek writes, "However, the nation's reading literacy rate, defined as students' abilities to 'understand complex texts, evaluate information and build hypotheses, and draw on specialized knowledge,' is low compared to other developed countries, at 86 to 98 percent of the population over age fifteen, and its science and mathematics proficiency also ranks below average."[102] In 2002, President George W. Bush promoted the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

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[99] Daniel M. Stamm, "Illusion of Rigor," *Nonpartisan Education Review* 14, no. 4 (2018): 3-4, https://www.nonpartisaneducation.org/Review/Essays/v14n4.htm.

[100] Ibid., pg. 4.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Wieczorek, "Comparative Analysis," 100-101.

to help create fair education opportunities for all children.[103] According to Mark and Gary, the NCLB "required states to create and implement accountability standards and to determine educational success by testing students in curricular areas identified as 'core subjects.'"[104] While the NCLB identified the arts as a core subject, the high-stakes testing in reading and mathematics forced administrators to emphasize preparing students for testing in those areas. Thus, time was extracted from other subjects, mostly music, to prepare.[105]

An Integrated Approach: The Suzuki Method

Shinichi Suzuki, the creator of the world-renowned music education methodology, the Suzuki method, states, "Musical ability is not an inborn talent but an ability which can be developed. Any child who is properly trained can develop musical ability, just as all children develop the ability to speak their mother tongue. The potential of every child is unlimited."[106] Utilized since the twentieth century, the Suzuki is a well-rounded, hands-on approach to teaching music. Furthermore, according to the Talent Education Research Institute, approximately 400,000 children worldwide are learning to play music via the Suzuki method.[107] Especially prominent in United States music education classrooms since the 1950s, the Suzuki method provides an example of the possibilities of integrating Japanese music education methods into American classrooms.

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[103] Mark and Gary, *American Music Education*, pg. 452.

[104] Ibid., pgs. 452-453.

[105] Ibid., pg. 453.

[106] "About the Suzuki Method."

[107] Hotta, *Suzuki: The Man and His Dream,* 1.

The History of The Suzuki Method

The Suzuki Method, or *Talent Education*, was formulated by Shinichi Suzuki, son of the first Japanese violinmaker, "Born in 1898, Suzuki studied the violin for some years before deciding to go to Berlin in the 1920s for further preparation."[108] While modern-day educators implement the Suzuki method for teaching a multitude of instruments, including piano, violin, and cello, Suzuki's original goal was not to create professional musicians. Alternatively, Suzuki's goal centered on aestheticism, "This method is not education of the violin. It is education by the violin."[109] Suzuki's wish was to help children reach their full potential, "Dr. Suzuki's goal was not simply to develop professional musicians, but to nurture loving human beings and help develop each child's character through the study of music."[110]

Suzuki modeled his music education method after his mother-tongue theory. While studying in Berlin and struggling to learn German, Suzuki realized that all children quickly learn their mother tongue, no matter how complicated the language. He also noted a few fundamental techniques commonly applied to teach children to speak, "They learn to speak by listening, primarily to their parents and caregivers, and then imitating. If a child's efforts to speak and increase vocabulary meet with praise and positive reinforcement, the learning process is facilitated. Thus, very young children acquire huge vocabularies seemingly without effort."[111] Suzuki applied these same theories to music education, which led to the development of his mother tongue theory.

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[108] "The Suzuki Method," Research, University of Wisconsin, https://www3.uwsp.edu/suzuki/Documents/research/handbook/Method.pdf.

[109] Hotta, *Suzuki: The Man and His Dream,* 2.

[110] "About the Suzuki Method."

[111] "The Suzuki Method."

Since its formulation, the Suzuki method has undergone modifications, and there are a few weaknesses that researchers have since refined. A few initial weaknesses/possible hindrances of the early Suzuki method are as follows:

- "Ineffective instruction in reading was a weakness of the early Suzuki movement in the U.S.."[112]
- "Parents may have a difficult time attending lessons with their children."[113]
- "Parents practicing the instrument with children may feel overwhelmed."[114]
- "Focusing on large group lessons and no choice of repertoire for learners hinder individual differences and choices."[115]

An Overview of the Suzuki Method

The core principles and practices of the Suzuki method are as follows:

1. Daily listening followed by imitation.
2. Constant repetition.
3. Praise and encouragement.
4. Children should begin learning as early as possible.[116]

Along with these core principles, Suzuki developed instruction books. However, unlike most educational curricula, Suzuki's instruction books do not correspond to a specific grade level. They apply to any age and level of proficiency, making it easy for children and adults to learn music. In total, there are ten Suzuki violin books. The books' content includes technique training, exercises, timing, songs, and more.[117]

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[112] Laurie Niles, "How Suzuki Changed the Landscape," Violinist.com, March 9, 2017, https://www.violinist.com/blog/laurie/20173/21035/.

[113] Akutsu, "Changes after Suzuki," 20.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

[116] "The Suzuki Method".

[117] Paula E. Bird, "The Suzuki Pathway: Books 1-10 General Overview," Teach Suzuki, December 30, 2011, http://teachsuzuki.blogspot.com/2011/12/suzuki-pathway-books-1-10-general.html.

A unique aspect of the Suzuki method is its emphasis on listening and imitation. Suzuki recommends delayed reading when teaching children so that their ear develops first, "Just as young children are not expected to be able to read their language before they speak it, Suzuki children are not asked to read music before they have already listened to and can accurately play a fairly extensive repertory of pieces."[118] Furthermore, the curriculum encourages younger/beginner musicians to observe the practices and performances of older/more experienced musicians. The Suzuki method also seeks to teach children in a well-rounded way by incorporating musical games, holding recitals, involving parents in the child's education, and teaching rhythm through experimental practice and movement.[119]

Taichi Akutsu, a Japanese violinist, teacher, and researcher of music education and a lecturer at Seisa University and Shujitsu University, notes the fluidity of Suzuki's lessons in his study, "In addition, Suzuki used more improvisation in teaching as he changed rhythms and let students imitate, or even composed a melody and let children follow after him as imitation. Suzuki also improvised his lessons. He changed plans reflectively as he saw children's responses and adapted follow-up activities. In addition, Suzuki's sense of humor was a key part of the lessons."[120] The unpredictability of Suzuki's lessons greatly contrasts the structure of Japanese classrooms, which are commonly "highly structured."[121]

Within the Suzuki method, there are four models that educators can implement in single and mixed-instrument environments, "All successful models embrace the Suzuki philosophy and

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[118] "The Suzuki Method".

[119] Ibid.

[120] Akutsu, "Changes After Suzuki," 34.

[121] Stamm, "Illusion of Rigor," pg. 4.

foster a positive learning environment for every child."[122] These four models and some of their core attributes are as follows:

1. Traditional Suzuki: Recommended for young children. This model includes private and group lessons, daily practice, and delayed music reading.[123]
2. Modified Suzuki with Like Instrument Classes: Parents become less involved in classes, home listening is encouraged, and music reading is postponed.[124]
3. Modified Suzuki in Mixed Instrument Classes: Students learn repertoire in the same key, D Major, for most of Vol. 1, and music reading is taught separately.[125]
4. Suzuki Philosophy Mastery: Recommended for the older beginner (sixth-grade orchestra) but can be applied in various settings. Parents are not involved in lessons, students must memorize techniques before moving on to the next, and music reading is postponed.[126]

Finally, as previously mentioned, the purpose of the Suzuki method is "to provide a happy way to foster development of the 'total' child-and not to produce child musical 'prodigies.'"[127] The University of Wisconsin notes that while there is no documentation of a "Suzuki-type" musician, the results of a Suzuki education are prevalent, "certainly a child who has grown up surrounded by love and some of the world's most beautiful music would stand a very great chance of becoming a well-rounded, compassionate, intelligent and peace-loving human being."[128]

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[122] "Suzuki in the Schools," The Suzuki Twinkler, Suzuki Association of the Americas, Inc. 1998, https://suzukiassociation.org/about/suzuki-method/.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

[127] "The Suzuki Method".

[128] Ibid.

The Suzuki Method Versus American Music Education Methods

There are two foundational philosophies of music education in America: the praxial method, developed by David J. Elliott, which emphasizes an education that incorporates the political, cultural, and social implications of music, and the aesthetic method, by Bennett Reimer, which encourages a pure enjoyment experience, separate from any worldly concerns. However, Social-Emotional Learning, a relatively new theory in music education, has grown in popularity in the United States, resulting in a wave of research exploring its effectiveness in schools.

The Praxial Method

David J. Elliott, author of *Praxial Music Education,* provides a brief overview of his method of music education in the first chapter of his book. He writes, "The praxial philosophy urges a comprehensive and reflective approach to music teaching and learning."[129] The praxial philosophy of music education relies on two main ideas: the nature of music education depends on the nature of music, and the significance of music education depends on the significance of music in human life.[130] Additionally, the praxial method incorporates many types of interactions with music, including performing, listening, improvising, composing, arranging, conducting, and listening to recordings/live performances.[131] Elliott notes that listening to recorded music (CDs, audio tapes, etc.) and conversations about music are effective in music education but not a central component.[132]

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[129] Elliott, *Praxial Music Education,* Ch. 1.

[130] Ibid.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Ibid.

Finally, Elliott points out some of the potential flaws of praxialism. Since the praxial method of music education focuses on music's social, moral, and political roles, it creates a potentially "wishy-washy" philosophy.[133] Elliott states:

> The meanings and values of musical practices are plural, historically emergent, unstable, socially relative, and contextually specific. Given the problematic status of universal claims about music's nature and value, praxialism seems to leave us with ideas that are tentative and provisional and with value claims that are changeable and perhaps ever-changing.[134]

The Aesthetic Method

In contrast, the defining characteristic of aesthetic education is that music expresses emotion, "Art transcends referential content through its form and that that transcendence yields meanings 'deeper and more basic' than the meanings of the content it incorporates, meanings specifically and characteristically 'aesthetic.'"[135] The philosophical agenda for aesthetic education remains constant while its contents continuously evolve, "Aesthetic education is an attempt to articulate a philosophical orientation that can be both temporally pertinent and progressively developmental."[136]

The aesthetic philosophy defines two different areas of music learning: "aesthetic" and "extra-aesthetic." These classifications attempt to incorporate some of the components of the praxial method of music education, "They endeavor to show that music is useful and valuable while maintaining a relatively strict boundary between properly musical value and value that is extra-aesthetic and therefore extra-musical."[137] These "extra-musical" values resemble praxial

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[133] Elliott, *Praxial Music Education,* Ch. 3.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Reimer, *Seeking the Significance,* Ch. 2.

[136] Ibid.

[137] Ibid.

beliefs. Finally, Thomas A. Regelski, a former professor of music at the State University of New York, summarizes a few characteristics of the aesthetic philosophy:

> An aesthetic distance must, therefore, be maintained that separates the 'pure' aesthetic experience of musical contemplation from any other so-called 'extrinsic' functions (such as worship) or personal uses (such as amateur recreation). Instead, the 'disinterestedness' (i.e., Kant's well-known "purposiveness without purpose") of aesthetic meaning is supposed to transcend any particular time, place, or person in favor of universal meanings of a metaphysical or symbolic kind.[138]

Social-Emotional Learning

National University in San Diego, California, defines social-emotional learning (SEL) as "a methodology that helps students of all ages to better comprehend their emotions, to feel those emotions fully, and demonstrate empathy for others. These learned behaviors are then used to help students make positive, responsible decisions; create frameworks to achieve their goals, and build positive relationships with others."[139] As of 2015, SEL programs operate in thousands of schools across the United States and other countries worldwide.[140] However, despite the recent rise in SEL popularity, many researchers believe the technique is detrimental to a student's educational growth, "At its best, SEL is something of a secular character education stripped of virtue."[141]

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[138] Regelski, "Implications," 66.

[139] "What is Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)?: Why It Matters," Blog, National University, published August 17, 2022, https://www.nu.edu/blog/social-emotional-learning-sel-why-it-matters-for-educators/#:~:text=Broadly%20speaking%2C%20social%20and%20emotional,them%20to%20succeed%20in%20school.

[140] Roger P. Weissberg et al., "Social and Emotional Learning: Past, Present, and Future" in *Handbook of Social and Emotional Learning: Research and Practice* (New York City: The Guilford Press, 2015), pg. 3.

[141] Daniel Buck, "Social-Emotional Learning is a Dangerous Fad," The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal, May 15, 2023, https://www.jamesgmartin.center/2023/05/social-emotional-learning-is-a-dangerous-fad/.

Collaborative for Academic Social-Emotional Learning (CASEL), established in 1994, is a "multidisciplinary network that includes researchers, educators, practitioners, and child advocates across the country who are passionately committed to SEL for all students."[142] CASEL lists three components often found in SEL-focused classrooms. First, a supportive classroom climate helps students feel "emotionally safe, part of a community of learners, motivated, and challenged."[143] Second, integration of SEL into academic instruction "weaves academic learning with opportunities for students to practice and reflect on social and emotional competencies, such as perspective-taking and developing a growth mindset."[144] Finally, explicit SEL instruction "provides consistent opportunities to cultivate, practice, and reflect on social and emotional competencies in ways that are developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive."[145]

CASEL reported a positive response from a study surrounding a sample group of 213 students in SEL schools. A follow-up analysis revealed similar results 18 years later, regardless of the student's race, socioeconomic background, or school location.[146] The results demonstrated:

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[142] "About CASEL," About Us, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), 2024, https://casel.org/about-us/.

[143] "SEL in the Classroom," Systematic Implementation, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), 2024, https://casel.org/about-us/.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Ibid.

[146] Scott N. Edgar, "Music Education and Social-Emotional Learning," NAfME Blog, September 16, 2019, https://nafme.org/blog/music-education-social-emotional-learning/.

- Better academic performance: achievement scores an average of 11 percentile points higher than students who did not receive systematic SEL instruction.
- Improved attitudes and behaviors: greater motivation to learn, deeper commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behavior.
- Fewer negative behaviors: decreased disruptive behaviors, aggression, delinquent acts, and disciplinary referrals.
- Reduced emotional distress: fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal.[147]

However, despite the positive results yielded from previous SEL-based studies, some educators believe that SEL is a "dangerous fad" that values students' subjective beliefs rather than teaching them "prudence, temperance, and courage."[148]

Daniel Buck, an educator and editor-in-chief of the Chalkboard Review, believes that SEL techniques, at their worst, allow opportunities for educators to influence their students according to their personal beliefs and agendas, including political opinions.[149] Buck writes, "Who would oppose teaching children basic emotional skills? As such, it acts as something of a rubber stamp, justifying whatever dream-list progressive educators want. Everything from eliminating math and traditional grading to providing lessons on gender identity and privilege comes under the banner of SEL."[150] Finally, Buck also observes a "disintegration of tradition and knowledge" in educational institutions, including K-12 classrooms and universities, leaving behind "vague, wispy, insubstantial goals," such as SEL.[151]

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[147] "SEL in the Classroom."

[148] Buck, "Social-Emotional Learning is a Dangerous Fad."

[149] Ibid.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid.

SEL techniques resemble Bennett Reimer's aesthetic method of music education. Over the years, aesthetic method researchers have amended the techniques. These amendments include "aesthetic cognitivism" (the mindful nature of musical experience) and "expressive aesthetic cognitivism" (stressing feeling, or "heart," and mind).[152] The aesthetic philosophy also defines two different areas of music learning: "aesthetic" and "extra-aesthetic," which incorporate components of the praxial method of music education by David J. Elliott, "They endeavor to show that music is useful and valuable while maintaining a relatively strict boundary between properly musical value and value that is extra-aesthetic and therefore extramusical."[153]

The praxial method of music education focuses on course content, tradition, and goal setting. In contrast, the aesthetic method encourages a musical environment without any influence outside the individual musician's experience. Similarly, SEL educators emphasize a student's emotional experience and personal values, whereas its disputers argue quality, objective, and ethical teachings are lost. Some K-12 music educators do not consider traditional topics such as classical music observation, analytical techniques, advanced music theory, and foundational keyboard skills essential due to the influx of music technology.

An Amalgamation: The Suzuki Method

The Suzuki method is a middle-ground between the praxial and aesthetic methods of music education, combining the strengths of both and incorporating the SEL theory's positive aspects. Elliott acknowledges that a weakness of his praxial method is its dependence on social relevancy. The Suzuki method maintains a mostly static teaching method, separate from social implications. However, while the Suzuki books typically comprise classically styled songs, the

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[152] David J. Elliott, *Praxial Music Education,* (Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005)*,* Ch. 3.

[153] Ibid.

Suzuki method also encourages students to listen to world music, which stems from Japanese philosophies. Conversely, the aesthetic method of music education offers minimal structure, focused primarily on providing students with a "pure" musical experience.

Similarly, in SEL, hermeneutic lessons are highly encouraged, often trumping traditional teaching techniques, creating a weak, opinion-based curriculum, "All Suzuki students follow the same sequence and choice of musical materials for their particular instrument."[154] The Suzuki method encourages all types of musical engagement, including listening, interacting, mimicking, and more, allowing for creative expression but maintaining a solid, reliable course for all students, "Suzuki teachers utilize creative and imaginative strategies in their teaching methods. They incorporate musical games, hold recitals for groups of stuffed animals, teach rhythm and movement classes, and use many other venues to help their students and parents enjoy musical study."[155]

Integrating elements of the Suzuki method and other Japanese music education techniques into American classrooms will benefit students and teachers alike. One example of this integration includes taking the strength of the praxial method, learning to read sheet music from the start, and taking Suzuki's principle of parent involvement. A student could learn to read sheet music in class and gain help and instruction from their parents. Thus, learning would occur not only in the classroom but at home as well. Finally, the student could end their evening with a "pure" or "aesthetic" listening experience. Before bed, a child could listen to their favorite songs: classical, worship, or otherwise.

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[154] "The Suzuki Method."

[155] Ibid.

Scott N. Edgar, a National Conference Presenter for the NAfME, has identified five core competencies that educators can apply in the classrooms: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.[156] In the music classroom, educators help students develop these skills by encouraging students to establish their own musical goals, devise solutions for individual or group errors, navigate performance anxiety, and understand the power of music for social change.[157] The Suzuki method also accounts for the social aspect of music education: "The constant playing in recitals, right from the beginning of study, has the additional benefit of providing opportunities to gain poise and confidence in supportive performance situations."[158]

Furthermore, Elliott notes the importance of students setting their own musical goals, "It is important to remember that the praxial philosophy encompasses all manner of participation—listening, composing, improvising, arranging, performing, and conducting—as music making situated in the mainstream of one's own experiences."[159] In terms of assessing students' abilities, Elliott suggests crafting a musical process folio, "The musical process folio is intended to record the development of each student's musical understanding in a variety of ways over an extended period of time. The folio is a collection of musical projects-in-process, musical creations completed to date, and feedback related to these processes and products."[160] These musical folios are less focused on cramming and regurgitating information and more on developing a relationship between student and teacher to properly evaluate individual students',

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[156] "What is Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)?"

[157] Edgar, "Music Education and Social-Emotional Learning."

[158] "The Suzuki Method."

[159] Elliott, *Praxial Music Education,* Ch. 14.

[160] Elliott and Silverman, *Music Matters*, Ch. 13.

"goals, strengths, weaknesses, fears, hopes, and so forth."[161] According to Elliott, musical folios may include the following, all of which align with Suzuki's ideas for student evaluation as well:

1. Audio and video recordings of efforts in group rehearsals and individual practice.
2. Recordings of solo, small group, and large group performances during and outside of class time.
3. Self-evaluations of practice sessions, performances, compositions, etc.
4. Plans and drafts of compositions or arrangements.
5. Goals for future rehearsals.
6. Written or recorded feedback from teachers, peers, and outside advisors.[162]

Psalm 150:1-6 and Ephesians 5:19 instruct God's people to worship Him in all circumstances, in many ways. Some may worship through dance, some through song, and some through speaking His truth. All these ways, and those addressed in the Bible, are worthy ways of worship. This same philosophy is seen within a music classroom and through a musical folio.

Contrasting Views

Despite the popularity of the Suzuki method, some educators recognize its limitations. Chris Tolbert, the founder of Tolbert Music, explains why he is not certified as a Suzuki instructor. In his article, he presents the strengths and weaknesses of the Suzuki method. Some possible drawbacks of the technique include parent involvement, delayed music reading, and other teaching methods.[163] For example, one of the most infamous aspects of the Suzuki method is the principle that children should not learn to read sheet music until later in their education, "But don't forget that there is an inherent flaw in this 'soul' of the Suzuki method - delayed reading. The problem generally surfaces after several years into the student's learning. While rote

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[161] Elliott and Silverman, *Music Matters*, Ch. 13.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Chris Tolbert, "Why I Am Not Suzuki Certified (The Science, Philosophy, and Practicality of the Suzuki Method)," Tolbert Music, August 17, 2021, https://www.tolbertmusic.net/blog/2021/8/17/why-i-am-not-suzuki-certified-the-science-philosophy-and-practicality-of-the-suzuki-method.

learning and learning 'by ear' are extremely effective ways to get students to perform basic musical patterns, when it comes to more difficult passages, we have to rely on reading."[164]

Summary

Researchers have found that despite the common roots of the American and Japanese education systems, the methodologies and philosophies have diverged over years of development, cultural influence, and political impact. Nevertheless, underlying commonalities remain in the two school systems' curriculum and music education standards. The praxial, aesthetic, Orff, and SEL philosophies of music education, which are prominent in the American school system, reflect similar principles in the Japanese music education system. However, due to the common materials utilized in Japanese classrooms, researchers observe a lack of creative opportunities for students. In contrast, American classrooms focus too heavily on music appreciation, so musical subjects such as theory and technique are not refined upon graduation.

Education in America is provided mainly by the government. In elementary and middle schools, curricula, funding, teaching, and other policies are set through locally elected school boards with jurisdiction over the school districts.[165] The states devise educational standards and standardized testing decisions through the acts of their legislatures and governors, along with their state departments of education. Education in Japan is a national, prefectural (provincial), and municipal responsibility. The MEXT oversees dozens of internal study groups that evaluate education methods and provide guidance, advice, and funding to the prefectural governments based on research from the National Council on Education Reforms.[166]

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[164] Tolbert, "Why I Am Not Suzuki Certified."

[165] Wieczorek, "Comparative Analysis," 100.

[166] Ibid.

In both countries, music education begins at a young age. However, in America, music is considered an extra-curricular activity until the second year of college.[167] In Japan, students can attend a specialized school at the beginning of their upper-secondary education. Craig C. Wiecorek states, "Generally, U.S. high school students take a broad variety of classes without special emphasis. If academic content in Japanese schools is 'narrow and deep' in understanding, its U.S. counterpart is 'wide and shallow' in content dissemination."[168] Researchers have observed the downfalls and positives of the Japanese and American music education methodologies and philosophies. Still, it would be irrational to trade one philosophy for another. Instead, music educators should learn from each other and take what they have learned to better the experiences of their students.

Ultimately, both cultures have similar goals: to enrich, inspire, and grow their music students. Music education should be available to all, regardless of the pre-existing talent, monetary funds, or background. Psalm 95:2 reads, "Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song."

However, minimal research is available regarding the similarities, differences, and possibilities of integrating Japanese and American schools' methodologies, philosophies, and curricula. While scholarly sources that analyze American and Japanese music education techniques are available, there is a gap in the literature comparing the two and opening a discussion about how educators may seek to combine such techniques, including, but not limited to, the Suzuki method, the praxial method, and COS curriculum. Furthermore, in addition to the

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[167] Wieczorek, "Comparative Analysis," 105.

[168] Ibid.

possibilities of an integrated curriculum, no modern studies explore the effects of these education systems on their educators and students. This study will examine the experiences of both Japanese and American music students and teachers to determine the possible effects and benefits of an education system that incorporates philosophies and methodologies from both. Romans 12:16 instructs its readers to live peacefully with one another, "Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited."

There are many different opinions on the methods teachers use in music education. One's worldview may also impact selected education methods. Having a Christian worldview as a teacher can significantly affect which music education method they choose since music is a form of worship. A worldview is a perspective through which one ascertains their surroundings, often shaped by culture, experiences, and background. Maintaining a Christian worldview means attempting to perceive the world as God would. For example, selecting to perceive each other through God's perspective includes loving others as brothers and sisters in Christ.

The definition of worship is very similar. In his book *Real Worship*, author Warren W. Wiersbe writes, "Worship is the response of all that we are to all that God is and does."[169] Maintaining a Christian worldview is a response to what God has taught through the Bible and one's experiences as a Christian. Wiersbe also states, "True worship is balanced and involves the mind, the emotions, and the will. It must be intelligent; it must reach deep within and be motivated by love; and it must lead to obedient actions that glorify God."[170] Maintaining a Christian worldview involves not just the mind and how one sees the world but also how one

[169] Wiersbe, *Real Worship,* pg. 13.

[170] Ibid.

reacts to circumstances around them. Possessing a Christian worldview, like worship, is a lifestyle.

The four principles of worship, as provided by Vernon Whaley, are the wonder, work, wisdom, and wishes of God.[171] Promoting a Christian worldview starts with the fascination with the wonder of God, which includes performing God's work, teaching God's wisdom, and allowing Christians to accomplish the wishes of God. Thus, the Christian worldview wonderfully reflects the principles of worship. "Just as dawn is an expected part of our life cycle, worship is also to be a part. God expects it as surely as we expect the sun to rise. All day, every day, we are to work for Him and, along the way, worship."[172]

The Japanese and American music education methods possess qualities that align with a Christian worldview. Japanese methods emphasize a well-rounded, rigorous education, while American methods (specifically, the aesthetic method) emphasize the feelings music can elicit. The worship of God and, similarly, a Christian worldview contain both characteristics. One aspect of the Christian life includes learning and studying God's Word; another urges Christians to bask in the light of worship. Ecclesiastes 3:1 states, "There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens."

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[171] Vernon Whaley, *Called to Worship,* 2009. Liberty University Online Bookshelf. Retrieved from: https://libertyonline.vitalsource.com/#/books/9781418580230/cfi/6/8[;vnd.vst.idref=Whal_ISBN978141851958, Ch. 1.

[172] Ibid.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This study investigated the effects and differences between Japanese and American music education methodologies in terms of teaching music literacy through foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies. It utilized a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological research approach. Additionally, the study examined the effects of Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies through data collection and qualitative interviews conducted with nine participants whose music education consisted of these elements.

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological research approach. David J. Creswell defines qualitative research as "an approach for exploring and understanding the meanings individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem."[1] This study examined the issue of music education in American schools. In 1986, the MENC recommended that schools implement comprehensive music education programs at all levels. Nevertheless, even in the 21st century, music education is not considered integral in students' curricula in American schools. Therefore, this study examined the issue of music education regarding American and Japanese culture. Little work has explored how American and Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies differ and how educators may seek to combine them.

This qualitative study conducted a hermeneutic phenomenological research design. Clark Moustakas, author of the book, *Phenomenological Research Methods,* writes on the significance of this design, especially within the field of the arts, "This interrelationship—the direct conscious description of experience and the underlying dynamics or structures that account for the

[1] Creswell, *Research Design,* Ch. 1.

experience—provides a central meaning and unity that enables one to understand the substance and essence of the experience."[2] The "experience" to be explored is the music education experience of students in American and Japanese classrooms. In addition to this characteristic of the phenomenological design, the hermeneutic design included personal experiences in the study. According to Doris Guillen, a hermeneutic design is especially effective in the study of education, students, and educators:

> Ayala (2008) stated that the hermeneutical phenomenology is a procedure that leads the educational agents to reflect on their personal experience and professional work in order to analyze the essential aspects of this experience, giving them the required sense and importance to these phenomena. Aguirre and Jaramillo (2012) pointed out that the "phenomenology favors the understanding of the school realities, emphasizing the experience of the educational process representatives."[3]

Participants and Settings

Population

Due to the nature of the study, it required two unique populations. The study's two populations were American and Japanese music students and educators. The research included data collected from American and Japanese music students and educators no younger than sixteen to ensure the subject "understands the risks and benefits of his or her participation and can make a voluntary decision if adequate information is provided."[4] While location does not guarantee any ethnicity, the population primarily consisted of American (no particular ethnicity) and Japanese (in terms of ethnicity) students. Furthermore, the population consisted of those

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[2] Clark Moustakas, *Phenomenological Research Methods,* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1994), pg. 9.

[3] Doris Elida Fuster Guillen, "Qualitative Research: Hermeneutical Phenomenological Method," *Monographic: Advances on qualitative research in education* 7, no. 1 (2019): 221, http://dx.doi.org/10.20511/pyr2019.v7n1.267.

[4] "Protecting Human Research Participants," NIH Office of Extramural Research, NIH.gov, last modified September 26, 2018, https://grants.nih.gov/sites/default/files/PHRP_Archived_Course_Materials_English.pdf.

whose music experiences (whether learning or teaching) had occurred within five years of the interview.

Recruitment Plan

This study implemented non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling "involves non-random selection based on convenience or other criteria, allowing you to easily collect data."[5] Convenience sampling is standard in qualitative phenomenological studies: "Again in common with many qualitative studies, the sample used in this type of research is often a convenience sample; that is, people who are easily accessed. Because qualitative research does not seek to be generalizable, it is not necessary for the sample to be representative of all types of people who have experienced the phenomenon of interest."[6]

Approximately half of the sample included overseas participants, so random sampling was not suitable. The researcher contacted each subject individually and recruited participants based on the responses received. The researcher gathered contact information for students and teachers who fit within the sample criteria via online music lesson platforms, explained the purpose of the research study, and requested their participation in an interview.

Sample Size

The recommended sample size for qualitative research is between six to twenty participants.[7] Thus, this research study's sample size included eight to ten participants, depending on the responses received during recruitment. In addition to a description of the purpose of the

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[5] Shona McCombes, "Sampling Methods | Types, Techniques, and Examples," Scribbr, March 27, 2023, https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/.

[6] "The Language of Research (Part 8): Phenomenological Research," *Wounds UK* 12, no. 1 (2016), https://www.wounds-uk.com/download/resource/931.

[7] Ibid.

study, interview questions, and thesis statement, the recruitment emails also included a consent form. The HHS regulations "require that informed consent be documented using a written form that either contains all of the required elements (45 CFR 46.116(a)) or a short form that states that all of the required elements have been presented orally."[8]

Sample's Demographic

The study recruited participants from America and Japan. While location does not guarantee any ethnicity, the population primarily consisted of American and Japanese (no ethnicity) students. Furthermore, the population consisted of those whose music experiences (either teaching or enrolled as a student) had occurred within five years of the interview. The age requirement of the participants was a minimum of sixteen. This requirement ensures the student had engaged in musical activity for an extended time and understood the purpose and intricacies of music education, "It is the requirement to be able to access and understand the 'first person' experience that shapes phenomenology as a research approach and which, in turn, creates its strong emic (explanation of a belief, attitude or experience from the first-person point of view) credentials."[9] Educators who served as participants were between the ages of 21 and 75. However, their musical experience was within the past five years to keep memories relatively recent. In conclusion, information about the population and sample size for the study is as follows in Table 1:

[8] "Protecting Human Research Participants."

[9] "The Language of Research."

Table 1. Sample Demographic, Population, and Sample Size

Population: Japanese and American Music Education Communities (Students and Educators)
Sample Size: 8-10 Subjects

Groups	Roles	Numbers	Ethnicity	Gender	Experience	Age
Japanese	Teachers	2	Any	Any	Within the last five years	18+
	Students	2-3	Any	Any	Within the last five years	16+
American	Teachers	2	Any	Any	Within the last five years	18+
	Students	2-3	Any	Any	Within the last five years	16+

Researcher Positionality

Interpretive Framework

I, the principal researcher, conducted this study to explore the differences and similarities between the Japanese and American music education systems. My study aimed to prove the experiences and education of students and teachers in America by studying the possibilities of integrating Japanese music education techniques into American music programs. I interpreted the data gathered during the study utilizing a phenomenological methodological framework. According to Pranee Liamputtong, Professor of Public Health at Western Sydney University, "It is crucial that qualitative research should be situated within a methodological framework."[10] Furthermore, "Phenomenology is a popular methodological framework within the social and health sciences, particularly in sociology, psychology, education, nursing, and health sciences

[10] Pranee Liamputtong, *Qualitative Research Methods* (New York City, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019), pg, 6.

(Willis 2007; Padgett 2008; Creswell 2012).” The topic of this study is related to a social phenomenon (music education) as well as individual’s personal experiences and opinions regarding this shared phenomenon.

Philosophical Assumptions

Ontologically, I synthesized data by understanding the concept of multiple realities, “When studying individuals, qualitative researchers conduct a study with the intent of reporting these multiple realities.”[11] The various realities examined in this study were each student and teacher’s unique, individual experiences within their music education. With an epistemological consideration, I conducted research via online video chat. Many of the study participants lived overseas. Thus, while not in-person, face-to-face video chats allowed me to conduct studies “in the ‘field,’ where the participants live and work,” to understand their perspectives better. Regarding the axiological assumption, I selected a hermeneutical research approach to incorporate my personal opinions and experiences into my report of the gathered data. Creswell writes, “In a qualitative study, the inquirers admit the value-laden nature of the study and actively report their values and biases as well as the value-laden nature of information gathered from the field. We say that they ‘position themselves’ in a study.”[12]

Data Collection Considerations

Rather than utilizing external data collection instruments, the researcher serves as a human instrument in qualitative research. Del Siegle from the University of Connecticut writes, “The qualitative researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Data are mediated through this human instrument, rather than through inventories, questionnaires, or

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[11] John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2017), pg. 5.

[12] Ibid.

machines."[13] In this study, I conducted interviews via online video chat and intelligently transcribed the participants' answers to my pre-determined set of research questions. Participants included personal acquaintances and individuals contacted via online tutoring platforms such as Preply and Apprentus. I utilized these online platforms to locate individuals in a desired location (America and Japan), and I learned more about their experiences and education (music-related) before contacting them to ensure they fit the requirements of my study. Once contacted, I served as the data collection instrument during the interviews. As an American music student interested in Japanese culture, educational practices, and philosophies, I am biased toward the Japanese educational system and how educators can improve their curriculum by integrating aspects of the Japanese music education system into their classrooms.

Personal Philosophy

Due to the hermeneutic element of this study, I included my personal experiences with music education, including my Christian worldview. Below, I have included my core beliefs surrounding the importance of music education from a Biblical perspective, my music education statement, and a brief analysis of two key Bible verses:

Beliefs:

1. Music education is vital for a well-rounded education.
2. Music education should incorporate performance and studies equally.
3. Music education should be available to all, not just those with a preexisting talent.
4. Music education is relevant to today's culture.
5. Music education benefits all people but in different ways.

[13] Del Siegle, "Qualitative Research Paradigm," University of Connecticut, https://researchbasics.education.uconn.edu/qualitative_research_paradigm/#:~:text=The%20qualitative%20researcher%20is%20the,Qualitative%20research%20involves%20fieldwork.

Philosophies:

1. Music education is a form of worship.
2. Music education is relevant and will always be relevant in today's culture.
3. Music education should not fall under one philosophy, such as praxial or aesthetic, but rather should consist of a mixed-methods approach.
4. Music education is as much about "music-making" as it is about "eliciting feelings."
5. Music education varies by culture, but there should be some similarities in how it is taught.

My personal music education philosophy statement is as follows: music education is a form of worship that surpasses all cultural, ethnic, and geographical boundaries (Hebrews 2:12). Additionally, music education is essential for developing a well-rounded education and must be treated as such, incorporating performance, traditional music (native to the student's region), world music, technical music theory studies, as well as philosophy of music (the "why" of music) (Ephesians 5:19).

Music Goals & Portfolios

Elliott notes the importance of students setting their own musical goals, "It is important to remember that the praxial philosophy encompasses all manner of participation—listening, composing, improvising, arranging, performing, and conducting—as music making situated in the mainstream of one's own experiences."[14] In terms of assessing students' abilities, Elliott suggests crafting a musical process folio, "The musical process folio is intended to record the development of each student's musical understanding in a variety of ways over an extended time. The folio is a collection of musical projects-in-process, musical creations completed to date, and feedback related to these processes and products."[15] These musical folios are less focused on cramming and regurgitating information and more on developing a

[14] Elliott, *Praxial Music Education,* Ch. 14.

[15] Elliott and Silverman, *Music Matters*, Ch. 13.

relationship between student and teacher to properly evaluate individual students', "goals, strengths, weaknesses, fears, hopes, and so forth."[16] According to Elliott, musical folios may include the following, all of which align with Suzuki's ideas for student evaluation as well:

1. Audio and video recordings of efforts in group rehearsals and individual practice.
2. Recordings of solo, small group, and large group performances during and outside of class time.
3. Self-evaluations of practice sessions, performances, compositions, etc.
4. Plans and drafts of compositions or arrangements.
5. Goals for future rehearsals.
6. Written or recorded feedback from teachers, peers, and outside advisors.[17]

Additionally, my music teacher was very accepting and supportive of my musical goals, which were often quite wide-ranging. For one lesson, I requested help solidifying 16-32 bars of a musical theatre excerpt for an audition. Another day, I would need help learning a complex strumming pattern for a worship song. Moreover, my music lessons rarely included standard testing. I have only one recollection of being "tested" within my music classroom. Before earning my bachelor's degree, I took an AP Music Theory course to prepare for it. This curriculum, suggested by my teacher, consisted of the typical study-test format.

As a result, my "musical folio" is currently presented on my various social media platforms and professional website. My teacher always encouraged video creation to solidify musical abilities. Not only is creating a musical valuable folio to my learning process, but it is also essential for my area of work: worship leading, acting, and musical theatre.

Psalm 150:1- 6 and Ephesians 5:19 instruct God's people to worship Him in many ways in all circumstances. Some may worship through dance, some through song, and some through speaking His truth. All these ways, and those addressed in the Bible, are worthy ways of

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[16] Elliott and Silverman, *Music Matters*, Ch. 13.

[17] Ibid.

worship. This same philosophy is seen within a music classroom and through a musical folio. As mentioned, my music teacher always encouraged my creativity, uniqueness, and passion. She recognized that there is no correct way to "do" music. Educators can apply the same principle in their music classroom. Just as Suzuki believed, not all students wish to be professional musicians. All students have different paths, and music will play a unique yet equally important role in each of their lives.

Unique Learning Goals & Educational Needs

I began taking private piano lessons at the age of four, which is when I first learned to read sheet music. While I took a break from playing the piano due to burnout, I resumed lessons at thirteen. My music teacher, a multi-instrumentalist, learned under the Suzuki method, which she then used to teach me, with one alteration. My music teacher taught me to read sheet music from the beginning of my lessons. In the Suzuki method, children do not use sheet music until they have "already listened to and can accurately play a fairly extensive repertory of pieces."[18]

I am grateful that my teacher chose to teach differently. Educators must teach music theory immediately in a student's musical journey and accompany it with music-making. A child must be able to combine the practical and aesthetic components of music, learning the intricate details of music theory while also enjoying using these skills on the keyboard. Luther Whiting Mason also emphasized the importance of musical notation. Mark and Gary write, "This approach, used by advocates of the 'song method,' emphasized the facts of music rather than the music itself."[19] While my personal philosophy incorporates many of the same elements as the Suzuki method, it is crucial to keep an open mind as an educator, which is why I also choose to

[18] "The Suzuki Method."
[19] Mark and Gary, *American Music Education,* pgs. 198-199.

incorporate sheet music in early music lessons. Proverbs 1:5 instructs us to continually learn from those wiser than ourselves, "Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance."

Instrumentation

The two data collection procedures the study utilized were question-based and written/researcher-based protocols. The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended (see Appendix G). Shazia Jamshed writes, "Semi-structured, in-depth interviews are utilized extensively as interviewing format possibly with an individual or sometimes even with a group. These types of interviews are conducted once only, with an individual or with a group, and generally cover the duration of 30 min to more than an hour."[20]

Each of the nine participants was asked a series of six questions, with sub-questions to follow, "To achieve optimum use of interview time, interview guides serve the useful purpose of exploring many respondents more systematically and comprehensively as well as to keep the interview focused on the desired line of action."[21] These questions remained the same for each participant. In addition, the interviews occurred at a convenient time and place for both the researcher and the participant. Due to the interviews occurring digitally, the researcher discussed the preferred technological method prior with the participant. The researcher also promoted confidentiality, comfort, and privacy within the interview. Lastly, the researcher allowed the participants to analyze and critique the final depictions of the interview within the study to ensure they were satisfied with the transcription.

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[20] Shazia Jamshed, "Qualitative Research Method - Interviewing and Observation," *Journal of Basic Clinical Pharmacy* 5, no. 4 (2014): 87-88, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4194943/.

[21] Jamshed, "Qualitative Research Method."

These interviews helped to provide insight into how Japanese music education methodologies, such as the Suzuki method and COS, have affected Japanese students. The specific Japanese music education methodologies this study explored included foundational keyboard skills and the Suzuki method/COS repertoire. These qualitative interviews and questions also illuminated how integrating Japanese music education techniques (including philosophies and repertoire) in American schools may affect American music students. The specific aspects of Japanese music education that this study explored with the intent to incorporate into American schools were world and cultural music and life enrichment philosophies.

Regarding the study's measurement techniques, Annie Rhodes writes, "Qualitative measurements are written down for deciphering ideas, thoughts, and experiences. This sort of study allows you to learn more about issues that aren't well-understood. Interviews with open-ended inquiries, observations recorded in words, and literature reviews investigating concepts and theories are all common qualitative approaches."[22] Qualitative measurement differs from quantitative, as the results are often ideas, traits, or characteristics. Therefore, "Data acquired through a qualitative measure is a type of information that describes traits or characteristics. It's gathered through surveys, interviews, or observation, and it's usually presented as a story. The qualitative data might be in the form of descriptive words that can be analyzed for patterns or significance using coding."[23]

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[22] Annie Rhodes, "The Importance of Qualitative Measurement in Driving Social Good," UpMetrics, https://blog.upmetrics.com/qualitativemeasurement#:~:text=What%20is%20Qualitative%20Measurement%3F,usually%20presented%20as%20a%20story.

[23] Rhodes, "Qualitative Measurement."

Before the interview, the researcher provided the participant with all necessary information regarding the study's problem statement, purpose, and research questions. This procedure ensured the participant was aware of and agreed with the study's core components and overall goals. The researcher also ensured that the findings were valid within the context of qualitative research, "*validity*, or whether the research reflects best standards of qualitative science, is described in terms of rigor, credibility, trustworthiness, and believability."[24] To ensure a lack of bias, the researcher consulted a panel of expert individuals within the field of the study to provide an overview of the interviews and, ultimately, the translation of the interviews. This panel included the researcher's thesis Chair and two individuals with educational and professional experiences similar to those discussed in the study. The Chair and the panel reviewed the study's purpose, problem statement, research questions, and methodologies and then deducted if the interview questions accurately reflect and align with these elements. If the interview questions did not align with or reflect the research questions, the panel and the Chair provided the researcher with feedback on how to improve and revise them.

Procedures

Before beginning the study, the researcher gained approval from the Liberty University Institution Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix A). After receiving permission, the researcher contacted potential study participants via email and instant messaging online to recruit them for the study (see Appendix C). To recruit participants, the researcher contacted participants (students and educators) over the age of eighteen directly and participants under the age of sixteen through their parents/guardians. The researcher contacted participants in the United States and Japan via email or instant messaging online (see Appendix F).

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[24] Cynthia K. Russell and David M. Gregory, "Evaluation of Qualitative Research Studies," *Evidence-Based Nursing*, no. 6 (2003): 36-40, https://ebn.bmj.com/content/6/2/36.

The researcher contacted local music students and teachers (see Appendix F). Furthermore, the researcher contacted Japanese music students and educators (see Appendix F). The study required two American music educators, two to three American music students, two Japanese educators (referring to location, not necessarily ethnicity), and two to three Japanese students (referring to location, not necessarily ethnicity). There was no age cap for the educators of the subjects. However, their musical experience was within the past five years to keep memories relatively recent. The researcher recruited students representing various schooling levels, including kindergarten through twelfth grade, high school, and higher education. When communicating with the participants, the researcher ensured they understood the study's intended purpose, requirements, and criteria.

Once the participants agreed to join the study, they confirmed that they met the criteria for the study. These criteria included:

1. Each participant must be in either America or Japan or have resided in either of these locations for at least one year.
2. Each educator participant must have teaching experience within the last five years.
3. Each student participant must be enrolled in music education or have been enrolled within the last five years.

Once the participants were selected and satisfied the criteria, the researcher scheduled a time to meet and complete the interview. The researcher and the participant agreed on a time and communication method (video call, email, etc.) that was convenient for both. The interview was a semi-structured, private interview. However, the researcher accommodated if the participant was under eighteen and wished to have a parent/guardian present. The interviews occurred via phone call, video chat, and email.

The researcher sent the participants a copy of the consent form via email or instant messaging (for online platforms where exchanging emails is prohibited) (see Appendix C) before

meeting with them. The researcher required the participants to read thoroughly, sign, and return the consent form before the interview. The consent form provided each participant with an overview of the study's purpose, the requirements of the participants, information on confidentiality and privacy, and finally, the risk associated with participating in the study. Participation in this study presented little to no risk as the researcher only asked the participants to discuss their experiences with the study's subject phenomenon. Participants under the age of eighteen required a parent/guardian to read thoroughly and agree to the conditions of the study. In addition, the participants could withdraw from the interview/study without any repercussions. If a participant chose to withdraw, any information gathered from them was discarded appropriately and not applied within the final data presentation.

During the interviews, the researcher asked each participant the same five open-ended questions (not including sub-questions). The estimated duration, which the researcher discussed with the participant beforehand, was thirty to forty-five minutes. While each interview contained identical core (and sub-) questions, the researcher reserved the right to pose follow-up questions to each participant, depending on the direction of the discussion. Any follow-up questions presented by the researcher ensured clarity and a meaningful understanding of the participant's experience. The researcher also recorded notes on non-verbal elements of the interview, including but not limited to facial expressions, inflections, and body language. The researcher manually transcribed the interviews using a computer. However, the researcher also requested permission to record the interview using screen record (for video calls), audio recording, or video recording. This practice allowed the researcher to review and re-watch the interview to ensure maximum accuracy. Once the researcher recorded every interview, she intelligently transcribed each and prepared them for data analysis.

After the interview and transcriptions were complete, the researcher again communicated with each participant to conduct member checking. Member checking ensures each participant can check the data collected and concur the researcher transcribed and interpreted it accurately. If the participant reports any data as inaccurate by a participant, the researcher will adjust, remove, and edit the discrepancies as needed to ensure quality and reliable results.

Data Collection

Qualitative research data collection resources typically consist of observations, interviews, and audiovisual and digital materials.[25] The study examined the effects of Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies through a qualitative data collection plan. The two data collection procedures the study utilized were question-based and written/researcher-based protocols.

Question-Based Protocol: Interviews

This research collected data from American and Japanese students, so the collection process was unique. The researcher conducted interviews with nine students whose music education consisted of the elements discussed within the study. Approximately half of these subjects were American and were local, or were once local, to Japan. Thus, because approximately half of these subjects lived overseas, interviews were conducted digitally. Digital interviews occurred over video, instant messaging, email, and phone calls.

Interviews consisted of open-ended questions, "Qualitative interviews use open-ended questions, which are questions that a researcher poses but does not provide answer options for."[26] However, while there was a set of pre-formulated questions, ultimately, the discussion guided the

[25] Creswell, *Research Design,* Ch. 9.

[26] DeCarlo, *Scientific Inquiry,* 13.2.

direction of the interview. Due to the qualitative nature of the study, DeCarlo recommends this method to preserve the authenticity of the study, "Respondents might think that qualitative interviews feel more like a conversation than an interview, but the researcher is guiding the conversation with the goal of gathering information from a respondent."[27] The questions utilized in these interviews resembled the research questions of this study and appeared as follows:

1. Overall, how have Japanese or American (depending on the subject) music education methodologies affected you?

    1a. Please explain how you feel Japanese or American (depending on the subject) music education methodologies have or have not adequately prepared you for your musical endeavors.

2. Please explain the incorporation (or lack) of foundational keyboard skills within your music education.

    2a. How has the incorporation (or lack) of foundational keyboard skills within your music education affected the development of your music literacy?

3. Please provide examples of how your school's music education repertoire has shaped, prepared, or developed your skills.

    3a. Conversely, please elaborate if you believe it has failed to accomplish these goals.

4. How has your music education shaped your understanding of world music?

    4a. How about cultural music?

    4b. Please explain how you would seek to improve the incorporation (or lack) of these topics within your music education.

5. In what ways has your music education experience and use of these skills enriched your life?

These questions helped to provide insight into how Japanese music education methodologies, such as the Suzuki method and COS, have affected Japanese students. The

[27] Ibid.

specific Japanese music education methodologies this study explored include foundational keyboard skills and Suzuki method/COS repertoire. These qualitative interviews also illuminated how integrating Japanese music education techniques (including philosophies and repertoire) in American schools may affect American music students. The specific aspects of Japanese music education that this study explored with the intent to incorporate into American schools were world and cultural music and life enrichment philosophies.

Transcription

Due to the incorporation of interviews in this study, transcription was necessary to ensure the study records the subject's answers accurately. Within qualitative research, transcription is "conducted of individual or group interviews and generally written verbatim (exactly word-for-word)."[28] The researcher transcribed the interviews manually via intelligent transcription to eliminate any filler words without losing the interview's authenticity. After the interview, a digital chart within Delve organized, stored, and maintained the data.

Written and Researcher-Based Protocol

Chapter 9 of *Research Design* states that public documents in qualitative research may include minutes of meetings, newspapers, etc.[29] This study incorporated articles, books, and accounts of the music education phenomena in America and Japan into the research. These data types are necessary for including historical backgrounds, personal accounts (recorded in public documents), and other researchers' findings.

[28] "Qualitative Data Transcription and Translation," IRC Research Toolkit, International Rescue Committee.

[29] Creswell, *Research Design,* Ch. 9.

Creswell defines digital materials as a "creative data collection."[30] These data types may include digital audiovisual materials such as websites, blogs, computer messages, and film.[31] These data sources included further information regarding personal experiences in arts and music education classrooms. Creswell writes that creative data collection "provides an opportunity for participants to directly share their reality" and "may be an unobtrusive method of collecting data."[32] A template organized the written and researcher-based data and sorted it into a topics-based category:

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

a) An Overview of Japanese and American Music Education Methodologies.
b) Japanese vs. American Music and General Education Techniques.
c) Effects of Early Exposure to Music Education.

2) Related Literature
   a) The Suzuki Method: Observations and Personal Accounts.
   b) Shortcomings of Japanese Music Education Methodologies.
   c) American Music Education Methodologies.

3) Biblical Context

Peer-Reviewed Studies

In her article, Kiester shares information and observations about Japanese music education methods in this article. Kiester studied Japanese schools and curriculum, requirements for teaching training, and history during a year-long sabbatical in 1990-1991. She observed classes, attended performances, and interviewed teachers and administrators. "The Japanese have long demonstrated a solid commitment to children and to education. Their 1872 Fundamental

[30] Creswell, *Research Design,* Ch. 9.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

Code of Education states: 'Learning is the key to success in life.... There shall, in the future, be no community with an illiterate family nor a family with an illiterate person.'"[33] Kiester's study determined that while some aspects of Japanese music education would not be welcome in America (such as five- and one-half-day school weeks), there are others worth noting (including the belief in music's life-enriching qualities).[34]

In his study, author Kensho Takeshi investigates the influence of American and Western music education methodologies and philosophies in Japan during the Meiji period. Takeshi primarily explores the impact in elementary Japanese music classrooms. Takeshi's study exclusively includes written and researcher-based data, "I engaged in the following activities, based on procedures appropriate to historical and descriptive research."[35] At the end of Takeshi's in-depth historical study, he concluded that the government used education in Japan (including music education) to gain control; this focus was prominent in the Meiji period and is still evident today.[36]

Saturation

Within a study, saturation is closely related to sampling, guided by "the necessary similarities and contrasts required by the emerging theory."[37] Then, the data causes the researcher to organize and combine results and analysis. Furthermore, when the data sources no

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[33] Kiester, "A Look at Japanese Music Education," 42.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Takeshi, "A Comparative Study of Music Education," 46.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Benjamin Saunders et al., "Saturation in Qualitative Research: Exploring Its Conceptualization and Operationalization," *Quality & Quantity* 52, no. 4 (2018): 1893-1907, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5993836/.

longer produce new results, the study will achieve saturation, "additional data do not lead to any new emergent themes."[38]

Data Analysis

Once collected, the data analysis began. However, in qualitative research, data analysis and collection should occur together.[39] As the researcher collected data via interviews or written studies and documents, the researcher organized the data into a thematic coding system. As the researcher collected data, they were "winnowed" or "narrowed down," so the study included only essential information.[40] Then, a preconceived set of codes sorted the data. However, as the researcher collected data, new codes emerged. Thus, the study utilized inductive and deductive methods of coding. Ultimately, the data analysis process included five steps, as provided by Creswell:

1. Organize and prepare the data for analysis.
2. Read or look at all the data.
3. Start coding all the data.
4. Generate a description and themes.
5. Representing the description and themes.[41]

This study's codebook, stored in the online qualitative coding application, Delve, addressed the research questions and overarching themes. The first coding round sorted the data

[38] Sanders et al., "Saturation in Qualitative Research."

[39] Creswell, *Research Design,* Ch. 9.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

into the following codes: Japanese versus American students, Suzuki method students, and COS students. These codes were broad but addressed each research and interview question. Once the researcher transcribed an interview, the researcher coded the information into these first-pass coding categories. As the interviews provided more information, the researcher further organized it into the second coding round, which included students taught foundational keyboard skills vs. not, life enrichment philosophies, world music, cultural music, and repertoire.

To finalize the thematic analysis and data synthesis, the researcher separated the codes and themes into two main categories: Japanese versus American, with subcategories, and pointed to a solution to the research problem. However, before finalization, the coding was further categorized into "positive" versus "negative" outcomes. The purpose of the research study was to investigate the effects and differences between Japanese and American music education methodologies in terms of teaching music literacy through foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies. Ultimately, it determined if incorporating Japanese music education techniques into schools would benefit American students. Nevertheless, the "positive" vs. "negative" coding was left for the end of the construction process to keep the study and interviews unbiased, "A common pitfall is to use the main interview questions as the themes (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Typically, this reflects the fact that the data have been summarized and organized, rather than analyzed."[42]

In a qualitative study, validity and reliability are important in producing accurate results. To ensure validity, Creswell provides a few techniques that researchers can utilize. First, by

[42] Moira Maguire and Brid Delahunt, "Doing a Thematic Analysis: A Practical, Step-by-Step Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars," *AISHE* 8, no. 3 (2017): 3353, http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/335.

triangulating different data sources to determine if the themes are consistent and member checking to determine if the participants also feel that the qualitative results are accurate.[43] Also, developing a rich, thick description to convey findings while including negative or discrepant information to incorporate different perspectives.[44] Finally, spending prolonged time in the field, debriefing with peers, and utilizing an external auditor are all ways to ensure validity.[45]

To ensure reliability, the researcher presented the set interview questions in the same way for each subject, and the detail to which the researcher recorded each discussion remained the same. Additionally, ensuring that there is no "drift" in the definitions within the codebook.[46] Overall, the codebook assisted in keeping the study reliable throughout the interviews. Finally, in terms of the codebook, Creswell recommends checking for intercoder agreement, which means determining whether two or more coders may code the information similarly, if not in an identical way.[47]

Summary

[43] Creswell, *Research Design*, Ch. 9.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

This study investigated the effects and differences between Japanese and American music education methodologies in terms of teaching music literacy through foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies. It utilized a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological research approach. Additionally, the study examined the effects of Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies through data collection and qualitative interviews with nine participants whose music education consisted of these elements.

The study's two populations were American and Japanese music students and educators. While location does not guarantee any ethnicity, the population primarily consisted of American (no ethnicity) and Japanese (in terms of ethnicity) students. Furthermore, the population consisted of those whose music experiences (whether learning or teaching) had occurred within five years of the interview.

This study implemented non-probability sampling. Approximately half of the sample included overseas participants, so random sampling was unsuitable. The researcher contacted each subject individually and recruited participants based on the responses received. This research study's sample size included eight to ten participants. In addition to a description of the purpose of the study, interview questions, and thesis statement, the recruitment emails also included a consent form.

The two data collection procedures the study utilized were question-based and written/researcher-based protocols. The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended. Each of the nine participants was asked six questions, with sub-questions to follow. These questions remained the same for each participant. In addition, the interviews occurred at a convenient time and place for both the researcher and the participant. Due to the digital interviews, the researcher

discussed the preferred technological method with the participants. The researcher also promoted confidentiality, comfort, and privacy within the interview. Lastly, the researcher allowed the participants to analyze and critique the final depictions of the interview within the study to ensure they were satisfied with the transcription.

The interviews took place via phone call, video chat, and email. Via email or instant messaging (for online platforms where exchanging emails is prohibited), the researcher sent the participants a copy of the consent form (see Appendix C) before meeting with them. The researcher required the participants to read thoroughly, sign, and return the consent form before the interview. The consent form provided each participant with an overview of the study's purpose, the requirements of the participants, information on confidentiality and privacy, and finally, the risk associated with participating in the study.

This study's codebook, stored in the online qualitative coding application Delve, addressed the research questions and overarching themes. Finally, to ensure reliability, the researcher presented the set interview in the same way for each subject, and the detail to which the researcher took notes of each discussion remained the same. Additionally, ensuring that there is no "drift" in the definitions within the codebook.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Given the commonality of the roots of Japanese and American music education methodologies and philosophies, it is beneficial to intertwine the two. This study explored the incorporation of Japanese methodologies and philosophies into American schools to assist students and teachers in bettering their experience. The researcher conducted nine semi-structured online interviews via video conference with individuals who have experience in music education as either a student or an instructor in the past five years. This chapter reported each participant's response in a comprehensive breakdown by code and topic grouping.

Results

The researcher analyzed a series of responses to six semi-structured utilizing Delve, a qualitative analysis coding system. Following coding, the researcher grouped each emerging code into the corresponding research question to which it applied, utilizing text analysis. Text analysis also included sorting and extracting concepts based on open coding of participants' words, phrases, and sentences. These responses, codes, and analyses comprise this chapter.

Description of Participants

This study comprised semi-structured interviews among nine participants with music education experience in America and Japan. Each participant had a history of musical experience from elementary school through college and was currently involved in music practice as either a student or an instructor. Among the American participants, two were instructors at the high-middle school and college level. Two of the student participants had recent college instruction. The third student participant was a current college student specializing in music. The Japanese instructors teach or have taught within private studios in Japan. One Japanese student was a current college student, while the other had musical experience from elementary through college.

Table 1. Sample Demographic, Population, and Sample Size

Population: Japanese and American Music Education Communities (Students and Educators)
Sample Size: 8-10 Subjects

Groups	Roles	Numbers	Ethnicity	Gender	Experience	Age
Japanese	Teachers	2	Any	Any	Within the last five years	18+
	Students	2-3	Any	Any	Within the last five years	16+
American	Teachers	2	Any	Any	Within the last five years	18+
	Students	2-3	Any	Any	Within the last five years	16+

Description of Findings

Research Question 1. How have Japanese music education methodologies such as the Suzuki Method and COS (Course of Study) affected Japanese students?

The participants' experiences emerged as the following subthemes forming the response to research question one and its sub-questions. To understand Japan's music education system, the researcher asked music students and teachers about their overall experience with music education in Japan, including the curriculum, methodologies, and philosophies. Participants discussed professional and recreational development, life-enrichment philosophies, world music incorporation, and extra-curricular opportunities.

Overall Preparation for Professional and Recreational Musicians in Japan

Music is integrated into the Japanese community's daily lives, regardless of occupation. Even in Japan's rural countryside, quality music lessons are readily available, which produce

successful musicians. Japanese Teacher Participant 2 had musical experience in America and Japan. She noted a "huge difference" between the two countries:

> I am shocked every time we visit some remote area in Japan and hear that some successful musician came from that town. These are rural farm areas, and I am impressed that they even have a music program let alone someone found success coming from such a rural environment. It shows the level of musicianship throughout the country that good teachers are everywhere and not only in big cities.

Furthermore, Japanese Student Participant 1, who had educational experience in both America and Japan, stated that compared to America, "I got a lot more opportunities specifically with music" after moving to Japan during middle school. Aside from personal study, he received no music instruction in America despite attending school part-way through junior high. However, once he migrated to Japan, he joined a music club, "Because I had originally a passion for music, but I never had, like any studies in America. But after coming to Japan, I was able to join a club where they enabled me to build like these instruments and teach me how to read score and like the basics and stuff."

JSP 1 also mentioned how individuals in Japan have a more profound understanding of music due to its accessibility and commonality. For example, "If you say classical music in America for, say, I ask my friends, what's a classical song you like? 100% more often than not it would be some very, very well-known, super popular Mozart piece or like Bach, like Canon in D or like something like that." JSP 1 continued to compare the knowledge of his American friends to his Japanese friends, "But if I were to ask here, there actually might be, there's a pretty decent chance, people would actually have a decent knowledge about like, especially ex-performers, they would have a knowledge of like songs they've heard or songs they've actually played themselves, and it's more common than not." Finally, JSP 1 stated that being a music student in Japan has greatly motivated him, as it is not uncommon to be regularly surrounded by fellow

musicians, “I would see people, students on trains going to school, they would have their instruments on them, and it’s really common. Every day, I probably see at least one person. So, with coming to Japan, I think the opportunities, especially with music, just being able to be like a part of it and actually having people around me be motivated like me or with me.”

Recreational music enjoyers, such as Japanese Student Participant 2, who stopped receiving music lessons after college, also integrate musical skills into their everyday lives. While she has not practiced any instruments regularly since college, she stated during her interview that her music education has helped her with her language studies, “So because I studied, or I enjoyed music, that’s why I really, it was kind of easy to catch on to the music of Chinese.” Chinese is a tonal language, meaning words can change dramatically depending on the tone and emphasis utilized by the speaker. JSP 2 stated that her musical background made it “easier to study foreign language.” During his interview, Japanese Teacher Participant 1, who taught private lessons in Japan for ages seven and up, noted that his teaching goal is not necessarily to create professional musicians but music-appreciating individuals, “whether you’re good at it or performing professionally, or just with a friend or a band at school or whatever, you know. That’s why a lot of us get into it: because it’s for its own sake. And for listening to music too, that sort of deeper appreciation or understanding or connection to music that you can get if you’ve played that particular piece.”

While the participants reported quality in-class instruction, two mentioned a key area of musical instruction lacking in their teachings. When asked what he would improve in his music education, JSP 1 noted, “But I do want them to, like, specify how to practice. I don’t feel like people are taught how to practice. Being able to practice and being able to perform are two different things, and I don’t think most people realize that.” In addition, JSP 2 discussed why she

no longer engages in music-making, “That’s why if he knew more, like how to start, how to practice, kind of basic things or how to cooperate with other music instruments or something like this, maybe I could enjoy more because I really love to learn something even though I’m lazy to study. Like once I learn it, I’m so happy, and I’m so interested in it.”

Importance of the Arts in Japan

The importance of the arts in Japan is significant compared to America. JTP 2 attended music school in America but teaches at a music studio in Yokohama, Japan. Like JTP 1, she understood that each student has a unique goal. However, she noted that music is deeply integrated into the daily lives of almost everyone in Japan, whereas American schools commonly emphasize other extracurriculars:

> I wonder if America had the type of serious music education system in place all over the country, if we would see more diversity in their professional musical life. It’s hard to tell since Japan is so homogeneous. I believe that better access to music education will either create music lovers, concert goers, or more ability for anyone to pursue a life in music if they wish. Clearly, in my case, I came from a position of privilege since my parents were able to send me to music lessons. If this was something offered by the school, everyone could have at least been exposed to music and if they liked it and couldn’t afford it, they could look for scholarships. If they don’t even get the chance to see if they like it or not, they will probably pursue something that they do have exposure to like sports. Sports education was huge while I was in school.

While the American education system tends to emphasize sports, math, and science, music is a required course in elementary through middle school. Furthermore, music theory is a part of standardized testing in Japan. While comparing her experience in Japan to her American education, JTP 2 recalled an experience she had in middle school:

> I'm originally from Fullerton, CA, and it is not a rural place at all. Yet, while I was going through my early education, there wasn't even a music program. I studied music privately. In 7th grade, our English teacher asked us to write an essay about what class we would like to see offered at our school. I wrote about how I wanted an orchestra class. The teacher gave me a C because she said that although it was well written, she didn't think that the class idea was very solid and therefore lowered my grade. This is a huge problem when orchestras are looking for funding, and people clearly don't value the arts, specifically the musical arts.

JSP 1 stated that music is very "embedded" into the culture of Japan. No matter the size of the school, he notes that every student will have access to some sort of instrument. JSP 1 indicated that his school is not well funded, but they have every instrument needed for a wind orchestra, including "flutes, clarinets, soprano, alto, tenor saxophones." In addition, he estimated that 90% of schools, regardless of location and size, will have a formed wind ensemble. However, music is not the only artistic extracurricular activity that his school offers. JSP 1 listed art, music, and *shodo* 書道, Japanese calligraphy, among the available courses for students to choose from. Finally, JSP 1 noted the abundance of competitions available in Japan versus America, where students may have their abilities and performances evaluated by industry professionals, "I think it's a lot more easy access, especially getting into like the more gritty parts of music like competitions, like where your performance, will actually be scored by professionals, you'll be judged on how well you performed."

Contrasting Views

JTP 2 noted a few negative aspects of the Japanese education system that she has observed. She stated that Kumon, a Japanese learning program, is extremely popular amongst her students. While Japanese schools are beginning to promote creativity and personal expression among music students, Kumon reinforces traditional thinking, which includes following orders and rote memorization. Kumon typically begins in grade four and is the extra tutoring needed for students who wish to get into the "good junior high schools," as music theory is a part of the

standardized testing and entrance exams. However, she believes that reinforcing these mindsets is “counterproductive,” “kind of defeating the purpose of, like, not doing all this like crazy memorization stuff and like, just following orders.”

Sub-Question 1: What are the effects of teaching students music literacy skills through foundational keyboard skills as taught in Japanese music education?

Music Literacy Taught Through Foundational Keyboard Skills in Japan Versus America

The first sub-question to Research Question 1 explored music literacy taught through foundational keyboard skills, as taught in Japan versus America. When asked about the most common instruments students begin learning in elementary school in Japan, JTP 2 stated that “piano and violin” are often taught in private lessons. In contrast, school lessons teach the recorder and melodica (a smaller piano-like instrument). Private music lessons are widely available in Japan, and most students participate in some form of music lesson outside of school.

While coding the data gathered from the interviews, the researcher compared the American and Japanese participant’s answers regarding foundational keyboard skills taught in their school systems. JSP 1 reported that most individuals have “some kind of knowledge in piano, even if their skill level is really, really low when they can only play with one hand, only play very slow, or maybe not even play at all. Everyone 100% has some kind of knowledge of like how to count on the piano or how to utilize a piano, or a keyboard or some sort.” Furthermore, multiple Japanese participants noted how the piano is a very common “baseline” for learning music theory, “my music harmony class, the teacher does utilize piano, and he actually shows the keys being highlighted up and he plays the piano and he like separates notes arpeggio.”

Three out of four Japanese participants did not play the piano as their primary instrument. However, all four stated that beginning their musical education on the piano benefited their overall understanding of music. JTP 1, a guitarist, noted, "I think that piano has an advantage of having it really easy to understand what the notes are, and, like, the layout of it. And on guitar, well, a lot of people might have some difficulty in playing the arpeggios or whatever you're working on. Understanding like that's an F# is a lot, there's a lot more of a barrier to that on guitar because the fretboard is a lot more of a mess than piano." JTP 2, a violinist, stated that learning the piano assisted her greatly with reading multiple clefs and that she is planning to have her daughter follow a similar learning path as well, "you'll be fluent in both bass and treble clef, and I think that's really benefited me in my ability to play anything that I want."

The researcher also questioned American participants regarding foundational keyboard skills. American Teacher Participant 1 explained the curriculum for his music program at a public school:

> Kindergarten, first grade, I don't think we ever teach solfege, we just learned pitches and singing the songs. But through 5th, everyone, you know, learned a different range of solfege. We learned stuff in major and minor and we would talk about them. We would do a lot of what we call Orff instruments, which is pretty much percussion instruments for elementary, so you have little keyboards, the metallophones, xylophones, and then we had hand drums and jimbe-type stuff, and there was a process for learning all that stuff and how it works. And then we also did the standard recorders with the kids as well.

American Student Participant 1 mentioned that she did not learn the piano until her undergraduate studies. American Student Participant 3 recalled that most of the students in his sixth-grade class "had never seen sheet music before, so it was a big challenge for them." He also mentioned that while a few students knew how to read sheet music, they had trouble with transposition, as they did not learn foundational keyboard skills, "And then, of course, there's the

other fact that they learn all their notes, like if the trumpet player is playing B flat, you know they would learn B flat, but it's written in C, So there's that issue as well."

While music lessons in American schools do not often teach foundational keyboard skills, a few instructors utilize the piano for visual teaching purposes, "We don't tell them they need to learn how to play the piano. We have it when I'm teaching music theory, especially the beginners." American Teacher Participant 2, a university-level piano instructor, also stated, "I think piano, in general, to study at first is fabulous only because then you have a foundation you can visually see a foundation of where all the physical notes are because in a non-keyboard instrument you can't really visually see it clearly." In addition, American Student Participant 2, owner of a music production company in Los Angeles, learned music theory on the guitar but stated that he believes the piano is the optimal choice for learning music theory, "I don't think there's any downside to learning piano and learning your, you know, the basics of music theory that way."

Sub-Question 2: How do the Suzuki method and COS (Course of Study) repertoire affect Japanese music students?

Course of Study (COS) Curriculum

In most schools in Japan, mandatory music lessons begin in elementary school. Participants reported that children commonly start with learning the recorder and melodica, singing Japanese homework songs and solfege, and reading scores. Additionally, music theory is a part of the standardized testing in Japan, which determines the schools that children attend. The incorporation and consistency of music education classes prepare students to surpass advanced proficiency levels at a younger age than their American counterparts. While comparing American

and Japanese middle school musicians, JSP 1 notes, “But they were lower level compared to here. It is crazy what some elementary schools even can do in music.”

Most of the Japanese participants also reported a heavy usage of classical repertoire in the schools’ curricula, “a very common pattern I see is influence of like well-known artists like Mozart or like Bach; it’s people like trying to replicate like well-known classical artists who are like basically like these giants or like these, I would call them pillars, in like the classical music scene.” However, popular Japanese music, or “J-Pop,” is incorporated as well, “There are some mixes with J-Pop, and J-Pop does mesh with jazz a little bit, but more often than not, what’s played in the brass bands, especially in concerts and in competitions, is very heavily classical.”

Extracurricular Opportunities in Japan

In addition to private lessons, music clubs and orchestra classes are popular with Japanese students. As mentioned, JSP 1 had no official music instruction in America. It was not until he came to Japan that he found a music club that taught him the necessities of the musical arts, “And I started playing percussion at first, for two years. And the extent of my education was studying alone. Because I had originally a passion for music, but I never had, like any studies in America. But after coming to Japan, I was able to join a club where they enabled me to build like these instruments and teach me how to read score and like the basics and stuff.”

Furthermore, non-graded events and competitions are easily accessible for music students who wish to gain performance experience and feedback from industry professionals, “There’s a lot more people who are, like, deeply interested in music and not just like, I just listen to music, but more like I want this to become my life and I’m motivated to like, for competitions, especially competitions, it’s a lot more easy access than I feel like in America.” JSP 1 also noted how these opportunities allowed him to work closely with musicians at higher levels, “So I feel

like the atmosphere of having people with the same passion and the same and higher level of skill is always like really good motivation to get better. So, I think that's really like a very special thing that I think Japan has, especially with music education and like wind orchestra and all that stuff."

Finally, JSP 1 described his music lessons in Japan as student-centered. From the beginning of high school, he recalls his music teacher providing him with many opportunities to lead rehearsals, compose performance pieces, and take on the role of concertmaster:

> So, the teacher gave us more freedom with controlling what we had to do and stuff. I think since it was high school, he was like kind of realizing we were older or like mature, I guess. So, I have experience from, it's kind of surprising, it's pretty early, but around 15 years old, 16 years old, for being concertmaster and all that stuff. And with, during my second and third year, structure wise, how Japanese school works, there's three years of middle school and three years of high school. So, in my first year of high school, I did normal, just performance and stuff and I'm still getting used to new to the high school. Then, in my second and third year, I started composing music for my wind orchestra to play in non-graded events, just like open events we had, so I've composed an eight-man Ensemble, flex ensemble, for I forget what instruments. It was an arrangement of a game song I really liked.

JSP 1 stated that this responsibility helped with his self-confidence and leadership abilities:

> I think it really positively affected me, especially with my teacher putting independence and like responsibilities into my hands with having to like manage people and manage an orchestra. The experience that comes with like teaching, even though I was not a full-fledged teacher, but I was able to like have the experience of being able to talk to people and speak out my ideas of how something should sound or how I feel like the music should go.

The Suzuki Method

JTP 2 is trained in the Suzuki method and currently utilizes some of the philosophies to teach her students in Japan, "Mr. Suzuki put together this order of music to teach these different techniques in this order that makes sense physically for children, and I was like, yeah, that makes sense to me like I can, I can say yes to that because he's already done the work of like finding what order to teach technique works for children." JTP 2 also mentioned that many of the

instructors she gained inspiration from also implemented Suzuki's methods, "But she is so inspiring, too. And she did like online class just randomly couple years ago of like her pedagogy method, and she's using a lot of Suzuki base." The Suzuki method is not a part of the Course of Study; however, many private instructors utilize the methodologies and philosophies. ATP 2, who also implements aspects into her teachings, discussed the emphasis on aural skills in the Suzuki method, "I find that those who have been Suzuki trained just blindly obviously have relied on their aural skills first, so that's the first to develop. But that means that everything else goes to the side, so it's important that the teacher fill in everything else along the way as they can digest it to be well-rounded." The Suzuki method emphasizes aural skills by not introducing sheet music to beginners. In contrast, the Course of Study curriculum requires students to study sheet music in elementary school. Thus, as ATP 2 stated, the two methods balance each other well.

However, similar to the "homogenous mindset" often seen in Japanese culture, the Suzuki Method requires students to follow the teachings blindly. While following meticulous instruction is common in Japan, ATP 2 noted the importance of children understanding why they are learning a particular song or musical concept, "Blindly doing such things only goes so far for so many reasons, and just telling someone to do such things. One does that because they don't if you're speaking to a young child and you just want them to keep doing it, then you to do that, you get them to do it a lot of times in a certain way. But the thing is, as they get older, they have to understand why they're doing it."

Contrasting Views

JTP 1, a private music instructor in Japan, expressed his observations regarding creativity in Japanese music classrooms:

> I like to try to be a lot more creative with my students. And I'm, I have like a jazz background, so you know improvising and all of that, like songwriting type things, are something that I have a lot of fun with, and I think are valuable tools and ways that people can interact with music, and I wouldn't find that I saw much of that going on from the Japan side of it, but I also don't see that much of that going on from the school.

Similarly, JTP 2 explained the "homogenous mindset" of the Japanese people, "it's like a group mentality rather than America, who's just like, 'I gotta get done what I need to get done, and if you're in the way, I'm just gonna, like, go around you,' whereas like here, they're like, 'oh, you're in the way do you need help?' Like, 'do you want to do kind of show you where you need to go?'" While Japanese locals tend to be less self-centered than Americans, they often struggle to "think outside the box," which JTP 2 believes stems from the education system, "these are some like big faults with the system that I think comes from the higher education system."

Furthermore, the Japanese people often function under militant discipline: "They have this set statement they're supposed to say, and then you just keep asking, like, can you help me a different way? And then they just repeat the same, like quote or the line or what they memorized in their job training. Like, this is not helpful to me like can you do some customer service and like talk to me like a human and not like a robot?" JTP 2 also mentioned that those who can think more freely often studied abroad and went to an international school or a more prestigious school in Japan, "So these are some like big faults with the system that I think comes from the higher education system. You will meet a lot of people who can think outside the box like my husband and many other of my friends that are from here, but it's interesting that a lot of them either went to international schools or really good schools in Japan and or studied abroad."

Similarly, American Student Participant 3, who studied abroad in Japan, mentioned the Japanese concept of "shingtai," which is the concept of growing in your craft and in your character simultaneously, "For example, when a player had a bad game, you know, an American player, they would maybe break their bat or throw it or something and they very much are against like, and this also sumo too, like they don't show any emotion even if they win like they're very just stone-cold kind of very respectful in that in that sense." Finally, in recent years, some aspects of the Japanese education system have started to resemble the American education system in terms of rigor. JSP 1 recognized this resemblance. He stated that he wished his teachers were a bit more "consistent" in their teachings, especially in their instruction on practicing outside of the classroom, "Mainly in my high school and middle school career, I don't think they push the students enough. I don't expect them to be like military-style, yell at them, do this, do that. But I do want them to like, specify, how to practice."

Research Question 2. How might integrating Japanese music education techniques (including philosophies and repertoire) in American schools affect American music students?

Overall Preparation for Musicians in America

Most American participants reported a lack of preparation and basic skill instruction in their education. While discussing the knowledge of music teachers in America, ATP 2 stated, "Music education here, and especially music teaching, is completely unregulated." Similarly, when asked if his music education adequately prepared him for his musical endeavors, ASP 2 stated, "Oh, in terms of music? No, definitely not." However, ASP 1 mentioned that overall, her music education prepared her, "Yes, I would say yes. I was lucky that I did have teachers that knew what they were doing, which is not always the case."

ATP 1 stated that the school at which he teaches has no music theory course. While there are varsity and non-varsity bands, the school offers no introductory music courses. Thus, music teachers must provide students with the minimum amount of music theory necessary to play their repertoire, “We have, it’s more of a visual learning guide. We don’t even teach music theory, technically. You know, we have pictures of a fretboard or fret chart. We have pictures of drums and high hat, bass, snare kind of stacked and this is the beat, so or they’re sectioned off, and this is where it goes. And eventually, these kids learn enough notes.” ASP 2, a recording artist and music producer in Los Angeles, mentioned how he wishes his education provided him a stronger foundation in “general music” when he first began learning:

> I’m trying to think, in high school, we had like history of art and then history of music and that was basically it. There wasn’t any like modern music, or like performance, or instruments, or anything like that. So it was, yeah, it was basically just like, hey, here’s the history of music. It wasn’t like, hey, we’re looking to, like, help people who want to get immersed in music. It was, you know, it’s just kind of, like you’d have to do that on your own basically.

ASP 2 discussed how the lack of essential preparation in school affected his confidence as a musician. While he was heavily interested in teaching music, he felt unequipped, “So I would have felt very uncomfortable putting anything out because I’m just like, I don’t know enough. You know, like, I feel like, hey, it’s not appropriate for me to do that. Right? But the reality is, that’s ridiculous.”

After high school, ASP 2 studied music production and recording. However, even in a music-focused degree program, there was no music theory, “But then when I went to the recording school, there was zero music theory at all. It was all just like the physics of engineering, like there was literally nothing about like, here’s how you play an instrument, or this is what’s cool.” Because his school did not offer it, ASP 2 studied music theory and practical instrumentation independently. As he entered the professional industry, he noticed very few of

his coworkers played instruments or knew basic music theory, “I know so many people in music who just don’t know theory at all, and they couldn’t play an instrument.” ASP 2 also mentioned how these skills are a “huge advantage” in the industry, despite their disparity, “I mean it’s the kind of thing where, at least in terms of like the engineering/producer or whatever kind of world, if you know music stuff where you can play an instrument, that’s like instantly, like oh, whoa.”

Teaching Methods in America

Regarding teaching methods, the American participants primarily reported an emphasis on mental health and character-building benefits from music education rather than technical or practical music skills. ASP 2 noted that the “general principles about learning working hard” were the main takeaways from his music classes in school. Furthermore, ASP 3 stated that he struggled with overconfidence as a younger musician, “And I think the teacher did a good job of like kind of bring me down to earth and you know, showing that, you know, there’s still a lot to learn, you know, and integrating me into the group even though I sort of had other skills that the other kids didn’t.” ASP 2 also mentioned how his current school regularly teaches mental health regulations for musicians:

> Alexander Technique classes are also offered classes here. I know they’ve been very popular at DePaul, and they’ve really helped me with just being able to, you know, help with air flow better, for the trumpet player, and even just, you know, getting a good night’s sleep, or dealing with stress before the concerts, stuff like that. Performance anxiety is a very, I know through the school of music, that’s a very big issue.

Some music educators in America attempt to personalize their lessons for their students as well, “Everyone is a different learner, everyone, just everybody is different. People are different. How they receive information is different.” ASP 1 noted that the quality and effectiveness of her music education in America was highly dependent on the instructor, “I wouldn’t say it’s been all good or all bad, you know, because you, especially when you go to

school for it, you have many different teachers, many different personalities, so some experiences have been great, and then there's always, you know, the teacher that you're not exactly compatible with, right?" ATP 2, as a professional music instructor for all ages, considers this concept when meeting new students:

> I have learned because of teaching remotely, because of the pandemic, I have had to teach many new students to me who are through a screen, and I learned that obviously, when you're teaching, it's important to know your person and get to know your person as a human being. First and foremost, because the communication is between you two first and foremost, then whoever is ready to receive your information.

For example, when ATP 1 is aware that one of his students is working to become an industry professional, he offers extra resources to assist them on their journey:

> And then I have a few students that want to be music majors, and so I set them up with extra lessons from teachers. I try to get them as involved as possible, playing solos. I try to give them the most of my percussion ensemble concert pieces and try to give them a little more of the challenging parts. And you know, I think about things. I talk to him and think about things that they're going to see in music school. Of course, you know, I go that step further. I try to get them entered in competitions, give them scholarships, and start introducing them to certain music professors that I know, so that way they can start building some networking.

America's Standardized Curriculum

In many American classrooms, teachers develop the curriculum, not the schools. According to ATP 1, lessons are conducted "by ear for the most part," "So, we teach our own curriculum for the most part, we don't have anything that's like set in stone." When asked what classes he took in high school, ASP 1 stated, "In high school, we had like history of art and then history of music, and that was basically it. There wasn't any like modern music or like performance or instruments or anything like that." He also mentioned that if you wanted to learn anything about playing an instrument or how to pursue a career in the arts, you had to "do that on your own."

Similarly, ATP 1 discussed a formerly offered course, music appreciation, which covered various musical topics, "We talked about what is sound, and then what is music, how do you define those things. The whole course of, you know, talking about what it does to you, you know, psychologically and physically. And then eventually we get into music history." However, his school no longer offers this due to a drop in enrollment.

Finally, the researcher asked ATP 1 what he would seek to improve in his school's music program. He stated that many of the problems are a "school district issue":

> We're not going out to middle schools right now, but really what should be doing is taking part of the day and going to, you know, our feeder campuses and working with the beginning percussionists to get to know them, because when you're working just with one band director, a lot of times percussion is kind of thrown out the mix, and just in general, they need that extra help to build those extra sounds to keep kids going. Working with middle schoolers isn't always the easiest thing, so I wish that was incorporated more in my school district. There are districts like that where, you know, you do have the directors of the high schools going out to the middle schools and helping run those classes as well, so, it would help bring in a consistent skill level every year versus all right, here we go, we're starting over again.

Importance of the Arts in America

Many issues with music education in America result from a lack of prioritization. For example, ATP 1 noted, "ISD doesn't really put Fine Arts first." In his school, any changes made recently to the music education courses only occurred to justify the teacher's jobs during the pandemic, "We decided, hey, well, we gotta get our numbers up to justify our positions and keep our jobs right. Keep our whole staff going. So, we created actually a beginning course for the high school kids." While a new course for high schoolers is a positive addition to the curriculum, it resulted from an attempt at budget cuts in the artistic department.

Furthermore, schools rarely assign music classes to students who desire to learn music. Instead, music lessons merely satisfy the student's extracurricular requirement. As a result, music teachers must instruct varying levels of musicians in a single class, "We get all these kids that

come in, a lot of them are just kind of dumped in there and we just kind of, I don't know, it's about 30 kids, usually, and the three of us will split up those kids, we'll audition them all and see what they're successful at." While occasionally mixing advanced and beginner musicians during class time is a valid educational technique, it can lead to inconsistent instruction if not appropriately regulated, "it would help bring in a consistent skill level every year versus all right, here we go, we're starting over again."

ATP 2 also discussed the issue of budget cuts in schools. First, she mentioned how many people today want to learn a skill "in five minutes on the internet" rather than realizing "how much time it takes to actually learn something, and what it is they're learning." According to ATP 2, long-term learning provides "an outlet of sound and creativity," which she believes is very important. In her city, she has also noticed the implementation of budget cuts in the arts, "All these budget cuts where they're not putting any arts education in schools. I don't know if it's a national thing, but it's definitely a New York thing and definitely a citywide school thing."

ASP 3 noted that more percussion instrument exercises would benefit elementary students. However, budgets for music programs may not allow for such additions, "I feel like the percussion instruments would be a great way to introduce some more music just cause, but yeah, I mean, I guess I also understand maybe that resources could be a tough issue too. There might not be the budget for it." Lastly, ASP 2 stated that a career-focused education would have significantly benefited him as he searched for his passions in school, as he was not aware that a music career was possible, "learning that there are different avenues within music would help a lot with, in terms of like how many, how people get turned on to actually being like, hey, I want to do this with my life."

Sub-Question 1: To what degree should schools seek to incorporate world and cultural music into students' education?

World and Cultural Music in Japan

The Japanese school system implements traditional and cultural music into students' curriculum starting in elementary school. JSP 2 stated that 90% of what she studied in elementary and secondary school was traditional and cultural Japanese music. Furthermore, students not only learn the history and meaning behind the music but also practice using traditional instruments. JTP 2 recalls witnessing a performance with a traditional koto instrument played by a mother and daughter, who wore kimonos. In addition, JSP 1 stated:

> They use a lot of Japanese instruments. I've played taiko or wazaiko, like Japanese style drums and stuff. It depends on the place. There are places that do mix traditional Japanese shamisen or toto and stuff like that. My college does have stuff like that, but my schools specifically do not use traditional instruments, but we did play songs that were really heavily influenced by like real traditional Japanese music and stuff.

Similarly, private music teachers in Japan employ children's Japanese music songbooks, many of which contain primarily Japanese folk songs. JTP 1 noted that many of his students enjoy playing anime theme songs recreationally. However, several participants also reported a heavy classical influence in Japan. JSP 1 stated that there is a "heavy classical influence," and many musicians in Japan work to replicate well-known classical artists such as "Mozart or Bach." Finally, music performances commonly incorporate J-pop and American pop songs.

In addition to in-school practice, world and cultural music are often displayed at festivals. JTP 2 stated:

> So, we're kind of more involved in, like, the Korean community here called Zainichi. And so, one of our friends does like the traditional Korean music drumming stuff. And there's, like, dance classes and drum classes and stuff that they offer. Like somewhere downtown Tokyo, for anybody who's interested, but mainly like they need the Zainichi community to kind of keep that tradition alive and that, like, pride in your culture.

While students learn some traditional, cultural, and world music, JSP 1 and 2 noted that they would have appreciated more, “So I do wish there was more like traditional Japanese music. I do like the Japanese music there is. I’ve only played like two or three songs that really utilized it. But I wouldn’t say it’s lacking. I would say it’s more a personal want in a way.” JSP 2 currently lives in Spain, so she wished she had a better understanding of Latino music, “Now I live in Spain, where so many Latinos live, and if I wish I knew more about, you know, Latin American, then I could enjoy more, or I could, you know, catch up with them, or dancing.”

World and Cultural Music in America

In America, world and cultural music incorporation levels vary heavily by school. In his school, ATP 1 stated, “I used to teach elementary music for my first three years of working, and there’s a lot more world music involved with that than people think.” Furthermore, before the school discontinued it, ATP 1’s music appreciation course covered a wide range of historical and world music topics, “And then eventually we get into music history, we date back to the Catholic Church. We start there, and how all music formed, and we go along, you know, the timeline in history.” He continued to describe the world music exploration in this course, “We go through Colombian, like Brazilian, type music. We talk about slavery and how the blues started and, jazz, and then country and rock. We just build it up to kind of where we’re at in the modern time.”

While some music classes may cover many historical and theoretical topics, practice-based lessons rarely exist. ASP 2 stated, “I think it was more like, hey, here’s the history of this instrument. These are the cultures that traditionally use it, but it wasn’t like, here’s this Oud being used in a super cool way in this pop song, you know, it wasn’t like that.” ATP 1’s school, based in South Texas, offers a mariachi class as an optional elective. However, he noted:

> Some things I wish I could have done differently, and if the class was going to keep going, I would have wrote out a grant or, you know, wrote a letter for a grant to maybe received some actual world music instruments. Because we did talk about African drumming, and all those, even like pan flutes. You know things you see like on the Riverwalk, right? I thought it'd be cool to have kids at least play along with those things and have a little more hands on and see what it was like. And you know, for non-band kids, it might be a little more interesting, but it was pretty much just a lecture course.

At a neighboring school in San Antonio, ATP 1 stated that there is a diverse musical program that includes Jamaican and Caribbean sounds and Brazilian drums and hosts a guest artist every year who specializes in some type of cultural music:

> He does these big concerts, and they include all types of music and the world drumming is one of the cool aspects that they bring to the program. I think it is really important too. Kids learn a different culture to a sense and learn why, you know, there's certain signals and rhythms that they learn that go along with other things. So that's a school that really kind of, has a big variety of things going on in their program.

Nevertheless, the musical repertoire in America centers around classical music. ATP 2 stated that while schools are beginning to make some progress, there is still a long way to go, "I think it's very, very important to include all, all cultures and all include everything possible, but it's a new world in that everything that has been printed as we know it in Western classical music or obviously Western classical men, and so just now we're learning to expand our horizons to find the other music that's much, much harder to find, but it's happening."

A few American participants had suggestions for improving the incorporation of world and cultural music in America. For example, ATP 2 believes "it should depend on the person studying, and what their cultural background is just to know, I just think it's really important for them to have some kind of connection." ASP 2 stated that students should learn how to incorporate instruments of other cultures into their original compositions and arrangements:

> I think the main thing is like, hey, you know everybody has guitars, and bass, and drums, and whatever, but these other cool cultures have all this other stuff that no one really talks about. Like there's all this percussion and like just, you know, there's infinite stuff that's just so cool, like didgeridoos or whatever, you know it's like if you, I think if it was framed as like hey here's what other people around the world are using to help to make music and this is why they use that, like there's no rule that says you can't use that or that they can't use that we're using. So, to me, it's like the interconnectivity of how everything is with the internet.

Finally, based on personal experience, ASP 1 believes playing with an orchestra exposes one to a wide variety of music, "playing in orchestras, you're working with all kinds of music, from the classics to, you know, contemporary, and a lot of contemporary brings in world music. So, I think just being an orchestral musician exposes you to multi-cultures."

Educational & Extracurricular Opportunities in America

In addition to the accessibility of private lessons in-person and online, schools provide a few opportunities for students to apply musical performance skills in real-world situations. According to ATP 1, marching band season usually occurs in the fall, while concert season is in the spring. Rehearsal schedules for marching band and concerts are regular, typically requiring an average of four days a week. There are usually varsity and non-varsity groups for competitions in American schools, which require auditions to get in.

The University Interscholastic League (UIL) hosts major competitions, which judge concert and chamber groups mainly on sight-reading on a scale of 1-5. Finally, at the collegiate level, ASP 1 noted that there are many orchestral opportunities, including master classes with industry professionals, "I think, you know, in college, they had me doing a lot of pit orchestra things, and that definitely helped because I did several, several years with a professional company, like opera companies, and other musical pit orchestras, and that's definitely a developed skill."

Sub-Question 2: How might the incorporation of Japanese music education life enrichment philosophies affect American students?

Life Enrichment Philosophies in Japan

Participants in Japan and America discussed the life enrichment benefits of music and the societal mindset of their community. In college, ATP 2 explored how Asian students process information versus American students. He stated, “The theory that it was basically because they’re raised more in like a collectivist society that their memories will reflect that value instead of like us in America. We’re all like, you know, selfish.” Similarly, JTP 2 also mentioned the collectivist mindset of the Japanese culture, “I mean people here, they’re really nice, and they really like, it’s like a group mentality rather than America, who’s just like, I gotta get done what I need to get done, and if you’re in the way, I’m just gonna, like, go around you. Whereas like here, they’re like, oh, you’re in the way, do you need help?” Finally, she reported that she much prefers teaching in Japan versus in America, “I’ve much more enjoyed teaching here in that regard, with like the respect and being paid on time and how they treat you. The lessons too, like a lot of times the parents were like you’re, in America, they’re like you’re not doing like this, I want my student to or my kid to do this or that they don’t trust you.”

JSP 1 mentioned several times throughout the interview that he gained much more than music skills during his studies. He discussed learning how to express his opinions, gaining confidence in live performances, communicating respectfully with others, and taking on responsibility, “I think the number one thing I’ve learned so far is not even just music, it’s communication skills.” However, while Japanese school systems teach excellency and respect, the private instructors in Japan notice a lack of creativity opportunity. JTP 1 stated:

> I like to try to be a lot more creative with my students. I have like a jazz background, so you know, improvising and all of that, like songwriting-type things, are something that I have a lot of fun with, and I think are valuable tools and ways that people can interact with music, and I wouldn't find that I saw much of that going on from the Japan side of it, but I also don't see that much of that going on from the like school.

Instead of producing professional musicians, private tutors in Japan seek to cultivate a love for music within their students:

> I think that one of the biggest areas that is a challenge or that can always be better is like, inspiring students to, like, want to spend their own time and dive into a subject or a technique or whatever on their own. And like just doing whatever it is for that individual person that really makes them want to, that sparks their interest. I think that if you've got that, then there is a ton to work with. It's pretty easy after that if somebody is willing to put in the time and the effort, then they're going to be fine.

Life Enrichment Philosophies in America

JTP 2 compared the integration of music in the daily lives of the general public in America versus Japan. With access to quality music education, JTP 2 believes more people would embrace music as a part of their life, "I wonder if America had the type of serious music education system in place all over the country, if we would see more diversity in their professional musical life. It's hard to tell since Japan is so homogeneous. I believe that better access to music education will either create music lovers, concert goers, or more ability for anyone to pursue a life in music if they wish."

Like private tutors in Japan, American teachers do not seek to produce professional musicians. Both ATP's explained their main goal was to help students grow as people through music:

> You know, I'm not downing sports, but I think music is really more of a team-building activity, in the end. It's not always about winning. We're about what is our best quality? Was it a good run of a show or a program you put on today? Are we lifting each other up? Are we bringing each other down? Are we holding each other accountable? Again, I think those things you practice have enough with the kids in this setting and they can take those things and use them in life later on.

ATP 1 works primarily with inner-city students. He also mentioned how much it can help children from complicated home lives and how music enrichment philosophies "really play into their kid's mental life." Since ATP 1 consistently prepares bands for competitions, he also discussed the benefits of competitions, even if his performers do not place, "And I found that after that competition, even though we didn't score very high, even though, and they had a good run and we just weren't as high skilled, I just saw a boost in, they had more interest in what they were doing now and it takes some time to kind of build that up." Finally, ATP 2 stated that music lessons prepare students for much more than becoming a concert artist:

> I don't think there are skills outside of music which require this kind of coordination and physical-mental coordination using that sort of, those skills, it just isn't anywhere else, so those are applicable toward others pretty much everything else we need to do in adult life that isn't really teachable in any other way, so I think it goes the other way actually. So just because someone says oh, I don't want, I don't necessarily need to be professional, blah blah blah, you will be a professional something else, but it will actually help you in that more so than being a musician, I think, because again these skills just aren't found anywhere else.

Life Enrichment Philosophies in the Suzuki Method

One of the most notable aspects of the Suzuki Method is its life enrichment philosophies. However, according to ATP 2, who specializes in the Suzuki Method, there are a few downsides to the method. ATP 2 stated that the Suzuki Method has precise regulations, "In the Suzuki philosophy, I believe that that only works really well in certain conditions and specifications, because as I understand it, because he was very, very specific about how things should be, ideally for it to work. So only when I feel that that's an ideal situation where we have all those components." For example, she mentioned that the teacher, student, and parents must invest in the child's education and utilization of the Suzuki Method for it to be fully effective.

Furthermore, while many instructors claim to be Suzuki certified, ATP 2 stated that very few know how to implement the methodologies properly, "I think a lot of times the idea is not

properly understood. You can also be certified but not quite understand what it is or not quite implement it." However, ATP 2 stated that the Suzuki method works exceptionally well under the correct circumstances, "But I do think it only works well exceptionally well in certain circumstances. And the teacher has to be flexible enough to understand." When implemented correctly, the Suzuki method "prepares people for way more than being a concert artist" and helps them become a "successful human being."

Summary

The nine semi-structured interviews explored the experiences of Japanese and American students and teachers. Each participant was over the age of 16 and had musical experience within the last five years to ensure maximum recall accuracy. The researcher asked each participant the same open-ended research questions, which explored overall preparation, importance of the arts, teaching methods, standardized curricula, foundation keyboard skills, life enrichment philosophies, world and cultural music incorporation, and extracurricular opportunities.

In Japan, educators and students reported a wide range of opportunities for musicians. Not only do schools provide students with a well-rounded education, including foundational keyboard and music theory skills and extracurricular activities, but music is also heavily embedded into the culture, which provides musicians with a sense of community and encouragement. However, private instructors in Japan noticed a lack of room for creative expression. While the Japanese school systems attempt to incorporate American philosophies like lesson flexibility and creative outlets, underlying traditional teaching methods, such as Kumon, remain prominent.

The American participants reported a lack of overall preparation in their music education. While private lessons, competitions, and school band classes are available for students, the arts

continue to be neglected by the education system in America. Several participants had experience in America and Japan and reported a noticeable difference between Japan and America's education system. Primary differences include the trouble with budget cuts in America and students' foundational understanding of music theory at a young age. However, a commonality between Japanese and American music education included an emphasis on classical music and utilizing the Suzuki Method in some capacity.

The researcher organized the emergent themes within their corresponding research questions section. Chapter 5 will present the insights related to each research question within the context of music education in Japanese and American school systems and how incorporating both might benefit American students and teachers. The following chapter discusses the implications of the findings to identify key takeaways and how education researchers and philosophers may apply them to future music education program planning.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Study

Music education in American school systems has evolved significantly over the years. In 1986, the MENC recommended that schools implement comprehensive music education programs at all levels. Nevertheless, even in the 21st century, music education still warrants a position in students' curricula in American schools. Thus, the problem is that these disagreements leave music education in American schools inconsistent and lacking proper student preparation. Conversely, Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies, such as foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies, seek to provide well-rounded music education for Japanese students.

However, the problem is that literature has not sufficiently addressed how American and Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies differ and how educators may seek to combine them. While scholarly sources that analyze American and Japanese music education techniques are available, there is a gap in the literature comparing the two. This study sought to determine the strengths, weaknesses, and standard practices of the Japanese and American education systems.

Summary of Purpose

The study aimed to investigate the differences that studies have yet to explore between Japanese and American music education methodologies in teaching music literacy through foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies. This study utilized a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological research design. Additionally, this study examined the effects of Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies through data collection and qualitative interviews with nine participants whose

music education consisted of these elements. The researcher interviewed two Japanese music educators, two American music educators, two Japanese music students, and three American music students.

These interviews helped to provide insight into how Japanese music education methodologies such as the Suzuki method and COS have affected Japanese students. The specific Japanese music education methodologies this study explored include foundational keyboard skills and Suzuki Method/COS repertoire. These qualitative interviews also illuminated how integrating Japanese music education techniques (including philosophies and repertoire) in American schools may affect American music students. The specific aspects of Japanese music education that this study explored with the intent to incorporate into American schools are world and cultural music and life enrichment philosophies. Teachers emphasize world music, introducing students to traditional Japanese genres and genres from other Asian countries and Western countries. Music appreciation in Japan is highly developed, while music appreciation in America is underdeveloped and often neglected, depending on which method is implemented (aesthetic versus praxial, etc.).

Summary of Procedure

The researcher contacted local music students and teachers. Furthermore, the researcher contacted Japanese music students and educators. The study required two American music educators, two to three American music students, two Japanese educators (referring to location, not necessarily ethnicity), and two to three Japanese students (referring to location, not necessarily ethnicity). There was no age cap for the educators. However, their musical experience was within the past five years to keep memories relatively recent.

Once the researcher selected participants that met the criteria, she scheduled a time to meet and complete the interview. The researcher and the participant agreed on a time and communication method (video call, email, etc.) that was convenient for both. The interview was a semi-structured, private interview. However, the researcher accommodated if the participant was under eighteen and wished to have a parent/guardian present. The interviews took place via phone call, video chat, and email.

Chapter 5 consists of three sections. The first section presents the findings and insights acquired from the research questions in Chapter 4. This section also relates these findings to related research studies. The second section in Chapter 5 identifies the study's limitations, recommendations for future research, and implications for practice. The implications for practice section will discuss key concepts identified from the phenomenological study and how they may assist music education researchers and teachers in bettering their practice and improving the effectiveness and scope of their instruction.

Summary of Findings and Prior Research

Introduction

Despite the common roots of the American and Japanese education systems, the methodologies and philosophies have diverged over years of development, cultural influence, and political impact. Nevertheless, underlying commonalities remain in the two school systems' curriculum and music education standards. This study examined the practices of the Japanese music education system and compared them to that of the American music education system, namely the praxial and aesthetic philosophies utilized in many classrooms. To understand Japan's music education system, the researcher asked music students and teachers about their overall experience with music education in Japan, including the curriculum, methodologies, and

philosophies. Participants discussed professional and recreational development, life-enrichment philosophies, world music incorporation, and extra-curricular opportunities.

Research Question 1

Japanese Music is Integrated into the Culture & Curriculum

The Japanese Research Participants reported a deep integration of music into the culture, community, and curriculum. Music is integrated into the Japanese community's daily lives, regardless of occupation. Even in the rural countryside, quality music lessons are readily available, which produce successful musicians. Participants reported regular sightings of music students with instruments on their daily commute, music festivals in the cities, and having meaningful, complex conversations about music with their friends. JSP 1 stated that this integration greatly motivates him, as it provides a sense of community and understanding. Similarly, David J. Elliott defines music as a "social art": "Music is an interpretive and social art in which 'people join together in the communal and ritual actions of listening, watching, and participating empathetically as music makers bring forth unique musical events and experiences.'"[1]

The Suzuki Method utilizes the concept of incorporating music education into every aspect of a student's life. One example of this integration includes taking the strength of the praxial method, learning to read sheet music from the start, and taking Suzuki's principle of parent involvement. JTP 2 noted that the teacher, student, and parents must invest in the child's education and utilization of the Suzuki Method for it to be fully effective. For example, a student may learn to read sheet music in class and then gain supplemental help and instruction from their parents at home to reinforce topics learned in class. Thus, learning would occur not only in the

[1] Elliott, *Praxial Music Education,* Ch. 4.

classroom but at home as well. Finally, the student could end their evening with a “pure” or “aesthetic” listening experience. Before bed, a child could listen to their favorite songs: classical, worship, or otherwise.

Music Education in Japan Better Prepares Musicians

While not all the Japanese Participants pursued professional careers in the music industry, each one noted that their education well-prepared them for their personal endeavors, as they utilize their music skills regularly in their daily lives. For example, JSP 2 stated that her musical background made it “easier to study foreign languages,” such as Chinese, which is a tonal language. In contrast, American Participants, and those with experience in America and Japan, reported that music education is highly under-developed and under-funded. While the American education system tends to emphasize sports, math, and science, music is a required course in elementary through middle school.

In contrast, while American music education initially influenced Japanese music education, it no longer prepares musicians well for their professional or recreational endeavors. When asked if his music education adequately prepared him for his musical endeavors, ASP 2 stated, “Oh, in terms of music? No, definitely not.” ASP 1 mentioned that she did not learn the piano until her undergraduate studies. In addition, ASP 3 recalled that most of the students in his sixth-grade class “had never seen sheet music before,” despite the NAfME’s regulations.

Sub-Question 1

Most People in Japan Have Foundational Keyboard Skills

This study explored the incorporation, or lack of, foundational keyboard skills in Japanese and American music education. JSP 1 stated, “Everyone 100% has some kind of knowledge” of the piano. Furthermore, multiple Japanese participants noted that the piano is a

standard “baseline” for learning music theory. In addition, even participants whose main instrument was not the piano mentioned that it is the best instrument for students to start on. In the first year of primary school, students learn to read sheet music with pictures, symbols, and solfege. In addition to singing, primary students learn to play at least two instruments, most commonly, the harmonica and pianica, a keyboard aerophone with a “hose-like” mouthpiece that the students blow into while playing the keyboard.[2]

In contrast, while music lessons in American schools do not often teach foundational keyboard skills, a few instructors utilize the piano for visual teaching. ASP 2 learned music theory on the guitar but believes the piano is the optimal choice for learning music theory. However, ASP 1 mentioned that she did not learn the piano until her undergraduate studies. ASP 3 recalled that most of the students in his sixth-grade class “had never seen sheet music before, so it was a big challenge for them.”

Japanese pianist Josephine Yang discusses the music education system, curriculum, expectations in Japan, and the requirements for becoming a music educator: “All music students are expected to have basic competence in piano playing. Most courses in music schools cover Western classical music subjects; however, to receive certification as school music teachers in Japan, students are required to enroll in Japanese traditional and folk music in addition to the general music curriculum.”[3] Furthermore, the NAMM lists ten instruments for young musicians to learn first. While the list includes the piano, the NAMM recommends the recorder as the optimal beginner’s instrument, “The recorder is easier than other wind instruments and is the

[2] Kiester, “A Look at Japanese Music Education, 45.

[3] “Music Education in Japan.”

ideal introductory instrument."[4] Instead of preparing students with foundational keyboard skills that would equip them with the necessary knowledge, American music education incorporates "easier" instruments such as the recorder. As a result, American students are unprepared to pursue their musical endeavors.

Japanese Versus American Student Musical Ability

In most schools in Japan, mandatory music lessons begin in elementary school. Participants reported that children commonly start with learning the recorder and melodica, singing Japanese homework songs and solfege, and reading scores. Additionally, music theory is a part of the standardized testing in Japan, which determines the schools that children attend. The incorporation and consistency of music education classes prepare students to surpass advanced proficiency levels at a younger age than their American counterparts. While comparing American and Japanese middle school musicians, JSP 1 noted, "But they were lower level compared to here. It is crazy what some elementary schools even can do in music."

The American education system does not ensure a proper education for students. Wieczorek writes, "However, the nation's reading literacy rate, defined as students' abilities to 'understand complex texts, evaluate information and build hypotheses, and draw on specialized knowledge,' is low compared to other developed countries, at 86 to 98 percent of the population over age fifteen, and its science and mathematics proficiency also ranks below average."[5] Finally, JTP 2, who has experience as an instructor in America and Japan, stated, "I wonder if America had the type of serious music education system in place all over the country, if we would see more diversity in their professional musical life."

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[4] "Top 10 Instruments for Children to Learn to Play Music."

[5] Wieczorek, "Comparative Analysis," 100-101.

Sub-Question 2

Music Education in Japan Starts at a Young Age and is Well-Rounded

This study explored the inconsistency and lack of proper student preparation in American schools. Conversely, Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies, such as foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies, seek to provide well-rounded music education for students. Liston W. Bailey discusses the effects of early exposure to music education in his study. The findings of this study "support the importance of the inclusion of music education into early life experiences to enhance and enrich the personal and professional lives of individuals."[6]

While the American education system emphasizes sports, math, and science, music Japan requires music in elementary through middle school. Participants reported that children commonly start with learning the recorder and melodica, singing Japanese homework songs and solfege, and reading scores. Furthermore, music theory is a part of standardized testing in Japan. JSP 1, who has had educational experience in both America and Japan, stated that compared to America, "I got a lot more opportunities, specifically with music," after moving to Japan during middle school. Aside from personal study, he received no music instruction in America despite attending school part-way through junior high.

Similarly, ATP 1 stated that his school has no music theory course. While there are varsity and non-varsity bands, the school offers no introductory music courses. Thus, music teachers must provide students with the minimum amount of music theory necessary to play their repertoire, "We have, it's more of a visual learning guide. We don't even teach music theory, technically. You know, we have pictures of a fretboard or fret chart. We have pictures of drums

[6] Hartman et al., "Career professionals' reflections," 398.

and high hat, bass, snare kind of stacked and this is the beat, so or they're sectioned off, and this is where it goes. And eventually, these kids learn enough notes."

American Music Education Highlights Creativity, While Japan Encourages Discipline

While Japanese music education better prepares students for their creative endeavors, researchers, students, and educators are concerned about the lack of creative cultivation. Frank B. Abdoo, a music educator from the University of Southern California, examines the differences between the American and Japanese music education systems. Abdoo writes, "It has moved from its American beginnings toward a more intellectual or technical approach, especially in the area of Western music, whereas U.S. programs have moved toward a more creative approach."[7] In addition, Kitayama writes, "They should reconsider the prospects for the future of Japanese music education by reaffirming the central purpose of music education: cultivation of aesthetics through an appreciation of the beauty of music."[8]

While Japanese locals tend to be less self-centered than Americans, they often struggle to "think outside the box," which JTP 2 believes stems from the education system, "these are some like big faults with the system that I think comes from the higher education system." Furthermore, Wieczorek states, "An ongoing issue is student creativity, flexibility, or individual expression. Critical thinking is not a concept that has been highly valued in Japan. Japanese students are regimented and geared toward perseverance and self-discipline."[9] JTP 2 also mentioned that the Japanese people often function under militant discipline, "They have this set statement they're supposed to say, and then you just keep asking, like, can you help me a

[7] Abdoo, "Music Education in Japan," 56.

[8] Kitayama, "Historical Changes," 36.

[9] Wieczorek, "Comparative Analysis," 105.

different way? And then they just repeat the same, like a quote or the line or what they memorized in their job training." However, the rigidness in teaching methods is highly dependent on the teacher, as JSP 1 stated that he wished his teachers were a bit more "consistent" in their teachings, "Mainly in my high school and middle school career, I don't think they push the students enough. I don't expect them to be like military-style, yell at them, do this, do that. But I do want them to like, specify, how to practice."

Researcher Daniel M. Stamm disagrees with the widely maintained "illusion of rigor" regarding Japanese education. He argues that despite the widespread belief that Japanese classrooms are overly unforgiving, it is for the opposite reason that these classrooms have more success. Stamm presents two core methodologies in Japanese classrooms that aid in the success of their teachings: 1) a marked lack of pressure on students during their classes and 2) frequent, substantial periods of vigorous physical activity between classes.[10]

Research Question 2

American Education Emphasizes Mental Health Rather Than Practical Skills

National University in San Diego, California, defines social-emotional learning (SEL) as "a methodology that helps students of all ages to better comprehend their emotions, to feel those emotions fully, and demonstrate empathy for others. These learned behaviors are then used to help students make positive, responsible decisions; create frameworks to achieve their goals, and build positive relationships with others."[11] As of 2015, SEL programs operate in thousands of schools across the United States and other countries worldwide.[12] However, despite the recent

[10] Stamm, "Illusion of Rigor," 4.

[11] "What is Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)?: Why It Matters."

[12] Weissberg et al., "Social and Emotional Learning," pg. 3.

rise in SEL popularity, many researchers believe the technique is detrimental to a student's educational growth, "At its best, SEL is something of a secular character education stripped of virtue."[13]

Daniel Buck, an educator and editor-in-chief of the Chalkboard Review, believes that SEL techniques, at their worst, allow educators to influence their students according to their personal beliefs and agendas, including political opinions.[14] Buck writes, "Who would oppose teaching children basic emotional skills? As such, it acts as something of a rubber stamp, justifying whatever dream-list progressive educators want. Everything from eliminating math and traditional grading to providing lessons on gender identity and privilege comes under the banner of SEL."[15] Finally, Buck also observes a "disintegration of tradition and knowledge" in educational institutions, including K-12 classrooms and universities, leaving behind "vague, wispy, insubstantial goals," such as SEL.[16]

Regarding teaching methods, the American participants primarily reported an emphasis on mental health and character-building benefits from music education rather than technical or practical music skills. ASP 2 noted that the "general principles about learning working hard" were the main takeaways from his music classes in school. However, despite the efforts to help students with their mental health, the lack of practical teachings affected their confidence as they entered the music industry or higher education. ASP 2 discussed how the lack of essential preparation in school affected his confidence as a musician. While he was heavily interested in

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[13] Buck, "Social-Emotional Learning is a Dangerous Fad."

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

teaching music, he felt unequipped, “So I would have felt very uncomfortable putting anything out because I’m just like, I don’t know enough. You know, like, I feel like, hey, it’s not appropriate for me to do that. Right? But the reality is, that’s ridiculous.”

The Arts are Completely Neglected and Undervalued in American Schools

In many American classrooms, teachers develop curriculum, not the schools. According to ATP 1, lessons are conducted “by ear for the most part,” “So, we teach our own curriculum for the most part, we don’t have anything that’s like set in stone.” When asked what classes he took in high school, ASP 1 stated, “In high school, we had like history of art and then history of music, and that was basically it. There wasn’t any like modern music or like performance or instruments or anything like that.” He also mentioned that if you wanted to learn anything about playing an instrument or how to pursue a career in the arts, you had to “do that on your own.”

Many issues with music education in America result from a lack of prioritization. For example, ATP 1 noted, “ISD doesn’t really put Fine Arts first.” In his school, any changes made recently to the music education courses only occurred to justify the teacher’s jobs during the pandemic, “We decided, hey, well, we gotta get our numbers up to justify our positions and keep our jobs right. Keep our whole staff going. So, we created actually a beginning course for the high school kids.” While a new course for high schoolers is a positive addition to the curriculum, it resulted from an attempt at budget cuts in the artistic department.

Similarly, ATP 2 also discussed the issue of budget cuts in schools. First, she mentioned how many people today want to learn a skill “in five minutes on the internet” rather than realizing “how much time it takes to actually learn something, and what it is they’re learning.” According to ATP 2, long-term learning provides “an outlet of sound and creativity,” which she believes is very important. In her city, she has also noticed the implementation of budget cuts in

the arts, “All these budget cuts where they’re not putting any arts education in schools. I don’t know if it’s a national thing, but it’s definitely a New York thing and definitely a citywide school thing.”

One can most recently accredit the emphasis on “core subjects” such as math and science (originally derived from the Soviet Union) to the NCLB Act of 2002. According to Mark and Gary, the NCLB “required states to create and implement accountability standards and to determine educational success by testing students in curricular areas identified as ‘core subjects.’”[17] While the NCLB identified the arts as a core subject, the high-stakes testing in reading and mathematics forced administrators to emphasize preparing students for testing in those areas. Thus, schools extracted time from other subjects, mainly music, to prepare.[18]

Sub-Question 1

Classical Music Takes Precedence Over World and Cultural Studies

World and cultural music incorporation is crucial for a well-rounded education. However, it is underutilized in American and Japanese schools. While Japanese schools are more advanced in exposing their students to traditional and world music, classical music remains at the forefront. At the end of his article, Satomi suggests future research exploring the lack of traditional music incorporation into Japanese schools. He writes, “The future development of teaching traditional music and world music will require collaboration among music teachers, music researchers, and musicians.”[19]

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[17] Mark and Gary, *American Music Education*, pgs. 452-453.

[18] Ibid., pg. 453.

[19] Satomi, “Traditional Music and World Music,” 97.

The MEXT requires the use of traditional and non-traditional songs in the classroom, starting as early as primary school, for application in music games. Despite the standards of the National Association of Schools of Music in America, world music incorporation is minimal. In 1972, the NASM revised its criteria to "include a non-Western requirement for programs leading to a baccalaureate degree in music."[20] This requirement only applies to programs leading into a college-level course; it does not address elementary or even high school-level programs.

The Japanese school system implements traditional and cultural music into students' curriculum starting in elementary school. JSP 2 stated that 90 percent of what she studied in elementary and secondary school was traditional and cultural Japanese music. Furthermore, students not only learn the history and meaning behind the music but also practice using traditional instruments. However, several college-level participants reported a heavy classical influence in Japan. JSP 1 stated that there is a "heavy classical influence," and many musicians in Japan work to replicate well-known classical artists such as "Mozart or Bach."

In America, world and cultural music incorporation levels vary heavily by school. In his school, ATP 1 stated, "I used to teach elementary music for my first three years of working, and there's a lot more world music involved with that than people think." Nevertheless, the musical repertoire in America centers around classical music. ATP 2 stated that while schools are beginning to make some progress, there is still a long way to go, "I think it's very, very important to include all, all cultures and all include everything possible, but it's a new world in that everything that has been printed as we know it in Western classical music or obviously Western classical men, and so just now we're learning to expand our horizons to find the other music that's much, much harder to find, but it's happening."

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[20] "Toward a Multi-Cultural Music Education Curriculum."

Sub-Question 2

Life Enrichment Philosophies in America and Japan are Nearly Identical

Life enrichment philosophies are prominent in American and Japanese music classrooms. JSP 1 mentioned several times throughout the interview that he gained much more than music skills during his studies. He discussed learning to express his opinions, gaining confidence in live performances, communicating respectfully with others, and taking on responsibility. Similarly, ATP 1, who works primarily with inner-city students, mentioned how much it can help children from complicated home lives and how music enrichment philosophies "really play into their kid's mental life." He also discussed the benefits of competitions, even if his performers do not place, "And I found that after that competition, even though we didn't score very high, even though, and they had a good run and we just weren't as high skilled, I just saw a boost in, they had more interest in what they were doing now and it takes some time to kind of build that up."

According to researchers, life enrichment philosophies differ between Japanese and American music educators. Kitayama provides an example of the acknowledgment of music's life enrichment qualities in the current COS, "This 'Tentative Course of Study' stated, essentially, that the main objective of music education was to cultivate aesthetic sentiments and fertile human minds by appreciating the beauty of music."[21] Comparatively, David J. Elliott, author of *Music Matters, 2nd Edition*, states, "There's no qualitative, quantitative, or pragmatic evidence to support the theoretical claim that music listening, music making, or school music 'educates feelings.'"[22]

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[21] Kitayama, "Historical Changes," 34.

[22] Elliot and Silverman, *Music Matters, 2nd Edition,* Ch. 2.

Nevertheless, despite the debate circling music education philosophies in American classrooms, most educators agree that music enriches students' lives in one way or another, "Every subject worthy of study, including music, embodies a diversity of values, all deserving our attention. Some of the values seem so important as to warrant our deepest devotion. One task of a philosophy of music education is to illuminate what those might be so that in pursuing them, our effects on our students can be as beneficial as music is capable of making them."[23]

When Implemented Correctly, The Suzuki Method is Highly Effective

One of the most notable aspects of the Suzuki Method is its life enrichment philosophies. According to the Talent Education Research Institute, approximately 400,000 children worldwide are learning to play music via the Suzuki method.[24] However, according to ATP 2, who specializes in the Suzuki Method, there are a few downsides to the process. ATP 2 stated that the Suzuki Method has precise regulations, "In the Suzuki philosophy, I believe that that only works really well in certain conditions and specifications, because as I understand it, because he was very, very specific about how things should be, ideally for it to work. So only when I feel that that's an ideal situation where we have all those components." When implemented correctly, the Suzuki method "prepares people for way more than being a concert artist" it helps them become a "successful human being."

A unique aspect of the Suzuki method is its emphasis on listening and imitation. Suzuki recommends delayed reading when teaching children so that their ear develops first, "Just as young children are not expected to be able to read their language before they speak it, Suzuki children are not asked to read music before they have already listened to and can accurately play

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[23] Reimer, *Seeking the Significance of Music Education,* Ch. 1A.

[24] Hotta, *Suzuki: The Man and His Dream,* 1.

a fairly extensive repertory of pieces."[25] Furthermore, the curriculum encourages younger/beginner musicians to observe the practices and performances of older/more experienced musicians. The Suzuki method also seeks to teach children in a well-rounded way by incorporating musical games, holding recitals, involving parents in the child's education, and teaching rhythm through experimental practice and movement.[26]

However, similar to the "homogenous mindset" often seen in Japanese culture, the Suzuki Method requires students to follow the teachings blindly. ATP 2 stated, "I find that those who have been Suzuki trained just blindly obviously have relied on their aural skills first, so that's the first to develop. But that means that everything else goes to the side, so it's important that the teacher fill in everything else along the way as they can digest it to be well-rounded." While following meticulous instruction is common in Japan, ATP 2 noted the importance of children understanding why they are learning a particular song or musical concept, "Blindly doing such things only goes so far for so many reasons, and just telling someone to do such things. One does that because they don't if you're speaking to a young child and you just want them to keep doing it, then you do that, you get them to do it a lot of times in a certain way. But the thing is, as they get older, they have to understand why they're doing it."

[25] "The Suzuki Method".

[26] Ibid.

Conclusion

Music education in America is suffering. Not only is this crucial aspect of a child's education losing financial support from the government-funded school districts, but the beliefs from which officials sourced American education methodologies and philosophies do not value the arts. For a brief time, the Japanese empire respected American education and hired American educators to Westernize their curriculum. This influence involved including music education as an aesthetic practice rather than a militaristic tactic and studying European classical music. Educators and researchers perceive Japanese education as rigorous, while American education lacks depth. While America once influenced Japanese education, American researchers and educators must now examine Japanese methodologies and philosophies to revise their education system, namely, music education. However, some aspects of American music education, such as creative expression, are better developed. This difference, among others, is a result of cultural differences. Thus, by combining the techniques of Japanese and American music education methodologies and philosophies, American educators can improve the state of the arts education in America.

This qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study investigated the differences that studies have yet to explore between Japanese and American music education methodologies in terms of teaching music literacy through foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies. This study utilized a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological research design. It examined the effects of Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies through data collection and qualitative interviews with nine students whose music education consisted of these elements. The researcher interviewed two Japanese music educators, two American music educators, two Japanese music

students, and three American music students. This study helped to provide insight into how Japanese music education methodologies such as the Suzuki method and COS (Course of Study) have affected Japanese students. The specific Japanese music education methodologies this study explored include foundational keyboard skills and the Suzuki method/COS repertoire.

Furthermore, this study illuminated how integrating Japanese music education techniques (including philosophies and repertoire) in American schools may affect American music students. The specific aspects of Japanese music education that this study explored with the intent to incorporate into American schools are world and cultural music and life enrichment philosophies. The two data collection procedures the study utilized are question-based and written/researcher-based protocols. The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended (see Appendix G). The results of this study benefited and advanced music by exploring the integration of Japanese music education techniques into American classrooms.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the history, current methodologies, philosophies, and curricula of both countries, as well as the experiences of both Japanese and American music students and teachers, to determine the possible effects and benefits of an education system that incorporates philosophies and methodologies from both. This study also examined the Suzuki Method, which America and Japan both utilize. While the Suzuki Method has some shortcomings, it works as a bridge between American and Japanese music education systems, displaying their possible relationship.

The researcher asked the same research questions to nine participants, who each shared their unique perspectives surrounding music education in their respective countries. These interviews revealed several insights.

Firstly, Japanese music students have a better sense of community because it is integrated into the culture & curriculum. Students are more likely to feel confident and part of a community when there is a noticeable integration of their passion into the culture around them. With regular festivals, competitions, and readily available music lessons, music students are seen more often in public. In contrast, the arts are completely neglected and undervalued in American schools, which is detrimental to a student's education.

Furthermore, music education in Japan better prepares musicians for personal endeavors, whether professional or recreational. The overall difference in quality between American and Japanese music education is most notably accredited to the implementation of foundational keyboard skills in Japan. Most individuals, no matter their occupation, have experience with the piano. Finally, because music education in Japan starts at a young age and is well-rounded (including foundational keyboard and music theory skills), the musical ability of Japanese students surpasses the ability of significantly older students in America.

However, because Japanese music education is significantly more consistent and concentrated, multiple research participants reported the difference between America and Japan regarding creative expression. American music education highlights creativity, while Japan encourages discipline. Similarly, American education emphasizes mental health & social implications rather than practical skills. These characteristics are two primary ways American methodologies and philosophies influenced the Japanese education system. However, in recent years, researchers have reported a transition from American techniques back to the disciplinary styles of previous centuries.

Two central aspects of the Japanese and American music education systems received similar reports from research participants. First, classical music takes precedence over world and

cultural studies in America and Japan. In Japan, traditional and cultural music is integrated into the culture via festivals and homework songs in early education. In America, cultural music integration varies by state. In Texas, Latin-American culture is prominent. Thus, schools often incorporate Latino music via concerts and guest musicians. However, while both countries incorporate world and cultural music, most participants reported an oversaturation of classical influence in competitions and curricula and wished their curricula utilized more world music. Second, life enrichment philosophies in America and Japan are nearly identical. Private and school music instructors included life enrichment philosophies in their rationale for teaching music. Furthermore, government music education standards in America and Japan include life enrichment as a main takeaway from a quality music education. Lastly, multiple participants reported an experience with the Suzuki Method in America and Japan. While no participants noted any negative connotations from this method, they stated it takes several individuals' cooperation to work effectively.

The results of this study revealed the shortcomings of the American and Japanese music education systems through historical analysis, relevant research studies, and open-ended interviews. By thoroughly investigating these results, American educators can improve their students' education. Drawing from these insights, the research concludes that the American music education system has fallen short of its standards and is no longer benefitting its students. While far from flawless, the Japanese education system has surpassed that which it originated.

Limitations

This qualitative study explored the experiences of nine participants from the Japanese and American music education communities via online video chat. The two data collection procedures the study utilized were question-based and written/researcher-based protocols. The

interviews were semi-structured and open-ended. Despite the researcher's efforts to reduce the study's limitations, this chapter notes two main limitations.

The first limitation was the sample size. While the researcher recruited nine participants, the likelihood of these experiences representing an entire demographic is slim. However, to address this limitation, the researcher did not recruit individuals of the same age, occupation, school, or location. Participants varied significantly in age, background, schooling experience, and occupation. Furthermore, the researcher asked each participant the same questions but opted to conduct open-ended studies. Allowing everyone to address topics not necessarily asked in the primary questions ensured that the researcher captured each participant's unique thoughts and experiences.

The second limitation includes bias. The participants and the researcher were subject to biased opinions, which may have affected the study's results. However, to ensure that bias did not affect the study, the researcher included a hermeneutic section in Chapter 3 to discuss researcher positionality. Finally, when coding the data, the researcher critically analyzed each set based on similarity and cohesive groupings rather than opinion-based criteria.

Recommendations for Future Study

Drawing from the insights of this study, researchers and educators need to make a drastic change in American schools. Despite the commonality in historical roots, Japanese and American music education curricula are almost entirely different. While some consider it too rigorous, the former adequately prepares all types of musicians. In contrast, the latter is shallow and completely lacking in quality content. However, the freedom of education is a positive aspect of the American school system. To improve students' education, music education research and teachers must first begin with their own curricula. To improve a generation's education,

change starts with a single classroom. Afterwards, educators can increase sample sizes for their studies. Furthermore, they can conduct additional qualitative studies in which they compare groups or predict relationships.

Implication for Practice

Researchers and educators must advocate for the arts as a core subject. The U.S. government warns against Russian propaganda yet makes no changes to the educational principles it first inspired. To justify music in schools, educators must produce better results for their students. This starts with teaching children about the life-enriching and occupational possibilities of music. Furthermore, by improving the artistic classes in schools and providing students with a more well-rounded education, they will be more fulfilled. Thus, they will improve on their studies outside of music as well. The researcher aligned this study to previous studies that have highlighted the importance of music education in America and the need for strategic measures in research, educators' training, developing skills and knowledge including foundational keyboard skills, life enrichment philosophies, and world music, funding, and the overall importance of music in the education system.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: IRB Approval

Submission Type: Initial Date: 3-20-2024

IRB #: IRB-FY23-24-1442
Title: A Qualitative Phenomenological Hermeneutic Japanese Music Education Research Study
Creation Date: 2-20-2024
Status: Review Complete
Principal Investigator: Mallory Flory

IRB Overview

Application for the Use of Human Research Participants

Before proceeding to the IRB application, please review and acknowledge the below information:

Administrative Withdrawal Notice

This section describes the IRB's administrative withdrawal policy. Please review this section carefully.

Your study may be administratively withdrawn if any of the following conditions are met:

- Inactive for greater than 60 days and less than 10% of the app has been completed
- Duplicate submissions
- Upon request of the PI *(or faculty sponsor for student submissions)*
- Inactive for 90 days or more *(does not apply to conditional approvals, the IRB will contact PI prior to withdrawal)*

*required

✓ I have read and understand the above information.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Demographic Questions

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Level of Education
4. Years of Experience
5. Type of School Setting

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Overall, how have Japanese or American (depending on the subject) music education methodologies affected you?

    1a. Please explain how you feel Japanese or American (depending on the subject) music education methodologies have or have not adequality prepared for you for your musical endeavors.

2. Please explain the incorporation (or lack) of foundational keyboard skills within your music education.

    2a. How has the incorporation (or lack) of foundational keyboard skills within your music education affected the development of your music literacy?

3. Please provide examples of how your school's music education repertoire has shaped, prepared, or developed your skills.

    3a. Conversely, if you believe it has failed to accomplish these goals, please elaborate.

4. How has your music education shaped your understanding of world music?

    4a. How about cultural music?

    4b. Please explain how you would seek to improve these topics' incorporation (or lack) within your music education.

5. In what ways has your music education experience and use of these skills learned enriched your life?

6. Is there anything else that you would like to share at this time?

Appendix C: Participant Consent Form

Title of the Project: A Qualitative Phenomenological Hermeneutic Japanese Music Education Research Study

Principal Investigator: Mallory Flory, Graduate Student, School of Music, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be at or above the age of 16, Japanese or American (in terms of location and schooling, not necessarily ethnicity), and have musical teaching or education experience within the last 5 years. There are no ethnicity or gender requirements for this study. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the differences that studies have yet to explore between Japanese and American music education methodologies in terms of teaching music literacy through foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies. I am writing to invite you to join my study.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

Participants will be asked to partake in video recorded, one-on-one, semi-structured, open-ended interviews via online video chat. It should take approximately 45 minutes to complete the procedure listed. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but participant identities will not be disclosed.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include helping to provide insight into how Japanese music education methodologies such as the Suzuki method and COS (Course of Study) have affected Japanese students. The specific Japanese music education methodologies this study will explore include foundational keyboard skills and Suzuki method/COS repertoire. Furthermore, this study will also illuminate how integrating Japanese music education techniques (including philosophies and repertoire) in American schools may affect American music students. The specific aspects of Japanese music education that this study will explore with the intent to incorporate into American schools are world and cultural music and life enrichment philosophies.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data collected from you may be used in future research studies or shared with other researchers. If data collected from you is reused or shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed beforehand.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After seven years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for seven years and then deleted/erased. The researcher and members of her thesis committee will have access to these recordings.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Mallory Flory. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [redacted] You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Monica Taylor, at [redacted]

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is

Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature & Date

Appendix D: Traditional Japanese Children's Songs

Elementary 1: "Warabeuta わらべうた or Nihon koyō 日本古謡" (Japanese old song): "Hiraita hiraita ひらいたひらいた" (Blooming, blooming).

Elementary 2: "Kakurenbo かくれんぼ" (Hide and seek).

Elementary 3: "Usagi うさぎ (Rabbit).

Elementary 4: "Sakura sakura さくらさくら" (Cherry blossoms).

Elementary 5: "Komori-uta 子もり歌" (Lullaby).

Elementary 6: "Etenraku imayō 越天楽今様" (a traditional song originally accompanied by gagaku 雅楽 instruments).[1]

[1] Satomi, pg. 76.

Appendix E: NAfME Teaching Standards

Creating

- Imagine -- Generate musical ideas for various purposes and contexts.
- Plan & Make -- Select and develop musical ideas for defined purposes and contexts.
- Evaluate & Refine -- Evaluate and refine selected musical ideas to create musical work(s) that meet appropriate criteria.
- Present -- Share creative musical work that conveys intent, demonstrates craftsmanship, and exhibits originality.

Performing

- Select -- Select varied musical works to present based on interest, knowledge, technical skill, and context.
- Analyze -- Analyze the structure and context of varied musical works and their implications for performance.
- Interpret -- Develop personal interpretations that consider creators' intent.
- Rehearse, Evaluate, & Refine -- Evaluate and refine personal and ensemble performances, individually or in collaboration with others.
- Present -- Perform expressively, with appropriate interpretation and technical accuracy, and in a manner appropriate to the audience and context.

Responding

- Select -- Choose music appropriate for a specific purpose or context.
- Analyze - Analyze how the structure and context of varied musical works inform the response.
- Interpret -- Support interpretations of musical works that reflect creators'/performers' expressive intent.
- Evaluate -- Support evaluations of musical works and performances based on analysis, interpretation, and established criteria.

Connecting

- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make music.
- Relate musical ideas and works with varied context to deepen understanding.[2]

[2] "2014 Music Standards," PK-8 General Music Strand, NAfME, accessed on August 8, 2023, https://nafme.org/resource/2014-music-standards-pk-8-general-music/.

Appendix F: Participant Recruitment Letter

Dear [Participant],

As a graduate student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a master's in music education degree. The purpose of my research is to investigate the differences that studies have yet to explore between Japanese and American music education methodologies in terms of teaching music literacy through foundational keyboard skills, world music incorporation, repertoire, and life enrichment philosophies. I am writing to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be at or above the age of 16, Japanese or American (in terms of location and schooling, not necessarily ethnicity), and have musical teaching or education experience within the last 5 years. There are no ethnicity or gender requirements for this study. Participants will be asked to partake in video recorded, one-on-one, semi-structured, open-ended interviews via online video chat. It should take approximately 45 minutes to complete the procedure listed. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but participant identities will not be disclosed.

To participate, please contact me at [redacted] to schedule an interview.

A consent document is attached to this email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the interview.

Thank you for your time. I truly appreciate your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Mallory Flory
Graduate Student at the Liberty University School of Music [redacted]

Appendix G: Interview Transcripts

Interview Transcripts: American Participants
Teacher Participant 1

Researcher: Just for audio purposes. Okay, awesome. So, I told you a little about my study. I'm studying American and Japanese music education methodologies and philosophies. So, for this part of my study, I'm interviewing American teachers and students. So obviously I'm interviewing you as an instructor. I'm hoping to get a good idea of the curriculum that the school that you work for utilizes. Do you teach your own curriculum, or do you have to follow a certain curriculum that the school uses?

Teacher Participant 1: So, we teach our own curriculum for the most part, we don't have anything that's like set in stone. So, because I'm out of high school, we kind of pick up from where the middle schoolers are at, and I can give you a breakdown of how we do our classes at least.

Researcher: That'd be great.

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, so, we created a freshman class for band because we found out a lot of these middle schools, that they're feeding in from, in my district it's kind of a big mess because we have the whole school of choice thing and kids are going everywhere and so we kind of get a mix of all different skills. We created this freshman class to really review them on basic fundamentals and to really hone on, you know, the good stuff that they really need to know to create better sounds. And throughout the year, if we feel like, well, we can move them up to our non-varsity or varsity groups if we think they're advanced enough and if not, you keep them where they're at so they can keep reviewing. And then we have a non-varsity group. In a varsity group, which kind of means that the varsity reads on a higher level than the non-varsity, we have UIL contests. We just actually had a UIL contest for concert band and sight reading right before spring break. And so, we have different grade levels. You know there's grades, I think 5 being the highest and one being the lowest in terms of what you can sight read and what you're reading on stage to the judges. So, usually, our varsity groups are reading on a Grade 5. And then non-varsity, groups are reading somewhere between a 3 and a 4. So yeah, in terms of curriculum, you don't really have something set, it's really just done by ear for the most part.

Researcher: Awesome. Okay, perfect. So, do you feel, just in a general sense, it's kind of a broad question, but how do you feel in general, the music education curriculum affects your students? Do you feel that it's overall a positive outcome, not so positive?

Teacher Participant 1: I think what we create and what we're giving the kids is a positive outcome. We're not the highest level of performing group out there and we're definitely not the lowest, but we're kind of a happy medium with the kind of kids we're receiving and then what we're trying to bring them up to. Again, like we have years that are like starting over, you know, and we have to do basics again and start from scratch and then we have years where, like this past year, like oh, we have lots of seniors and we're much more challenging things but.
Then you know, we kind of know what's gonna happen the following year, you gotta start over. I think that the most challenging part for our students again is, in my district, I work in is the San

Antonio ISD in the inner city, and so we have a lot of issues just amongst the whole district and it's a whole, it's a whole rabbit hole I can go down later, but I think with how these kids are learning and, in general, how we're scheduling their classes and whatnot and the type of classes we're putting kids in, it's really hindering the Fine Arts portion. ISD doesn't really put Fine Arts first. We struggle and we have to work a lot harder to get the results we want. Hopefully that kind of answers that question a little bit.

Researcher: Right. Absolutely. That's great. So, in your curriculum, or in your teachings, do you ever consider the students' musical goals? Because obviously some students want to be a concert pianist, and some just want to play piano recreationally. So, do you take that into consideration?

Teacher Participant 1: Oh, yeah, yeah, that's a good question, actually. I think about all the time because the one thing I always tell students, it's first of all, you know, I'm a percussion director, and we do the most rehearsing of anybody in the band. I mean, we're there pretty much every day. Marching season we're they're four days a week after school and then concert season, like right now, I'm actually preparing for a percussion concert, and we're there four days a week after school for an hour and a half. Anyways, but I always start to tell the kids you know, even though the all the rehearsals we do, like my goal isn't to make them musicians out of high school, my goal is to build skills for them that they can use in life and you just use music as an activity and metaphor for kids to do that, and I think music is a good activity to show that, hey, you know, you're capable of doing something and being successful in this, and I think kids can take those, those lesson skills and emotions for music and be able to successfully apply that to other places in their life. I, but my thing about my program, I'm going to put this kid on this part for this piece because it will help with these things that I see struggling with and it's not going to be super hard, but it's going to be enough to kind of give him a push. You know, so those are things I see and that changes year to year with my students. I've got 20 percussion kids and so I always try to bump them up a little bit every year so that way they're getting better, better as time goes on. I have to think about how that transfers from the spring whenever you do a bunch of concert and chamber music, to the fall, when we're doing marching band and little more rigorous activity that we go through. And then I have a I have a few students that want to be music majors, and so I set them up with extra lessons from lesson teachers. I try to get them as involved as possible, playing solos. I try to give them the most of my percussion ensemble concert pieces and try to give them a little more of the challenging parts. And you know, I think about things. I talk to him and think about things that they're going to see music school. Of course, you know I go that step further. I try to get them entered in competitions, give them scholarships, and start introducing them to certain music professors that I know, so that way they can start building some networking.

Researcher: That's great. Awesome. Let's see. So, obviously you're a percussion instructor. I'm not sure if you know about the process at your particular school. Do you know if there's any sort of foundational keyboard skills within the student's music education? So, as I'm sure you know, some educators believe you should start with piano. Do you know if that's incorporated at all in the education at your school?

Teacher Participant 1: You know, no, we don't.

Researcher: Okay.

Teacher Participant 1: We don't. We don't tell them they need to learn how to play the piano. We have it when I'm teaching music theory, especially the beginners. We have to understand the picture of the piano and the difference between the white and black keys. We start talking about, we start getting the major scales, the kids have to understand how to build a major scale. So, then you'll be able to look at you know the first scale always starts with C, but before that we talked about whole steps and half steps and what those look like between all the keys, and then I give them a formula to build a major scale like okay and I just go off F and they'll build that for me, just using the picture. Again, that's just to get that process and just to know how even in their head how their notes are moving and how that's going to sound, eventually. And that eventually ends up helping them learn key signatures and whatnot in the end, understand their accidentals.

Researcher: Hmm. Right. Just to clarify, you said music theory is not taught to beginners or it is?

Teacher Participant 1: It is, yes, it is. And as we go throughout, even the process of rest of the band, even though we don't have a dedicated music theory course, I especially like to touch up on those things.

Researcher: Okay, perfect. Do you know how many specific classes there are for each instrument? So, there's percussion and then is there a specific piano, specific music theory, like what all is offered?

Teacher Participant 1: So, that's a good question. So, it depends on the size of the school you're at. So, say you're at a beginning program, like a middle school, 6 through 8. I know for us we had what we called a homogeneous class. There was a class for flutes, beginners. There was a class for saxophones, every instrument. Even when you got to low and high brass, there was just a trumpet class or a tuba class. In other cases, and I had to do this for a while actually too, because I would go between the high school and the one of the middle schools here in the district. And at the middle school, I was in charge of that whole band program by myself. And it was small enough to where I only could have one set of beginners in one class and that was heterogeneous, so I had a mix of all the instrumentation in one class and that's a lot more challenging because you're dealing with kids who use different techniques, in terms of their armature and the way they blow. And so I had to find ways to keep kids busy as I was working one section and make sure we're on the same page. But when you get to high school, what we do, so we actually after COVID because our numbers went down a lot in public schools. We decided, hey, well, we gotta get our numbers up to justify our positions and keep our jobs right. Keep our whole staff going. So, we created actually a beginning course for the high school kids. So, a lot of times for us, you know, we get all these kids that come in a lot of them are just kind of dumped in there and we just kind of, I don't know, it's about 30 kids, usually, and the three of us will split up those kids, we'll audition them all and see what they're successful at. So, you just can't put a kid on the trumpet because he likes trumpet. You know, a lot of it defense on facial features and, you know, lip size, where they can be successful at and really sell that to them. The good thing about my staff is we have, one of our guys is a brass guy, the other is a woodwind, and I'm a percussionist. And so, we'll put the class up and then we'll put them in separate rooms and that's how we work with them. So, in a way, it's more homogeneous than heterogeneous

because. The woodwind guy would be working with all the woodwind instruments, you know, flutes, clarinet, saxophones and the brass guy would be working between high and low brass and I'm just working the percussion kids and so that's how we kind of do things just to kind of keep the numbers going in the beginning course at the high school.

Researcher: Okay, awesome. What are some outstanding skills that you have noticed in your students, whether it's confidence standing in front of a crowd of people or specific musical skills, sight reading, aural skills. What are some outstanding ones that you've noticed over the years?

Teacher Participant 1: That's a good one. So, my students, personally, you know my students specifically in the inner city they come with their own set of issues, a lot of personal issues at home and that goes back to being parents divorced, no father at home, or they're living with different sets of relatives every week or something, and so I think there's a lot of lack of social skills and a lack of confidence. You know me having you know, I work well with the kids, I have fun with them, but I'm also hard on them at the same time, and I like to push them, and I like to let them know, you're going to be able to do this. You're going to be successful, you just have to put your mind to it. You know, I think through the consistent reps of practicing all the repetition we do and then just getting them out in front of people. You know, getting those nerves out of their system. I think in the end it does build a lot of skills. I notice kids over the years become a lot more social. You know, a lot more social, more talkative. And I see a better boost in confidence. You know, especially when a kid, kind of, the light bulb will go off in their head and it's all of a sudden all they want to do now is just play a lot of music.

Researcher: Right.

Teacher Participant 1: Like last year, for instance, I had a brand new group of percussion kids. And it was really tough because I pretty much had to. Start over from bare bottom and build it up like from like, okay, this is how we hold a drumstick, and this is the stroke, and I actually, you know, I had to put a drum line together and I had to have the easiest music written for them, for us to sound successful. And so, I decided, well, you know what, I'm going to do a drumline competition with them this year. I don't care. It'll get them out there and exposed. And I found that after that competition, even though we didn't score very high, even though, and they had a good run and we just weren't as high skilled, I just saw a boost in, they had more interest in what they were doing now and it takes some time to kind of build that up. And then you know, this year when I added a little more kids to the drum line we wrote, we wrote a tougher book for the kids, a little more challenging, and they started winning at their contest and percussion and getting first place in those areas, you know, then that's when you really start to sell it to them. And I see a lot more excitement in them. So, I think that really goes in the hand to play, and they wanted just in their life personally, and then it does come to a good outcome musically in the ensemble so.

Researcher: Right, absolutely. Let's see. Is there anything you wish to improve in your curriculum or with the students?

Teacher Participant 1: I will say, so, as a teacher I will get a little impatient too fast sometimes and I have to remember like I'm not working with college kids, you know, when you're working

with college students, especially in the music department, you asked them to do something, they go do it and I have that with my students, but, you know, they're tied up in other activities too, in school. Some of them are doing, you know, a good amount of them are doing more than just band, if you want to do more things, experience everything. Like for instance, I have a really awesome piano player and she had told me, okay, I, you know, there's a piano part to a percussion piece I'm doing right now, and she said okay, I'll get it done, you know, in this amount of time. She showed up to rehearsal today and it wasn't anywhere close to being done. It's like, hey, we got a concert in three weeks, you know, and I'm like, trying not to get, you know, mad about this and I'm like it needs to be done and we just got off spring break and all this stuff, and I let you miss a rehearsal last week so you know I gave this to you, so you got to give this back to me. So, I think with me too, I just had to have a better understanding and not be so impatient sometimes, just to learn how to relax, and I think my students have helped me with that to because I've had to step back and kind of reevaluate things and see where we're at compared to where the end goal is. In terms of my curriculum. No, I mean, I'm doing everything I can with where I'm at. There are a lot of different aspects that I wish would happen and that's not on me, unfortunately, it's a school district issue. Like, I wish I still had access, like we're not going out to middle schools right now, but really what should be doing is taking part of the day and going to you know our feeder campuses and working with the beginning percussionists to get to know them because when you're working just with one band director, a lot of times percussion is kind of thrown out the mix, and just in general, they need that extra help to build those extra sounds to keep kids going, working with middle schoolers isn't always the easiest thing, so I wish that was incorporated more in my school district. There are districts like that where, you know, you do have the directors of the high schools going out to the middle schools and helping run those classes as well, so, it would help bring in a consistent skill level every year versus all right, here we go. We're starting over again, you know.

Researcher: Right, absolutely. So, we talked a little bit about student's different goals and how some, you know, want to study, become music majors and some want to work recreationally. For those who do want to become professional musicians and pursue a higher education, do you feel that the education they have at your school is adequate to prepare them to launch to the next step.

Teacher Participant 1: I think we try to prepare as best as we can. I think overall we're giving them a good amount of resources to kind of go out and discover and learn more.

Researcher: Okay.

Teacher Participant 1: We do hold them, you know, we do try to play things that are challenging for them. And again, that's a good question because you know, like you can compare us to maybe like Johnson or Reagan High School here in San Antonio, which those guys are like the power house of the band programs in San Antonio, I mean they're playing high, high up, real high, challenging music, high ranked music, versus us, we're not playing as high as them, but we're not we're not totally playing low. I mean, for instance, if we're going to UIL every year in concert and sight reading stuff and we're making straight one sweepstakes, I think, you know, we're obviously doing something right. And at our marching band contest, if you're going all the way

to area, which is the step before state, then yeah, I think we're on the right track of things. Especially with the type of kids we have.

Researcher: Awesome. OK. So, the last couple questions I have, we're going to switch gears a little bit. So, could you talk about the world music and/or cultural music incorporation?

Teacher Participant 1: Okay. Yeah, well. In terms of world music, I used to teach a class called Music Appreciation, we don't offer it anymore. We changed it to something else. I'll talk about that in a second, but the music appreciation class is basically just a music history course, and it's just for kids who were non-band. This needed a Fine Arts credit and so that's what it was. And so if my band kids want to take it, they could take it, just for the heck of it, but we pretty much started with like, you know, we talked about what is sound, and then what is music, how do you define those things. The whole course of, you know, talking about what it does to you, you know, psychologically and physically. And then eventually we get into music history, we date back to the Catholic Church. We start there, and how all music formed, and we go along, you know the timeline in history is like, well, then he had a guy named Martin Luther, right, who came with the 99 grievances, and that's how the Protestant Reformation started and when the Protestant Reformation started, we now incorporated these instruments in church and these chords and the Catholic Church tried to split, you know, we talk about all those aspects. We go through Colombian, like Brazilian, type music. We talk about slavery and how the blue started and jazz, and then country and rock. We just build it up to kind of where we're at in the modern time. And that was pretty much a lecture course. Some things I wish I could have done differently and if the class was going to keep going, I would have wrote out a grant or, you know, wrote a letter for a grant that maybe received some actual world music instruments. Because we did talk about African drumming and all those, even like pan flutes. You know things you see like on the Riverwalk, right? I thought it'd be cool to have kids at least play along with those things and have a little more hands on and see what it was like. And you know for non-band kids it might be a little more interesting, but it was pretty much just a lecture course. But we had to change that this year. Again, enrollment has dropped in public schools and we had to find a way to justify, okay, how can we have 4 directors on staff here if we only have 120 kids in the band program. That doesn't make sense. So, we had to create a class, I guess it's a class, called modern band. It's pretty much just rote teaching rock band instruments to non-band kids. And so, the idea was to give kids more playing ensemble courses so that we were teaching more of those and then we can include those kids inside of our band numbers, you see what I'm saying? So, we kind of double up our band numbers, almost having out for these courses, and so in that class, you know we're teaching from scratch. You don't even have to know to play an instrument. We have, it's more of a visual learning guide. We don't even teach music theory, technically. You know, we have pictures of a fret board or fret chart. We have pictures of drums and high hat, bass, snare kind of stacked and this is the beat, so or they're sectioned off, and this is where it goes. And eventually, these kids learn enough notes. From whatever instrument of their choosing, or we'd even rotate them, right? But to start learning songs and then they can kind of form their own bands within class time and run their own as we self-monitor that. So that's about as world music as we get at, at least at the high school. Now, I used to teach elementary music for my first three years of working and there's a lot more world music involved with that than people think. I mean one, you had to sing with kids, you sing solfege and all that stuff and you know, every grade level we were on, you know, Kindergarten, first grade, I don't think we ever teach solfege, we

just learned pitches and singing the songs, right? But through 5th everyone, you know, learned a different range of solfege we learned stuff in major and minor and we would talk about them. We would do a lot of what we call Orff instruments, which is pretty much percussion instruments for elementary, so you have little keyboards, the telephones, xylophones, and then we had hand drums and jimbe type stuff, and there was a process for learning all that stuff and how it works. And then we also did the standard recorders with the kids as well. And all that kind of stuff, there was a lot of different styles you can learn just kind of on a more kid friendly level.

Researcher: Right. Okay, that's great. Let's see here.

Teacher Participant 1: And I guess to add to that too, so I can give you all the information. You know, I'm just a band director, but within our whole Fine Arts department within that too, we have choir, we have mariachi. We have a mariachi teacher and we have a jazz band as well by one of the band directors. The kids can take a full range of those courses. We have a couple of kids that do mariachi and band and they kind of, you know, they bleed into each other. They help each other out.

Researcher: And those are optional? They get to kind of choose what they want?

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah. And you know, like when I was in high school, if you wanted to do mariachi or the salsa band, right, you had to be in band to do these other things. How ours work, is you don't have to be in band to do mariachi. There is a straight mariachi program, and we do have a just orchestra program as well for the kids and they go through different steps of learning music theory as well in these courses.

Researcher: Oh, okay.

Teacher Participant 1: I know that my old teacher, well, I guess he's still my teacher but, he was staying in high school now in New Braunfels, and he actually has an assistant who I actually went to college with. He does Brazilian drums with 6th to 8th graders at his middle school campus. Every year my high school teacher, he puts on a percussion, a big percussion concert. Like a 2 1/2 hour concert, it’s big. He brings in a guest artist every year. He’s a well renowned drum set player last year was probably one of his biggest ones. He brought a guy named Greg Bissonnette. Who was the drummer for David Lee Roth for a long time, this stuff? Vanessa Carlton. He's the drummer on the theme song for Friends.

Researcher: Oh yeah!

Teacher Participant 1: He’s also one of the Winnie the Pooh voices, that's the cool thing. And then he brought in a bass player this, and this was the big part, his name is Victor Wooten. He's a big bass player out in Nashville. And well, anyways, he does these big concerts and they include all types of music and the world drumming is one of the cool aspects that they bring to the program. I think it is really important too. Kids learn a different culture to sense and learn why, you know, there's certain signals and rhythms that they learn that go along with other things. So that's a school that really kind of, has a big variety of things going on in their program.
Researcher: Absolutely. And that was, you said Brennan High School?

Teacher Participant 1: That is Canyon in New Braunfels.

Researcher: Canyon. Okay, got you.

Teacher Participant 1: And then they also have a still band, so like still pans, like Jamaican sounds Caribbean sounds, as well. So yeah, my high school teacher, and he we had, I did that in high school too. He has a diverse program for sure, and that's good.
Researcher: Right, definitely.

Teacher Participant 1: You know these teachers, you know, you go through evaluations every year, observations. And your administration wants to see how you, it's important for them to see that diverse aspect, and how you include that in your curriculum and your program, and those are good things that really sell on that for the kids it just expands their minds a little more.

Researcher: Right, absolutely. Okay, let's see. Do you feel that the student's education enriches their life, just in terms of quality of life, things like that? Again, even if they don't ever use these skills again in their future, do you really feel like it's beneficial to their, you know, mental health things are going through, and you mentioned that a little bit. What are some of your thoughts on that?

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, I think so. As long as you're presenting it in a right form. I guess your delivery on it. You know, if you're all, if you're just nothing but upset all the time with the kids and you're acting mad and you're acting too impatient, the kids aren't going to like it and you're not really helping them. But if you're kind of getting behind them and pushing them and trying to figure out what do they need and to be successful and for me to feel good about this, then I think, you know, they'll buy into what you're doing and go along with you, and feel a lot better with what they're doing. You know, you make them feel good, I mean, kids always go home and talk about you and you don't think about those things. But yeah, I was talking about you to my mom last night, you know, or my dad and my family. Or, you know, parents will come up and thank you for what you're doing. Yeah, I think, these things really play into their kid's mental life for sure. Especially afterwards, and you know, even when I graduated high school and even college, how am I going to learn in times of practicing? How am I going to learn this piece? How am I going to organize it? How do I see the shapes and colors and I relate those things to what I do in life now. You know, just to remain patient in situations, and then like, problem solving certain issues I go through, in all aspects of my life, I think music really helped bring that out, in me. You know, I'm not downing sports, but I think music is really more of a team building activity, in the end. It's not always about winning. We're about, what is our best quality? Was it a good run of a show or a program you put on today? Are we lifting each other up? Are we bringing each other down? Are we holding each other accountable? Again, I think those things you practice have enough with the kids in this setting and they can take those things and use them in life later on.

Researcher: Okay, awesome. So those are all the questions I have for you. If there's anything else you wanted to share, let me know. But that is all I have today. Thank you again for your time. I really appreciate it because I know you're busy.

Teacher Participant 1: Oh, no, it's good. That's good. I wanted to answer those questions.

Researcher: It looks like I don't have the premium version of Zoom, so the meeting is actually going in to end in a second, so I will let you go.

Teacher Participant 1: If you need anything else, just let me know, I'll be happy to answer your questions.

Researcher: Awesome. Thanks so much. I really appreciate your time and have a great rest of your evening.

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah. See you later, Mallory. Bye.

Interview Transcripts: American Participants
Teacher Participant 2

Researcher: Perfect. Okay, so I don't want to use too much of your time. So, obviously I am studying the Japanese and American music education methodologies. And so, I read from your experience that you have a lot of experience teaching in America and as well as experience with the Suzuki method, which is, I'm studying that as well, so that was really exciting to hear.

Teacher Participant 2: Oh, are you?

Researcher: So, I just have a few questions and if you could pull from the Suzuki method experience and of course just your teaching experience in general in America. So, first this is just a general question, for your students how do you feel American music education methodologies have affected your students overall, positively, negatively? Just a general statement, really.

Teacher Participant 2: You're asking 2 separate sets of questions. So, my teaching is only partially Suzuki related. Did you want me to speak from the Suzuki standpoint, is that what you just said or in general? Including it?

Researcher: I guess in general, including it, if that's possible.

Teacher Participant 2: So, you're asking how, can you repeat the question again, just so I can be more specific.

Researcher: Oh, absolutely. So, this is just a general statement regarding how American music education methodologies have affected your students. So just a general statement, if you had mostly a positive experience, if your students have learned well from the methodologies used.

Teacher Participant 2: I'm having a hard time with the question only because the word methodologies is, I need to have that defined because there's so many philosophies of teaching and specifically, actual methods and philosophies. So, in the Suzuki school where I taught. They have a very specific philosophy and a specific way of applying that to their own students. In other places, they're more liberal with the teaching of that method and in other places all together, they just say, take what you would like and implement that. So I can only speak to what I know from what is available and typically used here. In the Suzuki philosophy, I believe that that only works really well in certain conditions and specifications, because as I understand it, because he was very, very specific about how things should be, ideally for it to work. So only when I feel that that's an ideal situation where we have all those components. As in parents, children, teacher and regularity, then I think. It works really really well, I think a lot of times the idea is not properly understood. You can also be certified but not quite understand what it is or not quite implement it. Or you can also just be not a great teacher, or not know how to operate your instrument so you don't really know how to teach it in any way, but you can also be certified somehow by just many different methods, so in that regard, music education here, and especially music teaching, is completely unregulated. So, I think that does people disservice only because oftentimes anyone can announce they teach XYZ or can get certified in XYZ and announce it, and it may or may not be the case. In general, I think it works really really well based on what I

understand as how he taught with it, with his philosophy and I actually love his philosophy, I include it within my traditional teaching as well, I mean my general teaching, if not at a specifically Suzuki school, includes that philosophy because it's a wonderful one it's basically applicable.

Researcher: Right, absolutely. You mentioned it's used well only in specific circumstances. What do you believe that is, or those are?

Teacher Participant 2: Well, you really need to have a commitment. Well, you have to have at least one committed helper of the child. I mean, we're talking who it was ideal for, the young children to start. And in my field, in piano playing. There's a very specific thing that needs to happen and the person doing the helping needs to be dedicated enough to learn from the teacher how to be the home teacher that really needs to be in place, because if you have a haphazard person who doesn't follow directions well, there's no way that the practice at home can replicate the lesson, so then it's either a lot of wasted time or the reinforcement is incorrect, and then it just isn't that great. You may as well just come and not do any practicing at home. I mean that. That's a reality here because we are over scheduled and especially in New York City, everyone wants to do everything. So in those kinds of situations, I just asked them if I know if I can tell that it's going to be a disaster or we set it up and they just can't follow directions for whatever reason because they think they're doing it but they're not doing it. I just let them come to me more often so they either get it together or figure, become old enough to do it on their own.

Researcher: Right, OK. That makes sense.

Teacher Participant 2: There's just a lot of room for interpretation misinterpretation. It's very specific. In order to be successful, to have it go well, but when it is it's fabulous, it's phenomenal, it works really well. But I do think it only works well exceptionally well in certain circumstances. And the teacher has to be flexible enough to understand. And when these cases are because everyone is a different learner, everyone. Just everybody is different. People are different. How they receive information is different. Suzuki's philosophy, but there are just many component, points of learning, including the group classes, I mean a lot of times the group classes aren't available that helps reinforce the community thing. And if that's not available, that's a huge component that's missing. So it's one of those things.

Researcher: Absolutely. That's wonderful. Perfect. OK, when used correctly, do you believe the Suzuki method adequately prepares students the musical endeavors? So, I know the Suzuki method, one of his statements was all students aren't meant to necessarily be professional musicians. You know, some want to learn for recreational purposes, whatever their desire. Do you believe, when utilized correctly, it prepares them well?

Teacher Participant 2: Well, I think it prepares them well to be good human beings who are able to get their daily whatever it is that they have to do done in the day. I mean, it prepares people for way more than being a concert artist, I mean actually the more difficult thing is to get your life together so. To be a successful human being, I think it is a major preparation for and for the most part, the more I think about it, I don't think there are skills outside of music which. Require this kind of coordination and physical mental coordination using that sort of, those skills, it just isn't

anywhere else, so those are applicable toward others pretty much everything else we need to do in adult life that isn't really teachable in any other way, so I think it goes the other way actually. So just because someone says oh, I don't want, I you don't necessarily need to be professional, blah blah blah, you will be a professional something else, but it will actually help you in that more so than being a musician, I think because again these skills are just aren't found anywhere else.

Researcher: That's really great. That's really great. In the Suzuki method. Is there any kind of incorporation of foundational keyboard skills? So, I know the Suzuki method was founded mainly on violin, I believe. Do you, I mean, you're a pianist. Obviously. So, do you feel like there's a benefit to starting with piano first and then moving into other instruments or vice versa.

Teacher Participant 2: Oh, definitely. Well, those are two questions. I think piano in general to study at first is fabulous only because then you have a foundation you can visually see a foundation of where all the physical notes are, because in a non-keyboard instrument you can't really visually see it clearly and it's just really easily applicable to apply the music notes to any other instrument from there, but I'm only coming from a keyboard standpoint obviously, but that's what they tell me anyway. So, I hope you're not asking an either-or thing, I'm sure both can be done at a young age. So I'm not sure if it would make a difference if for example, you started a string instrument very, very young and then took on piano, then your piano would be secondary. So, I'm not sure if it would actually help but I'm still would because then if you still, if you still started at a young age, you will still have the foundational physical memory of where visually the keys are.

Research: Right, absolutely. Okay, perfect. Yes.

Teacher Participant 2: Where the notes lie.

Researcher: Yes, yes, definitely. Let's see. What are a few key ways that the Suzuki method prepares students in terms of specific skills? Or, yes, sharpening really specific skills? Is there anything in particular, whether it's technique or sight reading or aural skills, things like that?

Teacher Participant 2: You cut out a little bit. Could you repeat the question?

Researcher: Oh, I'm sorry. Yes. So, are there any specific areas that you believe the Suzuki method develops really well or prepares students really well in oral skills, technique, things like that?

Teacher Participant 2: Obviously, aural skills, aural skills are a huge component of this teaching philosophy. That said, in others in other studios of other, more traditional methods that can also be a major component. So ,one does not exclude the other necessarily. I find that those who have been Suzuki trained just blindly, obviously have relied on their aural skills first, so that's the first to develop. But that's mean that everything else goes to the side, so it's important that the teacher fill in everything else along the way as they can digest it to be well-rounded. I mean, I think it's a matter of just what order everything combines in. So much of it does depend on the teacher teaching because it does all need to be included, but you can't just take the book and say, okay,

I'm studying song #1 therefore I am studying Suzuki. To some people, do that, they say I'm a Suzuki teacher, but they just use the volumes, but they don't actually do anything else regarding the philosophy or the methodology. So, then all of that is missing.

Researcher: Yes, yes, definitely. Let's see. Are there any areas in the Suzuki method that there are gaps in that you feel like it's lacking a little bit. Anything you can think of?

Teacher Participant 2: Well, because he only spoke about violin stuff, you have to take everything he said and apply it to other instruments, which it does. It does apply. So, I think he was pretty thorough. In his belief of what, how one learns music and he was a very meticulous person, obviously. So, I do think it is pretty comprehensive, however, because he was dealing with very, very young children first oftentimes people think that, for example, if you have an assignment, you need to have one that says something like, oh, do XY and Z, 5 times in a row, or 27 times in a row or something like that. Blindly doing such things only goes so far for so many reasons, and just telling someone to do such things. One does that because they don't if you're speaking to a young child and you just want them to keep doing it, then you to do that, you get them to do it a lot of times in a certain way. But the thing is, as they get older, they have to understand why they're doing it. The point is to practice efficiently and know why you're practicing something. So that's another point where someone actually has to be cognizant of this and know exactly what to say to someone as they develop and get older so that they know how to practice efficiently and this goes across the board. I think all too often in any teaching whatsoever, people just blindly think ohh, I don't know what to do with my assignment, it's more like when teaching, they have to teach what to do and why. Not necessarily do this five times. Do that 6 times do this part 37 times. It doesn't really work that way. Like yes, we do it a lot, but the reason we do it, I mean, if you're not focusing, if you're getting it wrong, don't do it 100 times that way, right? So, you just have to know why you're doing things to get better. You have to know how to divide things into small bits. Small steps and priorities so you know. When to move on to the next step. At home when you're practicing by yourself.

Researcher: Yes, yes, definitely. Okay, let's see. So ,for my last couple of questions, if you could talk about your experience teaching, not necessarily in the Suzuki method. So pretty much everywhere else, how do you feel about the incorporation of world music and then cultural music? Do you feel it's done sufficiently in America when teaching?

Teacher Participant 2: No, not at all. Well, this a completely new topic. I think it's very, very important to include all, all cultures and all include everything possible, but it's a new world in that everything that has been printed as we know it in Western classical music or obviously Western classical men, and so just now we're learning to expand our horizons to find the other music that's much, much harder to find, but it's happening. There are many options and we need to make an effort to find them because they're not in any collection locked up in a bow.
I mean, it's also like traditions. So that's what we teach, because that's what we are learning to produce, that's its own question there because we're learning to produce the music of these people who are of a certain demographic and that's another question. I mean, I think. I think I don't want to sound like one of those old back in the olden days, blah blah blah, every generation says that the previous generation learned you know, taught more, learned more. We did more things. So for example, in a lot of the schools where I teach now they say that the founders of the

schools all used to teach this and this and this and this and this, we just have a different society now where everyone expects everything yesterday or they think they can learn in 5 minutes on the internet how to play a song because of a game that they saw. So the issue is more people need to recognize how much time it takes to actually learn something, and what is it that they're learning? So the question is, when I'm signing up for piano lessons, am I signing up for keyboard lessons and electronic keyboard? Am I signing up for general musicianship lessons so I can play whatever I want on the keyboard like I want to play blah blah blah? So the assumption is when you take piano lessons or whatever violin lessons that it's Western classical music lesson. So because people always come to me and say ohh but I don't I want to learn insert anything not classical music. But the point of my point as a teacher for whomever is I'd like for you to be able to understand whatever it is that you see and how the instrument works so that you can produce it. So that's really a question that needs to be asked. The inclusion of all this other music is important it's just that we don't teach to that. And that's the question, because the assumption is already there that the lessons are classical lessons so that you can play classical music. Plus, they don't realize that there's contemporary classical music written yesterday or now or tomorrow, and that's also included, but people don't recognize that as classical music, unless we're specific. I thought in classical period in music which? You know they're not.

Researcher: Right, absolutely. If you had to improve the incorporation of world and cultural music, how would you do so? Is there a specific culture or a specific country you'd want to pull from, or something more general? How would you seek to improve it?

Teacher Participant 2: Oh, so open-ended. I think it should depend on the person studying and what their cultural background is just to know, I just think it's really important for them to have some kind of connection, and if you're I mean even if I mean that's just so open-ended. It's just so open. There's so many different types of music and different sounds that people some people don't even consider music. That's just such an open-ended question that can go on and on and on on or sound or like rapping under boom whackers, I want to run the boom whackers wire that sounds.

Researcher: Yes. Yes, definitely. Okay, that's great. Let's see. So this is kind of an obvious question with the Suzuki method, because I know he was very passionate about life enrichment, especially with music. What are a few ways that you believe music education and enriches someone's life? And honestly, your life as well as an instructor?

Teacher Participant 2: Can you see the first part of that? Again, you cut out just a hair at the beginning. What are?

Researcher: Oh, sure. So what are a few ways that you believe music education enriches your students lives and your life, as well as an instructor?

Teacher Participant 2: Well, first it gives an outlet of sound and creativity, which I think is really important, especially because of all these budget cuts where they're not being any arts education in schools. I don't know if it's a national thing, but it's definitely a New York thing and definitely a citywide school thing. So, the tiny silver lining is that the actual people who produce music and art, the arts have to take it upon themselves to do the actual teaching, which I think is really

important. That said, I think it's important for people to have that outlet and be able to use that outlet for themselves as a communication tool. In addition to whatever words they may or may not be able to use, I just think it's an excellent form of communication that's important to have and be able to do. Plus it's a global language, so it can people in a way that words can't necessarily. If you know the language, if you know the similar language, then I mean we're talking words, then that's great and you can be specific, but I think music is different because of its sounds and its vibrations, and I think there really has to be something to that which is more global, and it's been all these studies have been done regarding sounds and the universe resonating on a certain pitch, that sort of thing. I think people have a certain affinity towards understanding what that is, I've done a lot of studying of common, common likenesses in music around the world that all mean the same thing, where people all understand it to mean the same thing, even though they don't speak the same language, and that sort of thing. I just think it's important to be able to do and to participate in.

Researcher: Awesome. So the final question that I have for you is, again kind of a general question, but are there any outstanding experiences that you can think of that you've had in your teaching career? Anything that stands out particularly with your students?

Teacher Participant 2: Yes, I have learned because of teaching remotely, because of the pandemic, I have had to teach many new students to me who are through a screen, and I learned that obviously, when you're teaching, it's important to know your person and get to know your person as a human being first and foremost, because the communication is between you two first and foremost, then whoever is ready to receive your information. So for example, I had one student who I totally didn't know who was new to me, who was always really antsy and couldn't focus on anything and he was always upset about something. And I thought, is it me? Do you just hate music? What is it about? Every day would be a different situation. I just got to know him. And you know he's just a very feeling person. So basically I got to know him and he was upset because he was supposed to have his favorite snack, you know, 5 minutes ago. But they forgot to get it at the store. So his mother had to go get it. Now he has to eat it in like 45 minutes. And he was all upset about then he could, like, couldn't get past that stuff like that. So all he needs to do, he just wanted me to listen to him. He just wanted it to be OK for him to tell me that. But I didn't know to ask that. So that was, I think, the main point here is that when we're, when we're teaching, we have to recognize thatwe're learning. We're getting to know the person. We're getting to know the people in the room so that we're able to communicate better. What we're trying to get them. To do right. I think that that. That's basically the whole point of the communication. I mean, for me as a teacher, the whole point for me is for them to be able to communicate musically, but the whole point is more like we have to understand each other as human beings so that he'll receive my information and I will understand him as in, oh, I'm sorry you didn't get your snack. You gonna go get something else. And then we're good, you know. I mean, I can totally relate. I mean, we could run in. I just had like 20 transfers because the water main broke this morning and I'm running around in a rush and then I gotta get on a different train and then I almost didn't make it to the other one. And, you know I'm frazzled.

Researcher: Yes, absolutely, definitely. Yes.

Teacher Participant 2: I think I mean, so again that's one of those things. It's like a global, it's a global thing that we all need to learn and we could all communicate better that way. Even at work, wherever you happen to be with the post office.

Researcher: Right, absolutely. Awesome. Well, I think those are all the questions I have for you. Again, I really appreciate your time today. This has been awesome and your experience is beyond impressive. So I really appreciate it.

Teacher Participant 2: Right. Oh, it's my pleasure. Thank you so much. It's wonderful. I'm looking forward to hearing what you, keep me posted on what your project is. Good luck with all that.

Researcher: Absolutely. Thank you. So have a wonderful rest of your day.

Teacher Participant 2: Thank you too, Mallory.

Researcher: Bye!

Teacher Participant 2: Bye.

Interview Transcripts: American Participants
Student Participant 1

Researcher: Perfect. All right, so I don't want to take too much of your time. So, I'll go ahead and get started. So, I saw you got your doctorate degree from Liberty University. Is that true?

Student Participant 1: It's true.

Researcher: Oh, that's so cool. That's awesome because I'm going to Liberty as well, so that's super exciting.

Student Participant 1: Yes.

Researcher: OK, awesome. So, my first question for you and this is just regarding your music education experience over the years, this is pretty broad, a pretty broad question to start out. So overall, how has your music education experience effected you overall, was it really positive? Did you have a great experience? Do you feel like it prepared you adequately?

Student Participant 1: So are we. We're going back to like childhood.

Researcher: Yes, yes, just a general statement for over the years, yes.

Student Participant 1: OK, right. Music education over the years. I wouldn't say it's been all good or all bad, you know, because you especially when you go to school for it, you have many different teachers, many different personalities, so some experiences have been great and then there's always, you know, the teacher that you're not exactly compatible with right?

Researcher: All right, let's see. So I guess let's talk a little bit about your high school and then through collegiate experience. Do you feel they have adequately prepared you for your musical endeavor? So, for your professional career?

Student Participant 1: Yes, I would say yes, I was lucky that I did have teachers that knew what they were doing, which is not always the case. You know, they themselves had the correct formal training. So yes, I would say that that. They did prepare me.

Researcher: OK, perfect. And in your education, starting from childhood, was there any kind of incorporation of foundational keyboard skills? So, I know I believe you play the violin primarily, was there any sort of piano in the very beginning? Cause I know some people believe you should start with that.

Student Participant 1: No. The only the only you know keyboard slash piano that I had was in undergraduate school. Maybe some in Graduate School, but I can't remember to tell you the truth. But in college, yeah.

Researcher: So the instrument you started with was violin, correct?

Student Participant 1: Yes.

Researcher: OK. And do you feel not starting with well, starting with violin, do you believe that set you up well? Was that the only instrument you wanted to do ever or do you wish you had started with more of a piano? Because I'm studying a little bit of the effect of foundational keyboard skills in music education. So, how do you feel about starting with violin? Do you wish us start with a different instrument.

Student Participant 1: No, well, sort of. My parents chose it for me, but I never, ever was thinking ohh I'd rather be playing something else.

Researcher: Right. Perfect. OK. And then again, let's talk about a little bit, let's see, can you give me a few ways that your education and we can talk about anything else that is outstanding to you, whether it's your early education or your collegiate education, a few ways that has developed, shaped or prepared your skills a few ways you feel that you're really strong in and that's due to your education?

Student Participant 1: Uh, let's see. Well, I would say. This has nothing to do with keyboard, is that okay?

Researcher: Yeah, of course. No, this is yes, yes, of course, of course.

Student Participant 1: I think you know in college, they had me doing a lot of pit orchestra things and that definitely helped because I did several, several years with professional company like opera companies and other musical pit orchestras, and that's definitely a developed skill. You can't, you know, it takes a while to pick that up. It's totally different, it's totally different from regular symphonic stuff. So, the fact that I was exposed to not only symphonic music but also pit music in college was very helpful. So that would be one thing. Also, when I was in elementary school, my private teacher had us doing quartets. That was also another exposure to that which is just going to happen, you know? And so I was already doing chamber music as like a single digit child. Which isn't necessarily normal. Those are the main things that sort of stick out, I guess.

Researcher: Absolutely. That's great. OK, on the other hand, is there anything in your education you can think of that has failed to accomplish or fail to prepare you? Are there some ways that was, there were some gaps in the education?

Student Participant 1: Uh, there weren't any gaps. I was lucky that way. However, I would say auditioning. So, there's only so much you can do to prepare for auditioning. And in terms of, you know, even you take the classes. You do mock auditions. You do auditions every summer. You know, every year for orchestra. But there's a certain mentality that it can't break into, you know. What's in your head? And that's one thing they can't prepare you for that's so yeah.

Researcher: OK. Awesome. How has your music education and we can talk about again whatever stands out to you, shaped your understanding of world music or cultural music so a little bit of both.

Student Participant 1: Well, definitely, you know, playing in orchestras, you're working with all kinds of music, from the classics to, you know, contemporary and a lot of contemporary, brings in world music. So, I think just being an orchestral musician exposes you to multi cultures.

Researcher: Right. Right. Did you join orchestra? When did you join orchestra high school or?

Student Participant 1: It was actually in. What we called junior high, now they call it middle school. So yeah, it was it was, yes, that age. So 7th grade.

Researcher: OK, awesome.

Student Participant 1: That was a Youth Orchestra.

Researcher: Do you remember any kinds of cultural music specifically, was it Western culture? Was it European? Was there anything that stood out? Was there any Asian culture incorporated?

Student Participant 1: Everything. All of it, yes.

Researcher: Okay, great. When you performed cultural or world music, was it you just kind of played the song or was there any sort of learning about the history behind it or the meaning behind it?

Student Participant 1: Both. I mean definitely sometimes you're just preparing the piece, but you know sometimes the conductor will talk to you about parts of it, and occasionally the actual composer will be there.

Researcher: Oh wow. OK. That's great. Do you have any suggestions for how this would be improved so I know you said there was a lot of incorporation of it. Do you wish there was more or do you feel it was it was sufficient?

Student Participant 1: Personally, I think it was sufficient. I mean, I know it's going to depend on where you are and what your conductor’s programming and all of that but from my personal experience, I think it was sufficient.

Researcher: OK, great. So this is a little bit of a broad question, but in what ways has your music, education experience and use of these skills enriched your life?

Student Participant 1: OK, ask me that again.

Researcher: In what ways has your music education experience, and use of these skills enriched your life?

Student Participant 1: Well, I make a living doing it so yeah, not everybody can say that unfortunately.

Researcher: Yes. Wonderful. OK. So I know you said that I believe your parents were who chose you to play the violin in the beginning. When did you fall in love with your craft? Was it right away or?

Student Participant 1: Oh gosh. I mean, it's kind of a love hate. It's definitely not always passion and love, right? I think most kids go through phases where they want to quit, right? It's like up and down. Sometimes it's hard. Sometimes you don't like your teacher. That's totally normal. But my parents kept making me do it. And I think I got kind of into it in college, I was on scholarship and then I started thinking like ohh, maybe I'm pretty good, you know, right. So then you kind of get more into it but then again it's an ebb and a flow. You know, as an adult you sometimes think did I make the right decision. I could be making, you know, three times as much money. So yeah, I think it's almost a love-hate a little bit.

Researcher: That makes sense. Yes. OK. So the last question I have is if there's anything else you would like to share but do you have any outstanding experiences in music education? Anything that stands out to you, whether it's an interaction with a teacher or a particular topic you learned anything that's a defining moment in your educational career?

Student Participant 1: Yeah, I would say in college, whenever they would bring or even yeah, we'll say in college when they would bring in guest artists like, you know, soloists that would give us master classes and play with the orchestra, you know, those were always very inspiring.

Researcher: Definitely, master classes. OK, awesome. OK, so that went really well. So that is all the questions I actually have for you. So thank you so much for your time. It's been really great getting to hear about your unique insights and your education. So, I really appreciate it.

Student Participant 1: Well, thank you and good luck.

Researcher: Thank you so much. Have a really rest of your day.

Student Participant 1: OK, you too. Bye bye.

Interview Transcripts: American Participants
Student Participant 2

RECORDING DEVICE MALFUNCTIONED; FIRST FEW MINUTES NOT CAPTURED

Student Participant 2: But for me it was always like, hey, I just love music. I wanna be involved in it. And I didn't think there was any sort of, like, viable career path with that when I was in college. But I basically got laid off from three jobs in 2007, 2008, 2009, and then I was like, screw this so I'm gonna go to recording school and learn cuz I thought like hey you can't just say like, hey, I wanna be a rock star. You know? It's like, that's not really how it works. But I thought, hey, if I can learn engineering and I can work with, you know, music studios and then I can work with different artists and that kind of thing. And I saw that as more kind of like a viable path just like, hey, I'll be in a band or I'll like I'm a music person or what you know that kind of thing. So yeah for me the guess the biggest thing for me in terms of like teachers, it was a lot of just people that I looked up to like musicians that I thought were just like incredible, like Trey Anastasio from Fish, you know, in my mind, he's the best ever, you know, he's the Michael Jordan or LeBron of guitar players in my mind, right. But for me, it was learning like, hey, they had this catalog that spans everything from like, you know, like it's what is it bluegrass to like, you know, traditional Jewish songs. You know, it's like it's like they they did everything. So for me it was like, hey, well, why are they so open to doing those different many genres and why did they? Why does the audience actually like that and that kind of thing? So yeah, it was really more like, hey, like, what can I learn from the people that I really like? So I tried to like, listen to interviews and read interviews and stuff and learn about how they learned to play together and stuff like that. That was kind of main thing.

Researcher: OK, very nice. Let's see. So overall in this I'm talking also about your elementary through high school as well. Do you feel like your education during that time adequately prepared you? So I guess, in a general sense, from elementary to high school, that education, do you feel it prepared you to enter into college and higher education? In music, in terms of music specifically.

Student Participant 2: Oh, in terms of music? No, definitely not.

Researcher: Definitely not? OK.

Student Participant 2: No. Yeah, I mean, I like I think you could take like the general principles about like learning and like, you know, working hard and that kind of thing like that in that sense. Maybe it helps, but. In terms of like like we we had, I'm trying to think in high school we had like history of art and then history of music and that was basically it. There wasn't any like modern music or like performance or instruments or anything like that. So it was, yeah, it was basically just like, hey, here's the history of music. It wasn't like, hey, we're looking to, like, help people who want to get immersed in music. It was, you know, it's just kind of. Like you'd have to do that on your own basically.

Researcher: I see, OK very interesting. And then so you said in elementary school, your school started students off with piano right? That was the first, like, foundational skills kind of thing.

Student Participant 2: I think so. Yeah. That's what I remember. I mean, I it was a lot of like, hey we sing like, you know, like America, the beautiful or whatever and like the Pledge of Allegiance, it was like stuff like that. And it was a chorus. Yeah. It was mainly like chorus. I think is what it was. And then we had, like, recorders we learned recorders. That was. Yeah, that was kind of a, that was like a big one. Yeah, but I think from what my earliest memories from what I remember in elementary school, it was piano was like the first thing. But and then the first like instrument that we did was. Probably recorders for that everybody had because they did like band where you could, like, be in band if you wanted to do like trumpet or, you know, like that kind of stuff. But it was like everybody goes through that, tt was like you have to kind of elect to do that.

Researcher: OK, so because you did have pianos, your first instrument. How do you think that affected you? Do you think that was a positive thing? Because I know some, you know, music philosophers say starting with piano provides you with some really great foundational skills also with understanding music theory. Would you say that's true, or do you think no matter the instrument you would have, you would have been fine?

Student Participant 2: I yeah. It's hard to say because I think like for me, I learned all the theory on guitar like my instrument just taught me. I mean, I knew like chords and I knew like, hey, these notes make up the C chord. You know, like that kind of stuff. But I wasn't like hey I I can improvise in this key and make up stuff on the fly like that that that was that was from guitar. But I used the what I learned from guitar and then I was like OK cool I can, like I couldn't like I couldn't pick up a guitar and. Be like, oh, here's every note. I'll tell you all the note I'm like. Hey, I know if I'm right here I'm in, like you know. C# minor and and like that happens. And then I kind of just actually like, OK, cool. Well, what notes are in that chord? Cool that would be on the piano right here. Like, doing it like that. So it was like, I kind of like reversed it. It was like kind of in reverse order but yeah, I mean, I think for me personally, like I I would have to say piano is is like awesome to learn like I I don't think there's any downside to learning piano and learning your you know, the basics of music theory that way.

Researcher: Right. That makes sense. OK, that's interesting. It was reversed for you. That's cool. All right. So this can, this question can apply to anything that comes to mind, whether it's in college or before, what are some ways that your music education school has shaped, prepared or developed your skills, anything that stands out to you?

Student Participant 2: Yeah, I guess it's weird because like I never, I was never like, hey, I know all the theory. I know all the things was more like, hey, can I play in a band? Can I play like do I know the chords can I play along with other people and that kind of thing. But then when I went to the recording school that was more like so that was a complete there was 0 music theory at all. It was all just like the physics of engineer, like there was literally nothing about like, here's how you play an instrument or this is what's cool. But it was more like, hey, think about how the music is composed and what makes up the the different parts and how those affect like, you know, the the energy of the low and then the high end and. Like all that stuff. So it was like I use that stuff to kind of like with what I knew about music theory and stuff to combine it to be like, OK, cool, well, here's how I would go about doing this in the best way to get the best sound. Like that kind of thing. So it was more. Yeah, it was less like, it's it's really weird. Like, I I

because I know a bunch of, like, I've worked with a bunch of people who went to like Berkeley, and they started, they play guitar or whatever, right. But like most of those people know how to engineer and and and do that kind of stuff. And I'm like, well, where? How did you learn that? Like, where did you, you know? And they're like, well, how did you learn the music. And I'm like, well, you know, my friend just told me, I don't know. So it was. It's like I don't think there's ever, like one direct path that like, oh, you have to do this or like, it's absolutely crucial that you understand XYZ. It's like, man, I know so many people in music who just don't know theory at all, that they couldn't play an instrument. They don't know anything, but they can make cool beats or they can make cool melodies or whatever. Like, they can just do with it. You know, it's not like a thing where you have to have all these prerequisites, that's like now you're able to start creating. It's like we you can create at any moment. You know, we can just do it yourself.

Researcher: Definitely. So your understanding of music theory as you went into recording school did that come from self-teaching or from your studies?

Student Participant 2: So it was mainly self-teaching. My friend basically drew me the guitar fret board and was like here's all the notes for all the modes and here's what what that means. And like here's an aeolian and like you know all that kind of stuff. And then I think, I mean a lot of it was like I would listen to an interview of somebody and let's you know, Trey Anastasio, he's like, hey, you know, we're real big into like tension and relief. And I'm like, what the heck is that? You know, like, what does that mean? And then it's like, cool, I go back and listen. I'm like, I get. Now I see what they're saying and they're building and building to this peak and you know, that kind of thing. So it was it was really self-taught, I think. I mean, like I didn't I I took guitar lessons for maybe like 6 months, something like that. But it was. But it was really like, hey, here's how you read the musical notation and you play along to this like, Mary had a little. And I'm like, I don't really care about that. I just wanna, like, do my own thing, you know? So I don't know. I I feel like I'm probably pretty, pretty of a weird case in in terms of like how I got to where I am, but yeah, yeah.

Researcher: No, that makes sense. OK, awesome. What, what did you study in your undergrad was it recording?

Student Participant 2: No. So I studied human development, so it's basically like social social psychology. So I have like, I literally have like, no formal training whatsoever in in music.

Researcher: OK, I see. I see. OK, I got you.

Student Participant 2: Except for the engineering side of it, I yeah. That formal training.

Researcher: Right, absolutely. You mentioned that it's interesting because some people you knew had some recording experience, but no music theory, whereas you had some music theory and no recording. Do you think one is better than the other? Do you like ones more prepared than the other? Are you glad you had that music theory or just.

Student Participant 2: Oh yeah. Ohh 100%, yeah, I mean it's it's it's the kind of thing where at least in terms of like the engineering producer or whatever kind of world if you know music stuff

where you can play an instrument that's like instantly, like oh, whoa. This is just my experience I mean, I live in LA. I don't know if this is like how it is in Nashville or, you know, New York or anything. Like that but for me it's like there's a ton of people who they just don't know anything about. I mean, like, they don't know anything about the like theory of music or composition or like, you know they can make songs, but they don't know like oh, cool. You know, we went to the third there or whatever, you know, like it's like, hey, we raised it a third, and now we're doing it. It's like they have no idea, but they it's all feel for them. It's just like, oh, this sounds right. Or this is right. But then they know all the technical like, hey, this is mixed properly so it's going to sound correct to everybody. So hey, it's cool. It's all good. But for me, yeah, I mean, like, for me, I if I didn't. If I hadn't known the theory that I did, like I'd never would have been able to play with a band because it was me teaching the other guys in the band like. OK, you guys can tell what key you were in, but you couldn't tell me what key we're in, right? Like and I'm trying to teach them like, hey, when we play this, it's mainly G major. That's what we always jam in. That's the. That's the one, right? They so yeah. So for me, I like I I think it's like, I would recommend learning theory to anyone who wanted to be do anything in music, even if you were like, hey, I'm just a singer, you know, I'm I'm totally voice like, well, that still matters a lot because on my end when I get the song, I have to tune the vocals. So I have to know which key it's in. And I have to know which notes, you know, actually go fit with that and where they should be and all that kind of stuff. So, there's like no reason not to know it. And like if you wanted to do anything and use it, I would be like, hey, if you just know basic theory, that's a huge advantage.

Researcher: That's so true. That's really great. So you mentioned briefly that your elementary through high school education didn't really prepare you well for your musical endeavors, especially because it was mainly just history. So what are some key ways you wish they had done better? Or some key topics you wish they had covered?

Student Participant 2: Yeah, I think it just like a general kind of music course like we had it in elementary school. It was more like, hey, this is like music and this is why it can be fun. And these are the different instruments and different things you can do with music and why music like is involved in our lives and how humans like, you know, react to it and that kind of stuff. I wish it was more of that, like and and then and then I think like, yeah, I mean, if I had to, think about like the next generation. Like what they're because I I don't know if other people are like, hey, the young people are like, hey, I want to be like an awesome guitar player. You know? Like, I don't know if that's what they want to do because before it was like, hey, hey, if I wanna do anything, I have to know an instrument or I have to learn this. I have to know. It's like you had to have specific skills that were like required to do to build upon everything else, but now it seems like there's. I mean, you could literally go buy samples, drop them into Logic or whatever, and they basically have us on that, you know, it's be like it's not unique, it's not cool, but you could put that out like that's something, right? So it's like, I don't know. I I wish. Yeah. I mean, I wish it was. I wish there was more just like just general music stuff because I think for for me, when I look at it, so I I volunteered at this place in in Hollywood called My Friend's Place and it was like of Resource Center for like younger homeless people in Hollywood. And like for me doing that was like. The like I learned so much, even though I'm literally just helping the person record. But it for me it's like they'll say, hey, I want to do this and I want to layer this part here, and I want that. And then it's like, oh, my gosh, how do I figure all that out and fly and be able to do

this while they're still in the recording booth and not, like, messing with their time? So it's like I, I think, like, learning that there are different avenues within music would help a lot with in terms of like how many, how people get turned on to actually being like. Hey, I want to do this with my life, you know, because it's like for me I just think like if you, you know how people say like hey like if you can see your self and someone else or like you can relate to that. Then it's like easier for you to kind of be like oh, I could do that so I just think that if there was more like, hey, here's all the different ways you can be involved in music, it could be like, hey, we're for a publishing company and you do accounting, right. It's like that. That's something. Right. You could do that or you could be like you know you're a session musician or, hey, I'm, I work as an engineer in the studio or I do whatever. Like, there's so many more paths that are are viable that I would have ever thought before. I, like, started doing it right. That's so if there was just like a hey, here's like examples of people doing cool things in music like that that would be like oh. Whoa, OK, cool. And then maybe people would look at it. Differently and be like, well, OK, well, maybe we're not making music, but what you know, because for me, it was just like I, you know, I interned at Epic Records when I was in a junior in college and it was, hey, just go get the coffee and I didn't do anything right. Like, this sucks. I'm don't wanna do that. You know and then and then I was like, cool. So I learned guitar. Then I started playing around, but I was still like, well, music's not a viable path, you know? And it was like, OK, cool. I got laid off. Screw this. I'm just gonna do it, you know? And then it was like, whoa, now there's all this other stuff I can do. And it's like, all these people I've connected with now. And it's like, you know, my music partner lives in Nigeria and now I'm working with dude in in Philadelphia, who I met through Title, you know, it's like there's just all this stuff that you just don't know until you actually kind of put yourself out out there. So I would have felt very uncomfortable putting anything out because I'm just like, I don't know enough, you know, like, I feel like, hey, it's it's not appropriate for me to do that. Right? But the reality is that's ridiculous. Everyone should be able to do whatever the hell they want. It's like you put it out so I don't know if, yeah, I just think like having the the knowledge of like, hey, here's all these different paths that other people have taken or like, here's what's possible. Then you'd be like, oh, cool, whoa. Hey. Cause now it's like, hey, I I I started a company called Hollywood Music Company basically to like because it's like, hey, I know all these awesome people in music who I'm just trying to help them get paid, right? So I was like, hey, it'll be like you can offer your services you could, like, teach or you could, like, record stuff for people you could mix or you could produce or whatever. They can just hire you. And then I kind of just pivoted cause I I I hated working on the website. So then I so then I was like, oh, wow, AI art, when I'm like, man, when I try to release stuff, it's such a pain in the butt to get art. Right. Like, cool. Now I can use AI art and make my own stuff that looks super cool. I don't have to worry. And so, like, oh, well, now maybe, like, sort of business doing that, you know, and it's like, or Spotify canvases little videos that go on with your Spotify stuff. So it's like, there's so much stuff that if you just if you can get an entrance into it and try to start understanding it, then you can see like, oh wow, I see it might be moving in this direction, which then opens up these other opportunities. Like I remember when I was in college, one of one of my friend's Dad's had a hedge fund, right? Like was that, like, started his own hedge fund. And I was like, hey, what would you recommend investing in or like, what do you see as an investing? And he and this was in 2005. And he was like, I would invest in hearing aid technology because with all the iPods and all the like, you know, everybody's listening to music now with their earphones, like people are going to go deaf or, like, lose their hearing. And then that's going to be really needed, you know, so it's like, oh wow. So there's just this whole world you have no idea about because you just

think like, hey, I have to know an instrument or I have to do be a singer or whatever it is. So yeah, you can do it, but yeah.

Researcher: That's really cool. Awesome. OK, let's see. So switching gears a little bit, do you have any experience, whether in your education or whatever dealing with world music and or cultural music, did you learn about that in school at all?

Student Participant 2: Yeah. Yeah, we we did. So I took a I took a class in college, I think a senior year, it was Gamelon drumming. So it was like all these like East Asian instruments and like percussion and stuff like that. It was so cool. So that was, that was, I mean you, you learn kind of like, you know, there's like the Oud and stuff in, like, the Middle East. Like, that's super cool. Everybody, like, loves that sound like mandolins, you know, that might be like Italian or bluegrass or whatever it is. You know, who knows? But yeah, it was, I guess, like, yeah, the big introduction for me was like Paul Simon and when he did Graceland, that that was when I was like, what does he what? What does that mean? It was like, oh, he went to Africa and just found all these awesome African musicians and he made a cool album. And I'm like, whoa, you know, yeah. But it wasn't like, yeah, I think it was more like it was like, hey, here's the history of this instrument. These are the the cultures that traditionally use it, but it wasn't like, here's this Oud being used in a super cool way and this pop song, you know, it wasn't like that. Here's how it was developed, why they used it and why this is like part of their culture kind of thing, right?

Researcher: So is that a way, because my next question is how you would improve the incorporation of that. So would it be to see those, you know, instruments used in in the modern times?

Student Participant 2: Yeah, maybe it is. I don't. I don't know. I mean, I because for me, it's like, I love the history of it. So like, if it's like, hey, this is the reason why this was developed and how they initially use it like that's cool to me. Because then I'm like, oh, cool. I wonder if I can like sample that sound or like I can find like a like someone who plays it. I could record them and then use that like that kind of thing, so I think, I think the main thing is like, hey, you know everybody has guitars and bass and drums and whatever, but these other cool cultures have all this other stuff that no one really talks like there's all this percussion and like just, you know, there's infinite stuff that's just so cool, like didgeridoos or whatever, you know it's like if if you, I think if it was framed as like hey here's what other people around the world are using to help to make music and this is why they use that like there's no rule that says you can't use that or that they can't use that we're using right like I, so to me it's like the interconnectivity of how everything is with the Internet and like now everybody. It's like invested in every other country's debt, and like all that stuff, it's like it's just connected. We're just connected whether we like it or not. It's just we are.

Researcher: Definitely. Awesome. OK. And this is one of the last questions, again this is a little bit broad, but can you name a couple ways your music education experience or your music, your music experience in general has enriched your life, so having these skills, how has it enriched your life?

Student Participant 2: Yeah, for sure. I mean, yeah, the biggest thing is like just connecting with other creators for me, because it's like, the coolest part about it is like, hey, now I'm like, super tight with a guy in Nigeria who I never would have ever met had it not been for a record label that we were both working with and they said, hey, here's these, like, these instrumentals that John sent and he was like, oh, this is awesome. I want to write songs to this and then we connect it. And then now we don't work with the label. Well, we just, we do everything together. So for me it's like man, it's so cool just to do like a a Zoom call with it and see his family and what you know, it's like it's it's just like to me, it's like that's the best thing that's ever happened. You know, it's like just being able to connect with someone and be such so close to them. I've never met him. But, you know, it's like we do Zoom. I know about his family knows about mine. We're like joke with each other, you know? It's just like it's just me, it's like I I don't know. I mean, to me, music is the one thing that could, like, unite everyone for anything, right. It's like the thing that trans it it it goes above and beyond like borders and culture. It's like it's an emotion, right? It's it's it's like a feeling it's it's it's something it's like that's why Bob Marley was so dangerous. Right? Cause hey, he was preaching peace and non-violence and people were listening to him and he had that influence. And then it's like, hey, we can't let this guy do that. You know, that kind of thing. So it's like, yeah, what could be more dangerous than like uniting people and I think. That's like that to me. That's. The coolest part about it and then I think like you learn so much other stuff, just working with people on projects. So it's like you learn about like give and take and like sacrificing things like, hey, is this really important that I say this or like this is a sticking point with me. It's like I don't you know. And then on on his side, he's like cool. It's good. Whatever. Like you know, it's like I'm working with him because I want him to put his stamp on it and he wants me to put my stamp on. It so I'm not gonna mess with that.

Researcher: Hmm, that's really good. OK. The last thing that I have is, is there anything in your education that was it comes to mind, anything notable whether it was an interaction with a teacher or a lesson that you learned, any particular students you met, anything like that that stands out to you?

Student Participant 2: Yeah, I'm trying to think. I yeah, I don't know. I mean, I think. A big part of it was like in in in college basically like. So I I don't know if you I don't know if if it's still the same or if it has this reputation. But basically Cornell is like hey super hard like everybody there like it's all graded on a curve. Has like the highest suicide rate it's, you know, it's like all of the things, right. And for me, I didn't. I wanted to go to school where people took at their education seriously and it was like, hey, I could learn and there's going to be people who are way different from me there and like, I could, like, get their opinion and learn and like, you know, get in arguments and all that kind of stuff. But I think like for me, since everything was just graded on a curve, it was like, all right, cool. The answer to everything just you just have to work harder. That's it. So I learned. I learned, like, hey, I can pretty much do anything if I just outwork everybody. So I took that that mindset and was like alright, well, I'm just gonna outwork everybody that I know and and no one will be able to say like, oh, that guy doesn't do it right or doesn't care or what, you know, like that kind of thing. So it was, it was really like your, your reputation really matters. Like when you're working with, it's the other thing is it's such a small community. It's so insane. I've met people that like this guy in New York who plays piano he's played all his big, like, rap records. Hmm. And I was like, talking to many mentioned something. And like, how do you know that person? I I literally was on a kids video shoot, and that guy was

the direct, like, the director. And how do you know him? And he's like, oh, we did this. And I'm like, I like, that's just insane. I mean how would that be? It's it's a super small community and like people, people know what's up. You know, like people, if you have a reputation, they will perceive you for sure. So for me, it was like, hey, I just want to be easy to work like that. That's the biggest thing like I will work with anyone who's just easy to work with. I don't care if you're like terrible, or you're great or whatever. If you're easy to work, with I can work with you. So a lot of it was just like, hey, how do you basically, like, make yourself as valuable as possible as a, as a music person. Right? So it's like, hey, I can engineer, I can produce, I can play, I can do this. I can help you with licensing. I can help you know. It's like all the stuff. Distribution. I know all the like, so it's really just like, how do you arm yourself with as many skills as possible to be invaluable to somebody else or to some group or a group of people? And I was like, I got, you know, I just met this bass player guy threw a Fish message board. And he was basically like he he he went to Musicians Institute and then just played in bands as his job. He's like oh. We got to do a track with this person and I'm gonna get this person and it's like, you know, he just knew all these awesome musicians. So I got to them and and develop relationships with them and then it's like they just were like, hey, we want you to do it because you've done it before and you like what you do. And so then it's that's like how you get work and get involved and with with other people and that kind of thing. But yeah. So I yeah, I guess, yeah, I guess the big thing was like I I think you can learn I think you can like flex your creativity muscle. I think you can get better at it in terms of like strategic thinking. So. So yeah. So there's there's like a million things you could say. But yeah, I think. It's really just like work hard, be easy to work with and be flexible, is like the biggest things.

Researcher: That's really good. That's really good. This is a separate question that I just I just thought of regarding the Asian study that you did the thinking collectively which which you mentioned, did you look at all into if that's because of the culture and how people are raised there and the values that they're raised with?

Student Participant 2: That. Yeah, that was kind of the the theory. I I don't know what happened? Like ultimately with the like. I don't know where it was published or what the like results were or anything, but that was the theory that it was basically because they're raised more in like a collectivist society that they, their, their memories will reflect that value instead of like us in America. We're all like, you know, selfish. That that was kind of the general understanding of it.

Researcher: OK, I was. I was. I was just curious. That's really cool. OK, I think that is all I have for you today. But thank you again so much for your time. It's really great getting to hear about your experiences and everything and your insights. So I really appreciate it.

Student Participant 2: Awesome. Yeah, for sure. Glad I can help out.

Researcher: Thanks so much and. Have a great rest of your day as well.

Student Participant 2: Yeah, you too. Alright, see you later. Bye.

Researcher: Bye.

Interview Transcripts: American Participants
Student Participant 3

Researcher: OK, awesome. So. I'm going to go ahead and pull up my questions here. OK. So you mentioned just to get started, I would love to hear a little bit more about your experience. You said you've been learning music for a while in America and then you also studied abroad in Japan. What did you, did uou study anything specifically in Japan or was it just a general education, could you explain that a little bit more?

Student Participant 3: In terms of my study abroad program, it was it was general. In addition to being a music major, I'm a Japanese language minor. So I just learn the language. But I did like learn a lot about like specific, you know, cultural differences and like. Philosophies that may differ a bit from Western sort of ideas. So like one example, we were learning about like, like sports and like how they like, there's this philosophy called shingitai and it's basically like mental strength, technique with like physical fitness. In addition to that, it's important to like, in addition to like getting better at the sport, it's important to becoming a better person while doing that kind of. So like I think one of the examples I heard about was like an interview that a Japanese baseball player who plays with American teams gave about like, for example, when a player had a bad game, you know an American player, they would maybe break their bat or throw it or something and they very much are against like, and this also sumo too, like they they don't show any emotion even if they win like they're very just stone-cold kind of very respectful in that in that sense.

Researcher: Interesting. OK, awesome. During your study abroad program, did you take any music lessons in Japan?

Student Participant 3: No music lessons no, this was purely language learning.

Researcher: Right, right. I got you. OK, cool. OK. And then for your American Music studies, could you give me just a brief rundown of your experience here?

Student Participant 3: Yeah. Should I just like, go from elementary school or?

Researcher: Yeah, just a, just a. Really brief summary, if you could start from elementary, that'd be great. And then through whatever you've been doing now, yeah.

Student Participant 3: Yeah. Give me seconds to job my memory. I remember I I started out, I think, yeah. Elementary school. I assume I think probably the first thing I ever did was singing, just like I large group choir class. And I remember, I think maybe 4th or 5th grade. What we've learned, they're called like the flutephones or recorders. And I was. Yeah, that was until middle school. And then obviously you choose band, orchestra or choir. I choose band as a trumpet player. I remember they they they were kind of personal about like instrument selections. So they sat down with you and like talked about, hey, your armature is good for trombone and your armature is good for trumpet. You can, you know, stuff like that. So I did the band throughout middle school and in high school, I did band as well, but also an orchestra and choir. Cause you had the opportunity to do that. I actually do do a youth. Orchestra outside of choir as well. I also

I guess this goes back to childhood too, but I took piano lessons beginning at six years old, so I did that all the way until now. Basically, until college. And now it's just privately sort of. I think the general experience with kids is that everyone does piano lessons, but mostly quit after you know, at the end of elementary school. But I didn't quit so. Yeah. Those are kind of the main things I did, I guess I decided to major in music. I probably decided that maybe around Freshman year of high school. And that's when I decided to really do all the opportunities that I could.

Researcher: Right, for sure. OK. Awesome. That's great. Let's see. So overall, this is a pretty general question, but overall your music education experience in America has it been overall positive, negative? Do you feel like it's adequately prepared you for your future goals? Just a general statement, I guess.

Student Participant 3: Well, in terms of you know, there are various points where I thought you know, besides college that you know maybe sometimes the stuff I was doing was a little boring or wasn't something I wanted to do. But I think looking back, I'd say I was pretty satisfied, but a lot of that, too, is my individual drive. I don't know if I can speak to someone that maybe. You know, didn't have as much of a passion for music as me. It could have been squelched through the system, I don't know but. But in terms of like right now, my college experience. I think a lot is maybe that there's a lot of there's kind of dynamic environment I feel in terms of like the stuff that, is kind of changing a lot in terms of the course, courses that we take as music majors. One recent example, I think actually that's been really helpful to me in terms of just being a musician and like posture and taking care of myself is implementing like Alexander Technique classes into just the offered classes here. I know they've been very popular at DePaul and they've really helped me with just being able to, you know, help with air flow better, for the trumpet player, and even just, you know, getting a good night's sleep or dealing with stress before the concerts, stuff like that, performance anxiety is a very I know through the school music that's a very big issue so. Yeah, I feel like in terms of at least the DePaul University, there's a they're gonna have an environment, a lot is changing. They're trying to respond to the current context, so.

Researcher: OK, awesome. And you, I'm sorry, you said your primary instrument is piano right now. Or do you play? You play multiple?

Student Participant 3: So I'm majoring in trumpet performance, but I do play piano on the side, you know, for just accompaniment gigs and all that. But trumpet is the primary.

Researcher: OK, got you. OK, perfect. Just wanted to clarify. So you mentioned earlier that you did piano from six years old and then pretty much up until now starting. So part of my study is exploring foundational keyboard skills. Do you feel there's an advantage to starting with piano as your first instrument or not really of a difference? Not really much of a difference.

Student Participant 3: Yeah, that's interesting. It's also interesting too because you know, obviously with going to band, you're playing in a B flat instrument, right? And I learned everything before that in C so it was quite a challenge, for me at first to just kind of wrap my head around that. But I guess in the long run it's. I feel like it's been very helpful because I've been able to transpose a lot better from just getting that initial kind of C foundation and then going to B flat and then like being able to juxtapose it with C for terms of that, I think actually

piano is very helpful at a young age. Also, there's just the reading sheet music advantage that I think it's very big. You know most I remember most, most kids in 6th grade, they had never seen sheet music before, so it was a big challenge for them. And then of course there's the other fact that they learn all their notes, like if the trumpet player is playing B flat, you know they would learn B Flat, but it's written in C, So there's that issue as well. Ah yeah, I hope I answered your question, sorry.

Researcher: No. Yeah, that was actually perfect. Though just to follow up for that so you said you started in private lessons in piano, so your school like in elementary, middle school, they didn't introduce piano, you pretty much choose like a band instrument. Is that correct?

Student Participant 3: Yeah. In middle school there was no like piano classes.

Researcher: Right. OK, got you. OK. Perfect. Let's see. OK, so this question can apply to elementary through college. I would say anything that stands out regarding. Any specific? Let's see skills or yeah. Basically, skills that you feel were really sharpened or developed during your education? Basically, in your time in school and everything, was there anything they really honed in on, like whether it's confidence or music theory skills, things like that, that you feel like they really covered pretty well and now you feel like you're really well prepared in?

Student Participant 3: You know, it was interesting. I remember actually, there was a, so I when I was in like 6th grade bands like I thought I already taken these music lessons. So I felt like I think I remember being a little overconfident and a little, maybe. And I think the teacher did a good job of like kind of bring me down to earth and you know, showing that, you know, there's still a lot to learn you know. And integrating me into the group even though I sort of had other skills that the other kids didn't, and I think that was actually really helpful just in terms of, you know, being a team player and just kind of like working with musicians, cause that's definitely one of the biggest skills that I've felt like I've had to apply because there's also many different contexts in which musicians placed in, and you need to be able to work with the other people that you're playing with.

Researcher: Definitely. OK. Awesome. On the other hand, is there anything in your education that you feel has been lacking, so not necessarily your own, like studying on your own time, but more stiffly, the school curriculum. Is there anything that you feel is lacking or they could have done more of?

Student Participant 3: Yeah, that's tough, I mean maybe like the repertoire could be a little interest, more interesting, or maybe a little more like maybe be like, there's a lot of just like very simple, just like, you know, hot cross buns and all that stuff and you know, it'd be interesting to see like maybe more incorporations, of like popular topical songs that apply to certain skills cause, yeah, maybe like, you know, a lot of kids, they do a music class and they don't like the music class or they don't like the repertoire that they're singing, and that could maybe turn them off for music all together and I feel like that's a lot of time t's just like they need to find the right repertoire. So in that sense, maybe introducing more genres of music, you know, into the curriculum. Would also be. I feel like they probably are expanding on this a little bit more now. Like definitely loves classical music, obviously so, just like incorporating, maybe also new more

instruments as well. Yeah, in elementary school. You know, I feel like in elementary school you could really experiment with like percussion instruments specifically. You know, you all you have to do is hit them. It would have been cool at a young age to get hands on experience with other instruments.

Researcher: All right, for sure. OK, that's great. Let's see. And then could you talk about the incorporation of world music and cultural music in your education?

Student Participant 3: Yeah, I mean, I took a. World music class in college it was pretty, pretty broad. I know. I think that that's in, I've talked about dynamic environment in the college. They're kind of I know they're working on incorporating more world music in the curriculum. So probably as I leave, they'll have incorporated some more stuff. But yeah, for like high school and in middle school, it was mostly well, you mean? Yeah, it was just the band repertoire standard band repertoire. Not a lot of world music. I would say. I will. I will say in probably the most world music experience was doing acapella choir in high school.

Researcher: Ohh, in high school OK. Cool. OK, awesome. Could you give some examples of the kind of world music? So was it specific to South America, East Asian cultures or Europe? Or was it pretty broad? Was it, did you incorporate a lot of it?

Student Participant 3: Yeah, in my to go to my yeah, to the acapella class in college. I did, I think there was some Spanish music, some in Spanish a couple times. It's also like traditional African music as well. Like sort of, there was, like, spiritual and just also traditional, like African kind of music with I remember they had some kids play like drum rhythms and stuff like that well. In the college class I took, it was a lot more broad. There was African music, a lot of traditional Asian music as well, like Indonesian music, and I actually did my final project on on Yahoo, Japanese Sport music. So that was that was pretty fun to do as well.

Researcher: OK. Oh cool.

Student Participant 3: So yeah, I definitely liked the world music class I took, but I definitely feel like I could have taken maybe two or three more of those classes to expand on some of the things I learned.

Researcher: OK, cool. There right, definitely. So obviously you, you know, in college you choose to take electives for world music specifically talking about elementary and high school, do you wish more cultural and world music had been incorporated during that specific education? Because obviously you dove into it in college. Do you feel like it was sufficient in elementary through high school or do you sure I did more?

Student Participant 3: Yeah, I mean, in elementary school, going back to like the, I feel like the percussion instruments would be a great way to introduce some more music just cause, but yeah, I mean I guess I also understand maybe that resources could be a a tough issue too. There might not be the budget for it. But yeah, especially, I'd say elementary school would be nice to have some more world music.

Researcher: Yeah, definitely. OK. That's great. Awesome. OK. So just two more questions. So the first one is, in what ways has your music education experience and use of these skills enriched your life? It's kind of a general question, but yeah, just a question about enrichment.

Student Participant 3: That's tough. I mean it's, you know, made me, I think a more maybe expressive person I feel like because you know, it's just basically the primary way I express myself. You know, if I wasn't doing music, I feel like I probably wouldn't be very you know, creative or expressive. So I feel like that can be an outlet for a lot of students in, like school in general because I remember, you know, especially in high school, I was looking forward to those, you know music classes in between like you know, math and science and whatever. I think also, what else? I think it's made me a better like just team player as well you know cause having with all these groups, you know, going from comradery between peoples, it's very important. I think it's also, you know, I feel like the nature of music and sort of love your time as a student is like kind of having to do a lot of it yourself, enrolling in it yourself and taking it yourself to do it. So that's kind of it's made me more someone who's been, you know, willing to take the opportunity. That I see, you know.

Researcher: OK, definitely awesome. And this is related to your interest in Japanese culture. How did you get interested in that? Because obviously I am very interested in that as well. I'm actually traveling to Japan in November, so I'd love to hear how you came to love it.

Student Participant 3: Yeah, I mean to go off of, you know, how music may be more, you know out there in terms of getting opportunities that come towards me that was kind of the the case with with Japanese. Yeah, that basically started, you know, now it's I've been learning. I think the language for about 2 1/2 years so.

Researcher: Oh, cool. Awesome.

Student Participant 3: I started taking language classes in in college and it was the first time I ever learned the language. I guess I was interested in it from, well, probably partially learning about it in world music and I have a few Japanese friends. There was a saxophonist, jazz saxophonist, he’s a native Japanese person. He kind of introduced me to that, to the language spoken fluently. So yeah, it's various little things like that. I saw that, you know, Japanese was a language that was offered at. The school right, I had to just go for it.

Researcher: That's really cool. OK, awesome. I was just curious. OK, cool. I think that is actually all the questions I have, so I really appreciate your time today and and being willing to join my study. So thank you so much. Yeah.

Student Participant 3: You're welcome.

Researcher: Awesome. OK, I will stop the recording.

Interview Transcripts: Japanese Participants
Teacher Participant 1

Researcher: OK so, let me see, pull up my questions here. So if we could start out by if you could just give me a rundown of some of your experience. I believe you said you taught music in Japan for a little bit, is that right?

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, I've been a music teacher. I've been like a private like one-on-one lesson teacher, for about like 15 years, something like that. So I don't know if your project is about like more like classroom type teaching or or whatever, but that's what I have something to say about.

Researcher: Perfect. Absolutely. That's great.

Teacher Participant 1: But I've been teaching guitars my main instrument. When I went to school for, but I've been teaching like piano and drums also. So I taught for, I guess, probably about 10 years in the US and like New Hampshire and New York and then like four years ago-ish. I moved to Japan, and when I was teaching over there, I was teaching private music lessons, too. But it's like, mostly for my wife's in the military. She's in the military band.

Researcher: Oh OK. Wow. That's really cool.

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah. So I was teaching a lot of, like, military families and stuff over there and some, like Japanese people that were also there too, but most, mostly military, I guess.

Researcher: Oh, OK. Right. Absolutely awesome. Let's see. So, my first question for you, this is kind of just a broad question, but could you give me a few examples of some of the methodologies you use in your teaching? So if you use any specific philosophies or anything by any like Suzuki method, things like that, could you give me just a brief summary of what you use?

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, I'm sorry if this answer is not satisfying or not what you're looking for but as, like mostly a guitar teacher, our method and methodology, our method books and stuff like that. There's, there's some that I do use. I'll use like either like the Al Leonard or the Mel Bay that method books sometimes not all the time, but as like a more kind of popular music instrument a lot of times it goes in more of a direction of like learning songs and just going right to the music and trying to maybe do some your training, listening, transcribing type stuff with that or you know, doing that for students and showing them how to play certain songs. So, as far as what I have done like particular methods, it's not like necessarily following it's like it's, I know that's, yeah, I know Suzuki for like string instruments is a is a whole thing and I feel like it's nowhere near the same prevalence for something like that for like guitar and yeah.

Researcher: Right. Right, OK, awesome. And what ages did you teach for in Japan?

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, I thought like mostly about 7 to adults, like, you know, middle high school and adults too.

Researcher: OK. OK. And were they? Were you teaching like secondary? Like would they have music lessons in school as well or were you their primary teacher?

Teacher Participant 1: Some of them did have like they were in band, maybe o a class like that at school. But I think for pretty much all of them. I was there only like private music teacher.

Researcher: Perfect. OK. And then did you, could you explain how you took into consideration the students goals. So obviously some of the students wanted to go on and become music majors and then some wanted to learn recreationally. Did you take that into consideration when choosing how to teach them?

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, for sure. I feel like it when a student expresses like a real interest and like I want this to be my you know my future in some big way then I feel like the cadence and the whole way that you teach a lesson changes. t's like, well, we got to get down to business now and like really dig in, as you know, I'm sure, but yeah. And I think for kids or people that are not interested in doing this, like professionally or seriously, which or an instrument like guitar and a lot of people is it's a much more about just getting some satisfaction out of playing some songs that they like or artists that they're into and, you know, getting some of that technique and music theory stuff on the way, but a lot less of a rigorous hardcore method.

Researcher: Right. So you say your primary instrument is the guitar. Okay, awesome. So this is more of a question about your personal education. Did you learn the piano first, or did you only learn guitar first? Because this part of my study, this one part, is about foundational keyboard skills because I know some people believe you should start with the piano. Do you have any opinions on that?

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, that's a cool question. I starting with me I started on guitar, but I also did some piano I didn't do a bunch of like formal lessons as I was growing up like, but I did a handful here and there and I would play piano on my own, so I as a tool to understand music I find that a lot of people get a lot of benefit from being able to translate to or from piano or something like that, an instrument like guitar I feel like it’s really similar to piano the way that we can understand being one of the few harmonic instruments we're kind of doing similar stuff.

Researcher: Right, right.

Teacher Participant 1: I think that piano has an advantage of having it really easy to understand what the notes are, and like the layout of it. And on guitar, well, a lot of people might have some facility in playing the arpeggios or whatever you're working on understanding like that's an F# is a lot, there's a lot more of a barrier to that on guitar because the fret board is a lot more of a mess than piano.

Researcher: Yes, definitely.

Teacher Participant 1: At least that's, you know, the experience that from a lot of the students that I've seen.

Researcher: Right, right. Absolutely. OK, perfect. What are some particular ways you look to or some particular things you look to develop in your students, whether that's confidence, you know performing in front of people or technique, music theory skills, what are some big ways you look to develop your students.

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah. That's great. You have some good examples there. I might feel it all the same but I think that probably #1 is like rhythm.

Researcher: Oh, right.

Teacher Participant 1: Accuracy or time or however you want to say that? I hear a lot of students playing and you know, maybe they'll understand what those they're supposed to hit or the theory behind it and that's school and great and I like doing that stuff too, but I think that a focus on rhythm is what makes people like really, actually sound good.

Researcher: That makes sense, especially for acoustic guitar, for sure.

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, exactly. There's no hiding it if you're not playing in something.

Researcher: That's so true. That's so true.

Teacher Participant 1: But I definitely value like the theory aspect. I love when I'm working with people on a song or a thing and to you know just try to understand what's going on in that particular thing, whether or not we launch into a whole or something or whatever the theory concept is.

Researcher: OK, that's great. Let's see. Are there any ways that you've looked to improve your teaching methods over the years? Anything that you noticed some gaps in? Yeah.

Teacher Participant 1: Yes. Let's see, for sure, I definitely I'm always trying to improve and like learn from other teachers that I find are successful or getting something out of their students that I'm feel like I'm not all the time or you know, it's not hitting in the right way. I think that I'm about to give you a bunch of nonspecific answers. I don't know if they're going to be super satisfying. I think that one of the biggest areas that is a challenge or that can always be better is like that, inspiring students to like, want to spend their own time and dive into a subject or a technique or whatever on their own. And like just doing whatever for it is for that individual person that really makes them want to, that sparks their interest in them. I think that if you've got that then there is a ton to work with that, it's pretty easy after that if somebody is willing to put in the time and the effort, then they're going to be fine.

Researcher: Yes, definitely. This is kind of a a separate question. I just I just thought of actually. So being in Japan, did you ever take into consideration the methods of the schools? Because obviously you were, you're an independent teacher, but I'm not sure if you taught in Japanese or if it was in English. But obviously when students would come in who were in band and would you ever help them practice their repertoire for school. Did you take that into consideration so? How did that work?

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, I would do some of their school rep for band class like that are a lot of the people that I interacted with that had that were percussionists when I was teaching drums, but because guitar, you know isn't really in band, which is my own other complaints that I have but. The question was and repertoire. Ohh helping them. Any differences. OK. A lot of the students that. I taught were I I had a pretty much all in English, a couple in Japanese, but my Japanese is passable for a lot of things, but for teaching and it's it starts to push the limits of it, but. Differences that I noticed besides like, a couple really like basic things, not, not not a ton I think that like my couple piano students that also were doing lessons with the Japanese teacher. Or, I'm trying to remember exactly what they were doing, but they were just playing some like classical repertoire. I guess the difference. I like to try to be a lot more creative with my students. And I'm I have like a jazz background, so you know improvising and all of that, like songwriting type things, are something that I have a lot of fun with and I think are valuable tools and ways that people can interact with music and I wouldn't find that I saw much of that going on from the Japan side of it, but I also don't see that much of that going on from the like school.

Researcher: Right. That makes sense. Let's see. Did you, so obviously, being in another country did you ever try to incorporate world music, cultural music, things like that. Honestly, whether it was Western, Asian, European.

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, depending on the interests of the student, you know to gravitate towards those things played a lot of like or I taught a lot of kids on piano and guitar, a lot of anime theme songs and stuff like that. Like it's like rolling through their brains all the time and they were excited about planning to learn it. Stuff like that, I guess.

Researcher: OK, cool. Awesome. Let's see. OK. And then I'll only have a couple of questions left. So what are some ways that you believe music education enriches your student's lives?

Teacher Participant 1: I think being able to, there, there's a few. The practice of like having some sort of discipline which I feel like when you're a kid, there aren't a lot of things that are in this category of like, you know, this is something that in order to be at all good, you've gotta like, you've got to put in a decent amount of effort and try pretty hard. So just to show somebody that this is a possibility and it's really rewarding when it happens, it's also a challenge to get to that place with a lot of people because there's a big like start up cost. It's art. So yeah, the learning that discipline or, you know, you're on sort of self-motivation focused type of thing. The value the question was what? Sorry can you restate that?

Researcher: Oh, of course, of course. No problem, just some ways in which music education has enriched the lives of your students.

Teacher Participant 1: OK. Yeah, yeah. And my other thing I was going to say was like being able to play with other musicians is like a satisfying thing in and of itself whether you're good at it or performing professionally, or just with a friend or a band at school or whatever, you know. That's why a lot of us get into it is because it's like it's for its own sake. And for listening to music too, that sort of deeper appreciation or understanding or connection to music that you can get it you've played. That particular piece or something like that.

Researcher: Definitely. Definitely awesome and. OK, so the last thing I have is any outstanding experiences over the years in teaching in Japan. Any particular student experience you had? Yeah. Anything you can think of?

Teacher Participant 1: Outstanding experiences. I mean, I have some like, really great students that are, you know, really hard workers or, you know, are like, come in, really, I don't want to say like naturally talented or something like that, but come in playing pretty good but I don't know. I feel like I've seen so many students now that like to say an outstanding experience like, I've seen a lot of these people do a lot of the same things and they're good or bad or whatever. you know in all these different ways, but I mean the process of learning music is this collection of things that we're all kind of doing in this sort of similar way. I'm sorry that I don't have anything like.

Researcher: Ohh no no, not at all. No, that's actually perfect. OK, awesome. I believe that's all I have for you today. So thank you again for your time. I really appreciate it's been great getting to hear about your experiences and unique insights, so thank you so much.

Teacher Participant 1: Yeah, of course. Thank you. Nice to meet you. And yeah, good luck with your project and everything.

Researcher: Thank you so much. Nice to meet you as well.

Teacher Participant 1: OK, see you.

Researcher: Bye.

Interview Transcripts: Japanese Participants
Teacher Participant 2

Researcher: Perfect. OK. So I'm going to go ahead. And get started. So if you could first just give me a brief rundown of your teaching experience in Japan, that would be awesome.

Teacher Participant 2: OK. So I moved here like 8 years ago and I started teaching, uh yeah, I got. A student from a colleague of mine from America who, uh, like her student, moved back to Japan. She was an adult student and, so she hooked me up with that student. So that was kind of like how I first got into a teaching career here and I tried to like I put ads in the newspaper and there was like, no response. I was like like, lessons in English or something and like people were really, really shy and didn't really want to do anything so but I was going to language school anyway so it was OK to just like, teach that one one student for the first couple of years and then I started doing more with performing so I got I got into this like small orchestra. That's like like a regional orchestra sort of thing. And we did a lot of concerts all over Japan and and then my husband, who's from here, but we met in America and got married in America and. Then. He got an orchestra job here, so we moved back to Japan. So he he plays the trumpet, but he started on the violin as a kid and so his violin teacher was retiring. And so she was looking for someone to, like, pass a couple of students on to that.

Researcher: Oh. Wow, that's cool.

Teacher Participant 2: So she invited me to come observe one of her lesson days, and so she lives in Yokohama, which is the next town over from. I live in Kawasaki and, so it's about a 30 minute drive, so it's not far. And his parents live in that neighborhood. I mean, he took with her as a kid. So yeah, so I observed her teaching in Japanese and. That was really interesting to watch and I was like pretty overwhelmed to be like, I don't know, like if I can take over this studio. And she was like, don't worry, like, a lot of kids, they're going to somebody else who speaks Japanese. They and some kids don't want it to continue lessons. So it's just an option for some kids who are interested. So. Two kids decided to sign up, and so I was like, OK, that's good. Like, I didn't want, like, so many only Japanese speakers anyway. And my parents-in-law offered me their spare bedroom to make it into a studio, which would just be about a 5 minute extra walk for those students. So I was coming to their house like once a week to teach those two kids. And then I had my one adult student at home. Plus, like the orchestra stuff that I was doing. So I was like, OK, I'm, I'm pretty busy. I'm. I'm good with this and I continued to like, come back to America for my one regional orchestra in California. So I was satisfied at the moment with that and until like I could, like, maybe get a bigger job here then COVID happened. My adult student's husband decided to work from home. She had to quit because he didn't want the noise. And then one of the students was like, yeah, we can't really make this work, so they quit. So I only had one kid from that teacher, and he was awesome. He, like, got really into it. And so that was like, pretty much I put like my whole soul of teaching into him because he was like the only one left. Yeah. And then COVID ended here about two years ago.

Researcher: Oh wow, yeah.

Teacher Participant 2: I know it was over like everywhere else in the world. Like way before that, but borders just opened up. Like maybe a year ago. So my orchestra that I was playing with died. We were performing all the time and now there's like one or two concerts a year, so I'm like, I need more teaching so. I invested in my website. I hired somebody to help me make SEO and I like studied other people's websites in Japan, like just Googling violin teacher Japan and like trying to make mine look similar to theirs so it was, like, friendly for the Japanese viewer. And so now I have about 16 or 17 students. And so yeah, that kind of like happened over the last two or three years, OK and part of them, like I have three students, including that one boy that I was teaching the whole time. He moved to a different part of Yokohama and got really busy with junior high. So they just continued online. They come once a year, right before the student recital. They participate in the student recital and then they're like, OK, we're back online.

Researcher: Wow.

Teacher Participant 2: Uh. Yeah. So I have 300% online students, including that one kid who's. Like maybe 90-99% online.
Researcher: OK, awesome. Thank you so much. Let's see. So. I had a question about the particular methods that you use in the philosophy. So is there any specific method you use, like Suzuki or anything like that? Or do you follow the schools in the area, or do you have your own that you've developed to teach your students?

Teacher Participant 2: So I did Suzuki training through book three in America and then when COVID happened, they allowed Suzuki training online and that really changed my ability to teach or like just my interest in teaching. Right, so I did like I think book 4 and like revisiting book 1 during COVID. And I was just like, wow, this is so much better than actually like the seminars that I went to in person. I actually really hated it. I was just like, people are, like, obsessed with this guy. And I felt like a cult, sort of. But I don't know, maybe that I just didn't have good teachers, or maybe it was just like the atmosphere of everybody, like loving Suzuki. Like was just too much for me. But the teacher that I studied with online for the the book 4 seminar. Was just like, really, really chill. And he was just like, I have, like, a lot of a lot of pedagogy stuff like tell you and so then I was like, OK, like he was good that he, one of the things I didn't like about the Suzuki method is like, but I didn't think the people were very good or the teachers were not very good players. They just like knew this method and then they taught it and like I didn't yeah, I didn't particularly feel inspired by those teachers. So I found a different teacher for book 5 and he completely changed my idea of pedagogy. He was just because I'm I feel like really shy. I'm like I'm not a Suzuki raised kid. I didn't learn Suzuki as a kid. I don't really like know about this like group class situation like seems like a waste of time and like, why can't we add other pieces? And he was just like, yeah, this is just a a way that this, this guy Suzuki, Mr. Suzuki, put together this order of music in order to teach these different techniques in this order that makes sense physically for children and I was like, yeah, that makes sense to me like I can, I can say yes to that because he's already done the work of like finding what order to teach technique works for children. So I decided to finish my my Suzuki pedagogy training with this with this teacher online and so I'm in the middle of doing that. I've signed up through the at the end of the books, but I'm currently doing book 7. And then. And he found out there's a way to transfer the, if you finish it in America, you can transfer it to like Japan, so he's like, I'm super interested in helping you with this. Like, I want to like figure this out. I want to get you

registered as a Suzuki teacher in Japan. I'm like, OK, like, I'm still not a Suzuki teacher. I'm not doing group class. Like I did 17 students, but like I also teach at an International School. Like, that's like other kids like, they're not going to come. That's two hours away. And then I teach a couple of adults I teach online like it's I own. I actually have, like, maybe seven students who are children who would qualify for this sort of method. That's just not enough, and like also the the range of level is way too big.

Researcher: That makes sense.

Teacher Participant 2: Book one to book seven out of those seven children. So it's not possible. But anyway, he. But I'm like, OK, he's interested in in me and like my career so I'll go for it all. I mean, there's no harm in, like, getting that transferred. So, yeah, so I also got a bunch of books by Suzuki and just kind of reading them as from the standpoint of pedagogy. And then I took there was an online class with Elizabeth Badley. I don't know if you know that teacher she's in in New York, but she's she seems to be like you should check out her Instagram. She's like, ahhh, like, she's trying to get like, the students to emote and stuff. But she is so inspiring, too. And she did like online class just randomly couple years ago of like her pedagogy method, and she's using a lot of Suzuki base. And then she kind of goes off of it from book four and kind of what I was doing before doing the Suzuki method like training and that's yeah, that's kind of what I was trained with. Like I went through Suzuki books 4, 5, and 6 and then moved on to other like separate rep and atudes and before that, like my previous teacher was like using like Mueller Rush method book. So I didn't do the the beginning of Suzuki. So I just like I got really inspired by her and also by this teacher. His name is Rolando. I need to think, he's he's Brazilian. I'll just type it. But he's great. This is the Suzuki guy. He's in Florida. And do you know that guy?

Researcher: I don't think so. I don't think so.

Teacher Participant 2: Yeah. So then I started. Ohh. And then, Mimi. Zoo zoo wig. Do you know that lady?

Researcher: I don't believe so.

Teacher Participant 2: She has a ton of stuff on YouTube. Like has lessons from kids and like she just has, like each lesson from like their whole life. And so I started watching this girl's Sadie's lessons. And so I watched her entire first year. And just she's using Suzuki with a couple extra songs, but I really like how she starts with like this left hand pizzicato thing and no bow. And anyway, if you check out like the first three of her lessons, like you'll kind of see. So I kind of made my own lesson plan for beginner students, for adults and children using that combination of her, her stuff pre twinkle. And then then Suzuki, once they get past like twinkle. Oh, there's another girl I did a training with, it's called wee violins. Yeah, I'll look at what her name is. Crystal something something. She has this whole, like, whole book of of like pre twinkle stuff or foundational exercises. And she's starting to be recognized in this Suzuki community. She's giving, like, some talks and stuff there. It's a little weird because OK, so in COVID I had a a daughter and so there was nothing to do in COVID and I was super depressed at home and I had a newborn and I didn't, I couldn't really go out. I couldn't see people, so I found this thing called music together. It's a program for little kids. And a there was like a class that was like newborns

to year one and then they had another class for like year one to like year 5. So uh, it's just like a general music Mommy and me type class but. The music is all from all over the world and a lot of folk stuff, and then they have like different methods of like tapping the baby or having the baby hold, like a like a I don't know, like a wooden cooking spoon. And then you're tapping the wooden spoon so they like don't feel so directly, just they have different like techniques of like. They're not teaching. It's just like getting familiar with music sort of thing. So anyway, there's a lot of, like, I'm pretty sure all of those songs are like public domain, right? So wee violins girl, all of these songs from music together are like wee violins like repertoire? And I'm like what? This is not OK like all of these songs I know from like. But I mean it's public domain. They're like folk songs and then she's put together like. I can give you like an example. All of his songs, all of these songs I did in this class, I'm like. Yeah. OK. So the first, the first song is like for posture. So she like, puts it together with like words, like how, like how it's related to violin. And then she has like the song. And then sometimes she checks or she changes the words a little bit. So I mean, maybe that's OK, but I was just like. Like I mean I kind of thought about this anyway when I was doing this like, oh, these would be great to do for teaching, but like I don't know, but anyway, that's her own problem. If it's a problem for her. But yeah, like there's a song like rooting in the ground, little Birch tree growing to the sky, little Birch tree loo leeloo little Birch tree, loo lee loo, little Birch tree and so then she's like, OK, that's rooting in the ground for your feet. So make sure your feet are in the ground and like your posture is coming from the ground. So I'm just. I don't know. Maybe, maybe that's cool. But anyway so. But I've been using that. I got a new like 2 year old student, so I've been using a lot of those songs and I guess it's very convenient because she already did the work to like figure out how to make those songs into, like a violin lesson. So yeah, I just, yeah, I don't know if it's anyway.

Researcher: No, that's perfect. I had a quick question. So you obviously have almost 20 students. Are you mainly the secondary instructor for the students or like outside of their main class time in school?

Teacher Participant 2: So the International School that I teach at there, it's a British school system, so they they call them like year 5 and 9. And I don't think that relates in American like completely. But I think it's junior high through high school. I don't think there's anyone less than ten there and it's a boarding school. Which is also really weird to me that you would just get rid of your 10 year old. Like it's so early. I mean, maybe high school maybe. A couple of years of high school, but like the kid is ten, I feel so bad.

Researcher: That's young, that's young.

Teacher Participant 2: But yeah, so they the system, the British system, I guess they take the kids out of the class and have their music lesson in the school time. And that they, I've guessed they've run some studies where that like enhances their learning and of like their traditional subjects of like math and stuff. It's a little bit difficult for my scheduling because I can't just say, OK, Timmy comes out at 10:00 AM on Fridays every week, because then he'll always miss math on Fridays at 10:00 AM. So I have to change the order of the students every time and sometimes they have like. Like early release days or they have like a a school assembly. So then I have to change the time of the day. And then so a lot of kids, I mean, they're 10 or 11 and they forget like

what. Yeah. So I don't know. It's interesting. You can like see if you can find more information on that British study about taking kids out of their of their class, time for lessons, right?

Researcher: OK, perfect. Let's see. So the International School doesn't follow the Japanese Course of Study, right for music or for education?

Teacher Participant 2: No, they're they don't even like, watch the Japanese holidays.

Researcher: OK, cool. Let's see. So, have you ever helped students with their repertoire for school and specifically Japanese students? Do you ever help with the repertoire for school?

Teacher Participant 2: Like you mean like orchestra or something.

Researcher: Right orchestra, band, anything they're working on in their, in their studies.

Teacher Participant 2: I guess the short answer is no because the, I don't think I've had a student who's, been more interested in music as like as the Japanese Japanese kids like I have mostly half children. Or kids that go to international, other international schools and that I'm the private teacher outside of the school. Or the half kids, they go to Japanese school, but they're too young for orchestra at this point, but like the one like junior High boy and then the the girl that I lost during COVID. They were older and could have done orchestra, but in the Japanese system that is like after school club, it's considered school club. So. You'd have to like want to go down that route and I think for those two families, it was like lessons outside of schools enough and they wanted to do more, like, I don't know if you like Juku, which is like, uh, what? There's like a famous, it's like an outside study.

Researcher: Like extracurricular?

Teacher Participant 2: Yeah, it's kind of like. Like go to after school, school or like think. I thought it was in America. I forgot what it is called. Kumon. Yeah, I mean, everybody is obsessed with Kumon. I lose students to Kumon. It's because they have these really intense exams to get into junior high and you have to start doing Kumon from like Grade 4.

Researcher: Oh wow.

Teacher Participant 2: In order to get into your junior high of choice, and then you're in junior high. And so now you're busy. So I feel really bad for these kids like they're just like stuck in this like cycle and I'm honestly not really sure what I want to do with my own daughter because I don't, I don't want to go down that route, but then like, are you, like, ruining her chances for, like a future if you don't do that? It seems like counterproductive. I've been talking to a mom. And she was saying that like the junior high system like to get into a good junior high, they're more forward thinking and like less about rote memorization and and like following instruction. But in order to get into that good junior high. You have to do these Juku classes and then that's kind of defeating the purpose of, like, not doing all this like crazy memorization stuff. And like, just following orders. I mean people here they don't they're really nice and they really like, it's like a group mentality rather than America, who's just like, I gotta get done what I need to get done,

and if you're in the way, I'm just gonna, like, go around you, whereas like here. They're like, oh, you're in the way do you need help. Like, do you want to do kind of show you where you need to go? And it's really nice, but it's also not helpful for like for yourself, your, your own growth. And like you, you go to the restaurant and you're like it's a set menu or something. And there's like 3 sandwiches and you can have iced tea or iced coffee or hot tea, hot coffee, and you're like actually, can I have a cola instead? And they're like, no, you can't. And I'm like well. I don't want tea or coffee, so can I get something else? And they're like. No, but you can order a cola, but then you still have to get the tea or coffee. So you're just like. That doesn't make any sense like but they're still, they're still going to bring it to you, so just like they, they just can't think outside the box if it's not in the menu, if it's not in the set, then there's no other option, or if you just like have a question, they have this set statement they're supposed to say, and then you just keep asking. Like, can you, like, say it like, help me a different way and then they just repeat the same like quote or the line or what that they memorized in their job training there's like. This is not helpful to me like can you do some customer service and like talk to me like a human and not like a robot? So yeah, so these are these are some like big faults with with the system that I think comes from the higher education system and you will meet a lot of people who can think outside the box like my husband and many other of my friends that are from here but it's interesting that a lot of them either went to international schools or really good schools in Japan and or studied abroad.

Researcher: Oh, I see. OK.

Teacher Participant 2: So yeah, it's uh, the peer pressure is palpable.

Researcher: Oh, OK. OK, great. I'd love to hear more about the Japanese culture and your experiences with that. Do you know if in the Japanese school system is there what instrument do students usually start out with that you've noticed? Is it, because I know there's some philosophies that believe you should start with piano, I believe your main instrument is the violin. But in the Japanese culture specifically, do you know what the starting instrument is for students?

Teacher Participant 2: I think that piano and violin are quite popular. But if they're going to regular school and they haven't had private lessons, everybody learns the recorder at school. And actually it was really interesting. I had one of my adult students is actually a piano teacher, and she was saying that theory, music theory, like reading notes and stuff is, I mean, I think it's probably quite general, but is part of the standardized testing in.

Researcher: Oh wow.

Teacher Participant 2: And so she has a lot of like and solfege. So she has a lot. Yeah, she has a lot of students that come who don't play an instrument besides like whatever school record or you know, like those, like little pianos with like a.

Researcher: The xylophone or the?

Teacher Participant 2: It's a piano keyboard like this big, and then there's like a a hose with like a.

Researcher: Yes, yes.

Teacher Participant 2: They yeah. So they play that too at school. So yeah, so if they play like that in the recorder or something, they don't have like an outside instrument, they'll come to her for theory lessons because they want to, like, pass their exams and like they're not getting enough at school or I don't know. Needs extra help.

Researcher: OK, what is your personal opinion on because this is just one little part of my study, is the effect of foundational keyboard skill. So starting out on the piano being a violinist do you have any opinions on what a students first instrument should be? Do you think there's a benefit to starting with piano or not much of a difference?

Teacher Participant 2: I actually started on piano and I changed the violin when I was 9 and that was super, super late. And that was only because my mom was really hesitant and like getting me the violin that I'd been asking for since I was 5. But she's she was a piano teacher in the like, she's an amateur pianist. And so she just was like teaching piano in the neighborhood for, like, extra cash and so she started me on the piano, and that's actually the reason why I started getting interested in the Suzuki method because I was in college, I was like, I probably need to be able to teach for some income, but like before I get any sort of playing job like my goal was to have a playing job but, but I was like, yeah, like, that's not gonna happen like next year. So, in the meantime, I need a way to, like, make money, which is probably teaching so, I was like, but I started on piano, so I have no idea how to start a small child #1 because I was 9 on this instrument with like good foundations, because I also started my first violin teacher was an organist and she taught me horrible technique and taught me like hold the violin like this. You put your thumb inside like the cave of the I'm like. It's been so long to like, get rid of all those bad techniques and like I'm yeah, it makes me really like quite upset to know, like from now from my pedagogy perspective to be like what was she doing advertising itself as a violin teacher? But anyway, she's passed away, so like, sorry. Yeah, but it still makes me upset. But anyway. Yeah. So I was like, I need to know, like, how to start another kid. I personally am very happy that I started on piano because I you'll fluent in both bass and treble Clef, and I think that's really benefited me in my ability to play anything that I want. There was also a time when, like my mom had me with that lady because she thought I wasn't getting better and she was like, if you want to get another teacher, then I want you to practice for a year by yourself, and then we'll find you another teacher and she was a pianist. She had all this, all these big piano books, which has, like a lot of chords and bass Clef and bass. Melody moving to treble Clef and right, you know. So since I had learned on the piano, then I just figured out how to play those like an octave up or whatever, like, and I thought that was like quite beneficial to my foundations as a whole musician. But I don't know if that would help anybody if they don't plan on becoming a professional musician. So then for my daughter, I was like I'm going to start her own violin because it's easy. But I'm considering getting her a piano teacher when she's like 5 or 6, because I do think that's quite beneficial to start with the two clefs instrument. And then she can choose what she wants to do from there, I've kind of made the decision for her that she will be studying music through high school because that's what her parents do and she doesn't have to become professional. Actually, please don't. But I want her to like have a foundation in music and know like what we do and appreciate what we do and be able to enjoy music and I think that's one of my biggest teaching philosophies is like a lot of parents or a lot of kids were like forced to do

music and it's like not fun. And I want it to be fun. I want to raise a generation of concert goers and people who want to give their kids lessons. So yeah, if somebody wants to become professional, that would be super fun. But I don't think that's going to happen, and that's not really my goal with my students, but I'm. Yeah, that makes sense. Starting my daughter.

Researcher: OK, awesome. So you've had some unique experience. You've been in America, obviously, and your education was here, I believe you mentioned and then you've been a teacher in Japan. So are there any differences in the skills of musicians in both countries? So specifically with Japan, is there anything you've noticed particular skills, well developed skills in Japan that you believe it's because of their education? They're like, oh, these musicians seem to be better at this particular area versus American students. Does that make sense?

Teacher Participant 2: Yeah, following directions. OK, listening to the teacher, respecting the teacher. My time, respecting, respect in general. American students, I've had one family that I liked, and I still remember, I mean the way that the parents were with me with how like I mean like some, 1 family, I mean, she was like a really kind, well-meaning mother, but she would come late every time, like 15 minutes late to their 30-minute lesson. And she'd bring me Starbucks. And she's like, I'm sorry, we're, only for or we'll just have 15-minute lesson. I'm like, why did you go to Starbucks? I brought you Starbucks so I could like say sorry. I'm like, she bought me Starbucks every week and I'm like, OK. So your lesson is at 4 like I don't want to drink coffee at 4 like just warm this up tomorrow morning, but I'm like, just come on time once just. I mean, it's OK if you're late. Like, but, not every time. And I did appreciate that she was like, yeah, we're only here for 15 minutes because you have other students. Like. Some parents. Yeah. And then, like, paying on time. Like one mom, she would be like I forgot my checkbook. I forgot my checkbook again. I'll bring it next week. And like, girl, if you don't bring it next week, you're gonna owe for two months at the same time, like I also am like just out of grad school. Like I need this money right now. To pay my bill, I am, yeah. So, like, most people were like that in some capacity. And there was only one family who was just awesome. They brought both of their kids, the mom like, used the kitchen table to do her work she was very much like, oh, I'm doing my thing right now. Do you have a question? Do you need something? OK, I'm going to go back to my work now. Here's something. She brought paper and pens for, like, the kids to draw. Like it was just she respected her kids, her kids respected her, she respected me. It was lovely, right? So yeah, like here, I don't even have to tell. I don't have to invoice the kids or the parents. I'm just like, OK, next month we're gonna have four lessons. Here's the dates. Let me know if you have any like changes. And then the next thing I know, I have a notification that I have some movement in my bank account. I'm like, great. That was lovely. And like, that's the right amount. Perfect. OK. I've I have one British family who wants me to say like, OK, this is how much you owe. And then she brings in cash. Also interesting thing is like this is like a really cash society and so there's they have let me show you. They have these envelopes for sale at like a lot of, like music shops. And because people don't give cash to hand in hand, if you've ever been here. But like, even at like like grocery store or anything, there's like a little like tray and you put the money there and then they take the money and then they put the change on the tray. You take the change. So it's the same for like lesson fees then they put the money in the envelope. I'm not really sure how it's transferred. Like for the way that I've been doing it is that I just, like, take the money directly out. I put a stamp that said like paid, and then I give the envelope back, but possibly another way to do it is like you give it to them on the last lesson and

then they bring it the next week or something. But. But I kind of like this method because it also keeps track for them to know like hey, December wasn't paid because there's no stamp. So yeah, the Japanese families are much more they don't talk about money, they don't talk about, they just do it. And you just like kind of say like there's four, it's very. Not direct, so that's that's kind of kind of nice I've much more enjoyed teaching here in that regard, with like the respect and being paid on time, right, and how they treat you. The lessons too, like a lot of times like the parents were like you're, in America, they're like you're you're not doing like this. I want my student to or my kid to do this or that they don't trust you like I had one kid I started in America. She was three, and she's one of, like, 3 genius students that I've had in my career. And she just, like, took off. And then the dad just got it in his head that he was like, well, we want her to go to San Francisco Conservatory prep and I'm like, OK, that's good, but like let me get her through a certain level and then I will pass her off to, like, let, I'll let you know when I think like she has a solid foundation for that. And I was like young, I was in my 20s and so they're just like, yeah, you don't have enough experiencee, and I'm like, yeah. But I do know what I'm doing. I'm I've been studying music at a higher level for a long time, like I'm not just like some novice teaching your child. So. So yeah, just like that. That and then they like they did they they quit. They like tried to get into the Conservatory, and they eventually did get in. But then he was just like, ohh yeah. The reason he said that he was quitting me is because I didn't charge enough. And so I couldn't have been good. I was like oh.

Researcher: Oh my goodness.

Teacher Participant 2: What, like? OK, like I charged my new incoming students more, but I usually kept the rate that they arrived on. So I'm like, OK, I mean like I am charging more for new students. Would you like to pay that rate? That would be fine, I would like more. I'm right out of grad school, and I have no money, but yeah, just like the there's no trust for like my plan. And it was the same with the other genius kid, like they were just like he got really good really quickly. And then they were like, yeah, I think we want to take him to a different teacher because, like, he's really good. I'm like, well. I got him there. Yes, he did practice on his own too, but like. I taught him from zero, so give me some credit too and also if you're interested in that, like I'm happy to pass off the kid like I know I'm not Dorothy Delay. I'm not going to get your kid on Carnegie, but I can finish my foundation techniques and then give him to somebody who can take him from there. So yeah. Anyway. They don't do that in Japan they just like, go with you. They're like, OK, we trust you.

Researcher: Ohh, that's awesome. OK, great. So the last question that I have is what do you think about the world's music and then cultural music integration in Japan? Do you notice any incorporation of Western music, European music? I was talking with a Japanese student the other day and he said there's a lot of classical influence. Have you noticed that or anything else?

Teacher Participant 2: As far as like folk music, you mean?

Researcher: Right, right. Folk music or westernized music, things like that.

Teacher Participant 2: I have a couple of like Japanese published like song books for Kids like. They have like, some, like, a lot of folk songs that are, like, arranged for easy violin or

something like that. So, I have seen that. I've been combining studio recitals with a piano teacher here. She's Japanese. She only speaks Japanese and she teaches only Japanese kids and, she used to give joint recitals with the teacher who I inherited, the one student from and retired, so it kind of was natural that I like started working with her and she's much younger, I mean, than the retired teacher. She's older than me, but so I started like joining my recital with her and one of the moms of like of one of her piano students plays koto. I think koto. And so she came to like, accompany her kid for the recital with full kimono and like the koto thing, it was really lovely and, I thought it was like really special like to have like but I don't know if that's so common that people play those types of instruments. The last place we lived there, the landlord, lived across the street from us and in the summer it's like crazy hot and the air conditioning was not so good in our house. So for some reason our window is open and I heard her, the landlord playing shamisen or something like that, just like practicing in in her house and she must have had the window open too and I was just like, this is so lovely, like hearing this like traditional Japanese music coming out from the house. And like, they lived in a very traditional looking house. And then they have, like, this beautiful garden. It's really sad because then when the husband died, he was like a farmer. So he had, like, a tax break for property tax. And so once he died, then there was no working farmer anymore. So the the land went back to a normal rate plus the back taxes of his whole life. So they had to. They had to, like, cut down the entire like farm and some houses so that they would be in debt and then they couldn't pay the tax because they're still in debt. It's so sad. And so like the all these green spaces in Japan are just like leaving because of this property tax problem. But anyway, but that was before he died. And so like they had this beautiful garden and like yeah, but I don't know if many other people that play traditional instruments. Yeah, there's a my, my family, my, my husband is actually Zainichi Korean. So that's if you ever read the book, Pachinko. That's kind of the story about that. It's not really related to education and music, but it's interesting to know if about Japan in general because of Japan's, had Korea as a territory. And so a lot of people came or were forced to come from Korea to Japan, and after the war, like a lot of people had kids already. And like, the kids, only spoke Japanese. And so they had to award them some sort of status to stay in Japan. And so my husband is from that line of people. So we're kind of more involved in, like, the Korean community here called Zainichi. And so one of one of our friends does like the traditional Korean music drumming stuff. And there's, like, dance classes and drum classes and stuff that they offer. Like somewhere downtown Tokyo, for anybody who's interested, but mainly like they need the Zainichi community to kind of keep that tradition alive and that, like, pride in your culture. And I find really, like, kind of like America, where, like, you have a lot of these cultural centers that like kind of like try to keep these traditions alive for people who, like the next generation, you're just like, yeah, they go to like, the Saturday school. Japanese. Plus, they, like, do like singing or Japanese dancing or whatever. So, like, this is kind of that, that in in Japan for Koreans. I kind of find that, like, very, very like at home because I've had so many friends in America who've done stuff like that and so I'm like, yeah, I'm totally on board with that, like, let's go do the drum.

Researcher: The final question I realized I did not ask was, what are some notable differences that you have noticed between the Japanese and American music education systems, specifically in terms of the schools run by the government. Do you believe one more adequately prepares their students in terms of musical ability, technique, and overall skill?

Teacher Participant 2: Sure, I can do that. Are you talking about public school music education before college? I would say that this is a huge difference between the two countries. I am shocked every time we visit some remote area in Japan and hear that some successful musician came from that town. These are rural farm areas and I am impressed that they even have a music program let alone someone found success coming from such a rural environment. It shows the level of musicianship throughout the country that good teachers are everywhere and not only in big cities. I'm originally from Fullerton, CA, and it is not a rural place at all. Yet, while I was going through my early education, there wasn't even a music program. I studied music privately. In 7th grade, our English teacher asked us to write an essay about what class we would like to see offered at our school. I wrote about how I wanted an orchestra class. The teacher gave me a C because she said that although it was well written, she didnt think that the class idea was very solid and therefore lowered my grade. This is a huge problem when orchestras are looking for funding and people clearly don't value the arts, specifically the musical arts. As I said before, kids in Japanese schools learn recorder, that keyboard bagpipe thing, note reading and solfege. Kids sing songs in solfege as we would sing a tune using the word "la-la-la". I wonder if America had the type of serious music education system in place all over the country, if we would see more diversity in their professional musical life. It's hard to tell since Japan is so homogeneous. I believe that better access to music education will either create music lovers, concert goers, or more ability for anyone to pursue a life in music if they wish. Clearly in my case, I came from a position of privilege since my parents were able to send me to music lessons. If this was something offered by the school, everyone could have at least been exposed to music and if they liked it and couldn't afford it, they could look for scholarships. If they don't even get the chance to see if they like it or not, they will probably pursue something that they do have exposure to like sports. Sports education was huge while I was in school.

Researcher: That's awesome. OK, I think that is all I have. Thank you again for your time today. I've loved getting to hear about your insights and experience. So thank you so much for being willing to help me.

Teacher Participant 2: Yeah, no problem. I'm. I'm excited for your, for your studies. So, and I'll send that. Let me make sure I downloaded that. OK. Yeah I have it.

Researcher: Awesome. Thank you. Again. I hope you have a great rest of your well, I guess for you it's morning, so great rest of your day.

Teacher Participant 2: You too. Bye.

Researcher: Bye.

Interview Transcripts: Japanese Participants
Student Participant 1

Researcher: Okay, so I'll go ahead and get started. So, I just have a few questions regarding your music education in Japan. Obviously, my study is about comparing American and Japanese techniques and methodologies. So, if you wouldn't mind just giving me a brief rundown of your education, music related, in Japan, that would be awesome. From elementary to college, because I know you're studying in your undergrad right now.

Student Participant 1: Yeah, okay, so, I was originally born in America, so I can speak English, but I came to Japan around middle school, and when I did, I started in, we call it brass band, or like, wind orchestra. And I started playing percussion at first, for two years. And the extent of my education was studying alone. Because I had originally a passion for music, but I never had, like any studies in America. But after coming to Japan, I was able to join a club where they enabled me to build like these instruments and teach me how to read score and like the basics and stuff. So, with that, I have a really strong passion for it, so most students, they learn at school only. But for me I like to study at home, and I studied some music theory too, personally at home. So that was, through my middle school year, then entering high school, I started getting in more into the music theory side and music composition side of studying. Then I changed to saxophone. I played alto saxophone in high school. With that, there is a lot of competitions in, especially in high school, in Japanese, I guess wind orchestras and brass bands. So, there are two types. There is the normal ensemble contest where it's a three-to-eight-person ensemble. And it's usually categorized as brass instruments, woodwind instruments, or it's called flex, where it's mixed, where they have both. I have experience playing in like, we get rated, and we get scores. There's bronze, silver and gold. If you're top 3 in gold then you get to go to the next level which is nationals and it's a whole other competition. Then on the other hand, we have, it's called "Concul" I don't know what it translates to. It's more or less a full-size orchestra, well it's not an orchestra, it's a brass band, a wind orchestra competition where we're categorized within how much people are in the orchestra. I think it's 10 to 15, then 16 to 25, 25 to 35, and then 36 up. The amount of people. I have more experience playing with the 25 to 35, it wasn't too much people. But in there, we also get graded bronze, silver, gold eagle from I think region to state, I mean it's called providence. So, region, providence, then nationals. So, I have a lot of experience. Every year they have the events. So, I have three years experience in the concul, the full-size orchestra, and then three years experience in the woodwind, brass instrument stuff. The ensemble. So, with our education too, how personally my club was structured, was the teacher liked to give us responsibility with what we had to do in the club. For example, concert master, choosing parts, the teacher didn't really choose first chair, second chair. We kind of had discussed it with our own parts and then whatever, whoever wanted to play what and whoever is comfortable with what. So with my experience, I was chosen as concert master because I had, I studied on my own and, what was it called? Forgetting my words here. I study on my own more advanced music like music theory, music composition, was is it called conducting and stuff, stuff that related to classical like performance. So, my teacher chose me to be, he went out of the way to tell me I could be like concert master. He wanted me to like take control of things when he's not there or to like help out. So I was concert master and part leader. So, for the woodwind side of my breast band, around 15 people we would have section practice where brass instruments would woodwinds would split up and I'd be in charge of the woodwinds. So the teacher gave us

more freedom with controlling what we had to do and stuff. I think since it was high school, he was like kind of realizing we were older or like mature, I guess. So I have experience from, it's kind of surprising, it's pretty early, but around 15 years old, 16 years old, for being concert master and all that stuff. And with, during my second and third year, structure wise, how Japanese school works, there's three years of middle school and three years of high school. So, in my first year of high school, I did normal, just performance and stuff and I'm still getting used to new to the high school. Then my second and third year, I started composing music for my wind orchestra to play in non-graded events, just like open events we had so I have I've composed a eight-man Ensemble, flex ensemble, for I forget what instruments. It was an arrangement of a game song I really liked. I have composed. I think, in total, 3 ensemble songs and then one special solo contest song that was graded and it was performed in a competition like the concul and the ensemble contest, it was graded bronze, silver, gold and if you got top three you get to go to the nationals. So, I have I've composed a solo, a solo piece, I think is the term. I don't know the words. The solo piece for percussion. And it was played in a solo contest and with, how solo contests work, you can't really apply, you get invited, and you have to submit an application video and then they accept you from there. And my friend was really good at percussion. Like exceedingly good. So, he got invited. And I had the honor to compose a song for him and original song, for him to play at the competition. ,So I do notice there's a lot of competitions and stuff in Japan especially with like wind orchestra. With how common it is, I think like 90%, probably more, of high schools, middle schools, will have a wind orchestra, even if it's small, not a lot of people, they will always have accessibility to like some sort of instrument and I feel like it's very embedded into the culture. Then the from there was my studies I did on my own for music theory and like music composition arrangement. I got into music college. And I'm continuing my studies as a, getting a bachelors degree in music composition and arrangement.

Researcher: Okay. Awesome. That's great. Just real quick, you mentioned you studied a lot especially in middle school when you first came to Japan, you studied a lot on your own. I assume you're going to school as well in Japan during that time, were there any required music courses in school.

Student Participant 1: There was no required. There was optional, like you can choose an elective. I think it's what it's called. There was art, music, and if there's something else I remember, I think it was shodo. Shodo is like Japanese calligraphy.

Researcher: Oh, okay.

Student Participant 1: So, I chose music.

Researcher: So overall, this is just a pretty broad question, but how would you say the Japanese music education methodologies have affected you? Would you say overall it's a positive experience, negative experience? It's just a pretty broad question.

Student Participant 1: I think, it depends on the teacher, person, place and time, but for me personally with my experience. I think it really positively affected me, especially with my teacher putting independence and like responsibilities into my hands with having to like manage people and manage an orchestra. The experience that comes with like teaching, even though I

was not a full-fledged teacher, but I was able to like have the experience of being able to talk to people and speak out my ideas of how something should sound, or how I feel like the music should go. So ,I think with that, that did 100% definitely influence me in a very good way, especially being able to get into music college, it helped with the confidence especially performing arts. Where at this point, I don't have much, what is the word? Nervousness when performing in front of people. There's the anxiety of like, oh, and I don't want to mess up. Right? But it's less shaking. It's more adrenaline and I can actually utilize that energy into like performing.

Researcher: Right. That's awesome. That's great. Overall, do you think your education has, mainly in middle and high school, has prepared you adequately for your future musical goals? Do you feel like you're adequately prepared and obviously in your undergrad, do you feel like you are being prepared for what you have in mind for the future?

Student Participant 1: Yeah, I think the number one thing I've learned so far is not even just music, it's just communication skills and just talking with people, being able to get the ideas across, the confidence, being able to speak my own mind and reaching out to people, not being afraid to voice my opinion. And I've learned that, especially with my teacher giving the responsibility of concert master, if I don't say anything, I've learned that if I don't voice what I feel like what should be done then nothing will really happen because people, especially in Japan, people are a lot more shy and it's a lot less common for people to just speak out. So, taking that step was a yeah, 100%. I think in the real-world, I mean, whatever the real-world means, it does help with communication skills and I think that's like the number one thing I've learned so far.

Researcher: Okay, awesome. So, let's see. I know you mentioned you studied a lot by yourself in your early education there. Did you notice any incorporation of foundational piano skills, so I know some, you know, methodologies and philosophies believe you should start with the piano. Did you notice any of that in your education?

Student Participant 1: So, I'm going to split up the education with personal, how I study on my own, because I started studying real music, or not real, I was starting to learn real music here from actual like certified teachers and stuff when I got to college. So, everything before that was studied by myself. I noticed that using the piano is really easy to like understand things like chords is right, like CEG. That's a C major. It's easy to visualize. It's there. The piano is a very. common instrument it’s like very well-known and it's a very good baseline. I realized, especially with videos or like stuff, I've looked online and when I look up at the very, very, very beginning, I was looking up stuff like basic music theory, like circle of fifths, you know, like the whole entry level stuff and more often than not people would utilize stuff with the pianos and they would have, like, piano keys. Highlight the what notes being played and all that stuff. And I did notice when I write scores, even up until now, when I write scores in music I use Finale and Muse score. I started with Muse score. So, originally, when you write notes you can turn on a option to show a piano and you can highlight notes on the staff and it will show what notes are being played on the piano. And I did utilize that a lot where I could, where at first. When I didn't know what chords or what I would count how many semitones are between 2 notes and then like the intervals and stuff. Then I noticed going into college, my music theory class, jazz harmony. I'm

going to call it harmony. I don't know why, it's called jazz harmony, but my music harmony class, the teacher does utilize piano, and he actually shows the keys being highlighted up and he plays the piano and he like separates notes arpeggio. What makes sense like arpeggio? So, it's like we're going to have an A minor 7, so it's going to be, ACEG and like he would like play it out for example. So, I think piano is like, understandably, especially with what I'm doing specifically, music composition arrangement, piano is 100% baseline. Everyone in my course or major, whatever the word is, has some kind of knowledge in piano, even if their skill level is really, really low when they can only play with one hand, only play very slow, or maybe not even play at all, everyone 100% has some kind of knowledge of like how to count on the piano or how to utilize a piano, or a keyboard or some sort.

Researcher: OK, great. Let's see. Can you name a few ways, this could be personality wise or also your music skills, what are a couple of ways your music education has shaped, prepared or developed your skills? In a classroom setting, more specifically, so your teachers or the repertoire, things like that.

Student Participant 1: With middle school and high school since the music classes were more based on very simple music skills like learning to read score. I think at one point we had to play a recorder, I think. There was very basic level singing. I didn't pay too much attention on those, but I remember it was mainly aimed towards beginners, but since I was in the brass band I was already way past that we had to learn how to play an instrument which we had to prepare for the concul events and all that stuff. So, I'm going to use the clubs as examples and with the clubs there was a lot of classical influence, especially with the composers. Every year in Japan, if you ever heard there's a, it's called, I think the rough translation is homework songs.

Researcher: Oh, yes!

Student Participant 1: So we have that every year. So, we have a, there's usually 5 per year, I think sometimes there's four as they cut it short, but they'll have like these songs specifically made for brass bands which is like the number one most common way of performing music in Japan, and there's a lot of classically based musics. There is, actually one that's supposed to be like an arrangement of a very common, basic, I'm not sure if it's played in brass instruments cause I'm more a woodwind person, but I remember I practiced flute for a little bit and there was like Aria and like Poland or however you pronounce. So we made an arrangement of both the songs put together which are like well-known classic songs or like, what was it called practice repertoire? If that's the proper word, so there's a lot of classical influence, and I think that's influenced by composition and arrangement like ideas and like influence with what I've played so far up until now. So there's heavy, heavy classical influence. More or less. Baroque. I don't know how to spell, yeah, from there on, everything past that, like maybe, a very common pattern I see is influence of like well-known artists like Mozart or like Bach, it's people like trying to replicate like well-known classical artists who are like basically like these giants or like these, I would call them pillars, in like the classical music scene. Like when you say classical music, they're like the first thing that comes to mind. There are some mixes with uh, J-Pop and J-Pop does mesh with jazz a little bit. But more often than not, what's played in the brass bands, especially in concerts and in competitions, is very heavily classical. So, it's like people who play in brass bands are like very, very strongly classically influenced. I think that's what affected me.

Researcher: Right. Okay, that's awesome. Is there anything you can think of where your education has been lacking at all? Anything that you wish it covered a little bit more of? Things like that, any gaps?

Student Participant 1: I think the skills of performing in front of people, especially being on stage and the comfortability and the reason with like consistency should be looked upon more. I feel like I'm more of a case that I was able to become comfortable with performing, not because my teacher pushed me. I mean, he did, but it was more that I realized in myself that like, if I don't get like this phrase, like let's say I had a solo where I would have to stand and play it off of memory.I would have to be 100% comfortable with playing it. Or me personally, if I feel like if I'm not 100% comfortable, not just like being able to play it, but play with my eyes closed, anytime, anywhere, right? If I'm not able to do that, then I'm not ready. Until then, I will practice like in I'll put a lot of time in practice in that, but I don't think the teachers. Mainly in my high school and middle school career, I don't think they push the students enough. I don't expect them to be like military style. Yell at them. Do this, do that. But I do want them to like specify how to practice. I don't feel like people are taught how to practice. Being able to practice and being able to perform are two different things and I don't think most people realize that. There's like the number one thing I've noticed. So far.

Researcher: Right. Absolutely. That's good. Okay, so for the last couple questions, now switch gears just a little bit, could you talk about the incorporation of world music and/or cultural music in your education, your music education?

Student Participant 1: For world music, what would go into the definition of world music?

Researcher: So, obviously you mentioned the classical music. What about Western music? Anything from America or South America, things like that.
Student Participant 1: There is a lot of pop music influence and with that it meshes with American music. There was a song that was very commonly played in my, especially my orchestra, or my middle school. We would have an encore and like the last song to end on a kick or whatever the terminology would be. We play, it's called the deep purple melody, and there's stuff from like American pop songs, I forgot the names of the individual songs. There's, like, Burning Star. I forgot other names, but it's like hard American, like pure American yeehaw blood rock. So it's like the idea of America, and I'm from Texas. So, I feel like it's like a perfect ideology. So, we had like a deep purple melody. We had this one pop song from the 80s. I don't remember the name, but there's a lot of older music. Okay, I think there was a big boom with we saw like recent or more modern pop songs being arranged, but there's a pretty big category of like, 80s, 90s, pop music. If you ever heard there's a Japanese pop song or like pop-esque influence song called Takarajima. It’s very popular here. For events like, open events just to play for, like open crowd for free or whatever, there's a lot of pop music and especially American pop.

Researcher: Okay. And then what about cultural music in terms of traditional Japanese music and things like that?

Student Participant 1: Specifically, traditional Japanese music, it's a little difficult because there is music that’s influenced by Japanese composition styles.

Researcher: Okay.

Student Participant 1: I played a handful of songs that use stuff like very strict for like the first 16 measures or for even like of the half of the entire song it uses like Japanese scales. I forgot the names, there's like 8 of them, but they use like Japanese scales. They use a lot of Japanese instruments. I've played taiko or wazaiko, like Japanese style drums and stuff. It depends on the place. There are places that do mix traditional Japanese shaisen or toto and stuff like that. My college does have stuff like that, but my schools specifically do not use traditional instruments, but we did play songs that were really heavily influenced by like real traditional Japanese music and stuff.

Researcher: Awesome. Let's see. Do you wish your schools had incorporated it more, or were you happy with the amount that you got to explore, the cultural music and world music also?
Student Participant 1: I do wish we played more because I come from a background of percussion. I do like rhythmic, like percussion music. Percussion ensemble sounds like it would be really fun. But we did play a wide variety. My teacher really liked Slavic-esque music. The Russia area and like the left of Russia. But yeah, Slavic, Slavic-esque music. I'm gonna butcher this guy's name like Tschaikovsky where they would like have very strong downbeats and stuff, and they would use a little brass. My teacher really liked that, so we played a decent amount of Slavic music, and for one of the competitions we did play Slavia from Van-something, I forgot his name. But yeah. he there is a very clear pattern. We played a lot of music that my teacher liked. So I do wish there was more like traditional Japanese music. I do like the Japanese music there is. I've only played like two or three songs that really utilized it. But I wouldn't say it's lacking. I would say it's more a personal want in a way.

Researcher: Okay, for sure. So, my last question is, can you talk about the just overall enrichment of having music be part of your life for so long and learning in Japan. Do you feel like your experience and use of these skills has overall, just enriched your life.

Student Participant 1: Short answer, yes 100% most definitely, but in a long answer, I do feel like it is luck based, but compared to America, I got a lot more opportunities specifically with music. Because where I used to live, I lived in Hawaii for 13 years. We do not have any or we did have, I think, like extracurricular music classes, but I didn't really know too much of it and I don't want to like dog on them for no reason, but they were lower level compared to here like is crazy what like some elementary schools even can do in music. I do think it is the accessibility and how common music is, especially like performing music, is here because, like if you say classical music in America for, say, I ask my friends, what's a classical song you like? 100% more often than not it would be some very, very well-known, super popular Mozart piece or like Bach, like Canon in D or like something like that. But if I were to ask here, there actually might be, there's a pretty decent chance, people would actually have a decent knowledge about like, especially ex-performers, they would have a knowledge of like songs they've heard or songs they've actually played themselves and it's more common than not. I would see people, students on trains going to school, they would have their instruments on them and it's really common. Every day, I probably see at least one person. So with coming to Japan, I think the opportunities, especially with music, just being able to be like a part of it and actually having people around me be motivated like me or with me, I don’t want to toot my own horn. So, I wanna stay motivated with

me. There's a lot more people who are, like, deeply interested in music and not just like, I just listen to music, but more like I want this to become my life and I'm motivated to like, for competitions, especially competitions, it's a lot more easy access than I feel like in America. I can't say too much because I've never experienced in America. I know there's, I've heard of the terminology. There's like, all-state, I think that's a competition?

Researcher: Yeah, I'm not sure. I haven't competed. I do know there's, you can go to state for competitions, but I don't know the specifics.

Student Participant 1: Like I I've heard there's, like, there's auditions. I do listen to the audition pieces, like people playing them. I do like how, it's really, really nice. We don't have that here. We do have auditions for solo contests, but auditions for like all-state and all that stuff we do not. I've never heard of that before. Yeah, here at least. I think it's a lot more easy access especially getting into like the more gritty parts of music like competitions, like where your performance, will actually be scored by professionals, you'll be judged on how well you performed. It is a lot more mesh here and I think with that it really influenced and helped me become more confident and more vocal about how I like play music, or how I perform, write, compose and how I can write for other people because they're experienced in the same way I am, probably even more, because I'm not even purely a performer, I'm mainly a composer, so people who have like experience playing in, I have friends who've played in nationals before. I have friends who've gotten golden nationals before and they're infinitely more experienced than me, but even so, there's a lot of them. So I feel like the atmosphere of having people with the same passion and the same and higher level of skill is always like really good motivation to get better. So, I think that's really like a very special thing that I think Japan has, especially with music education and like wind orchestra and all that stuff.

Researcher: That's really good, that's really good. Okay, so that is all the questions that I had. Just to check, is there anything else you wanted to share at this time?

Student Participant 1: I do find it really interesting cause I have heard, a YouTuber I really like that talks about music and notation, I've watched videos where he talked about like problems with music education. I think it's mainly he talks, cause he's based in Europe or the UK, and he talks about, like, lack of funding and difficulty with funding, there are organizations that help with money and like funding with lower income like cities or like schools and areas that people don't, or kids don't have access to, like instruments, even a chance to be able to be a part of like band and all that stuff. I did wonder, because in Japan, how common it is, like every single school at least have, even if it's like some super old rundown instrument, they will have like some sort of like instrument for people to play. Cause my school's honestly not very well funded, but we still have like every single like wind orchestra, we have flutes, clarinets, soprano, alto, tenor saxophones.

RECORDING DEVICE CUT UNEXPECTEDLY; LAST FEW MOMENTS NOT CAPTURED

Interview Transcripts: Japanese Participants
Student Participant 2

Researcher: OK, awesome. OK. So I just have a few questions about your music experience in Japan. So first if you could just give me kind of a summary of your experience from elementary through whenever you stop taking it, or if you're still taking it now, but just a timeline.

Student Participant 2: I am Nana and I am 30 years old and the first music experience was I actually don't remember exactly how old I was, but I was six or seven-year old. I started piano playing piano. And then, like in neighborhood, one of the neighborhood there was a piano teacher. That's why I went to her house and and practiced the piano. And also, I'm not sure if I can say it, but at the school, that was kind of music class. I mean it's like in its math or Japanese, and one of the subject was music that's why and when I was five or six, I, you know, I had the lesson. I started having the lesson, the music on music. That's why, well, maybe as a school, the first experience was the age of five or six. And then playing some like, you know, not only piano, more like, you know, do you know? Ohh I don't remember how to say it but something. Like you know some music instruments looks like you know, piano, but more like for a child and also something and or singing. And then in terms of piano lesson from the neighborhood, I stopped studying that around 9 or 10 because I joined the music band. At school, playing the clarinet and it starts from when I was 10 I started it and then until 12 I did it. Yeah. And then. Sorry, from 10 to 12 I played clarinet and also I kept playing that from 12 to 15, and so six years I played clarinet. And then when I was university student, which means 18 to 22. I was the member of Jazz Club and I played saxophone. Yeah, I changed the instrument, but that is the last experience. Well, I I have the piano at home that's why I sometimes play piano. But it was not like, you know constantly it was like irregularly.

Researcher: OK, that makes sense. Awesome. OK, that's perfect. Thank you. So this is just the first question, just to kind of a general statement, was your music experience during elementary through well through college, was that overall really positive? Did you have really good experience? Or or, not not so much.

Student Participant 2: Well, it was almost every day I did it until secondary school. That's why I learned so many things, not only about music knowledge and also because I was the member of music band. That's why, you know, I learned how to cooperate with friends. So yeah, I'm not sure what was the negative impact in me concerning this? Well, everything was positive. Well, I didn't like the teacher. He was not good, he was funny and he's so smelly. I didn't like him.

Researcher: That's so funny.

Student Participant 2: Yeah, I know. Also he was not a music teacher. He taught the science, but somehow he knows something about music. That's why he was in charge of the music band well. But that yeah, that's why only teachers saying I didn't like him, but except that.

Researcher: OK. That makes sense. OK, so you played both in elementary through high school and then went on to play in college as well. So did you, do you feel like your education in

elementary through high school, prepared you well to go into college? Do you feel really well prepared or not really?

Student Participant 2: Not really. Music was like kind of for having fun I mean. I mean, maybe there was a purpose to have a good friendship or something in the music classes, but it was more like because the reason why I stopped music at school high school was well, that the school itself was focusing on English study, that's why I was super busy with it and also not focusing on the music too much and only those who want to play harder. Maybe they kept doing that because they was, you know, music lover as well. But I didn't enjoy that. That's why nothing were prepared for college or something for. Always more like, you know, having fun.

Researcher: OK, I see that makes sense. Let's see.

Student Participant 2: But one thing I want to say is that you know from studying English or I studied Chinese as well, but especially Chinese and that. You know, like, you know, it is kinda singing, you know that how to say, that once I say for example if I want to say tea in Chinese, it is cha. But if I say cha, it is totally different thing. So because I studied or I enjoyed music that's why I really it was kind of easy to catch on to the music of Chinese, that's why.

Researcher: Hmm. Wow, cool.

Student Participant 2: I think Japanese is like, you know, no tone. I mean, it's kind of lies on tongue language, not like in English or Chinese, but even English. Yes or yes, it's totally different thing. That's why if maybe. It music helped me to study those languages, I guess.

Researcher: Ohh yeah, that's really that's a really cool, yeah, that's awesome. OK, cool. So the school that you went to, just to clarify there it there was a required music course, correct in elementary through high school or there was no required music?

Student Participant 2: Ohh until OK elementary, secondary, it was mandatory but high school, it was kind for those who want to do it selected. Well, I'm not sure in other school because my high school was kind of special, specialized in English. That's why more English classes were there. So, yeah, not so many school is, I think music is not that mandatory in normal high school I guess.

Researcher: OK, that makes sense. What was the, what was the school called that you went to for elementary and junior high?

Student Participant 2: It's kind of normal public school. I OK, I think it is difficult for you to listen of the name of it. That's why I will tell you later. Thank you.

Researcher: OK, perfect. No problem, no problem. So you said you started with piano. So did you start piano, I think you told me this, on your own, or did the school start you on piano?

Student Participant 2: Both. OK. Sorry, only piano itself is, not school. Sorry. It was like, you know, maybe I can say private lesson, but it was done by neighborhood kind of.

Researcher: Oh, OK.

Student Participant 2: But it was like, you know, kind of it it like it was not like company. It was like, you know, by a lady.

Researcher: Yes, yes, that makes sense. That makes sense. OK, perfect. And then remind me I think I forgot what you said. What instrument did the school have you start on? What was your first one in the school?

Student Participant 2: The clarinet.

Researcher: And that was, you chose that instrument.

Student Participant 2: Yes.

Researcher: OK. Perfect. So what instrument in elementary school did you, did the students mainly learn on? Does that make sense?

Student Participant 2: Yeah. Sorry, I don't understand the question.

Researcher: In elementary school, what instrument, do students usually start on, not the one they pick? Like what does the school pick for them?

Student Participant 2: Then well. Well. Do you know we call that like, the recorder? Do you know that?

Researcher: Yes!

Student Participant 2: Some music instrument which is super easy to play, OK, and then we did it. We we we had to buy it. That's why every single student had it.

Researcher: OK, I see.

Student Participant 2: Recorder and then some small piano, which is the size of this and using a kind of tube. You blow it and then the sound and then something like this we put those instruments to play it in the practice. That is the basic music instruments and then other thing we're mainly singing and I'm not sure if I can say that but. Well. The music band. It was like, you know, kind of club activity. That's why if you want, if you don't want to, you don't need to join it. That's why I could choose some music instrument which is a little bit professional or not, you know, kind of something like this.

Researcher: OK, awesome. I just wanted to clarify. So thank you. Awesome. So starting with piano and then obviously you transitioned instruments a little bit to clarinet, do you feel like starting on piano helped you either with reading sheet music or transposing? Are you glad you started on piano or do you feel like it wouldn't have made a difference either way?

Student Participant 2: Well, it was. Obviously it made me easier to study clarinet because you know, I knew the do-re-mi. I I could read it but I didn't know that, you know, there were the the like, you know, C, B, E, depending on the music instrument, for example, clarinet is B and the piano is maybe C.

Researcher: C, mhm.

Student Participant 2: That's why, I didn't know that, that's why I didn't understand what the B sound or something like this? But it was a little bit difficult to catch up because I thought do-re-mi is just do-re-mi for every single music instrument, but that's all. I mean I started piano earlier that's why I'm not I don't say perfect, but it was kind of OK. You know, umm, it's helped me a lot.

Researcher: Cool. Let's see. OK, so this can apply to anytime in your education. Elementary through college. Are there any skills you feel like you are really developed in? Due to your teachers, is there any skill that you feel like prepared you really well in school, whether it's being like confidence or music theory skills or aural skills? Anything you feel really strong in?

Student Participant 2: In the music thing?

Researcher: In music, yes.

Student Participant 2: Wow. Ohh nothing. Let me think, I mean. Everything was on the the average or. More like, you know, on average, that's. Why? I don't know, I didn't. Well, I really loved it, but I I'm so sorry, but nothing.

Researcher: That's OK, that's OK.

Student Participant 2: It's like, you know, like same as people, nothing special.

Researcher: No problem. No you thank you for being honest. No, that's great. Let's see. OK. So is there anything you noticed or that you wish your school had covered more of? Is there anything you feel like it was lacking in? Like, hey, I wish we had learned more of this or more of this. Anything you can think of?

Student Participant 2: If my teacher was much better, I mean because not only he was, he was just teaching this science. They didn't have much knowledge about musics like, you know, specialized. That's why if he knew more, like how to start, how to practice, kind of basic thing or how to cooperate with other music instruments or something like this maybe I could enjoy more if because I really love to learn something even though I'm lazy to study. Like once I learn it I'm so happy I'm so interested in it. That's why, of course music is for enjoying just enjoying the moment, but also to enjoy the moment I needed to have more knowledge to do it. That's why if he knew something more to develop or improve my skills, maybe I could keep doing that after high school as well. I stopped that. That's why I started music or jazz club or jazzing in college. But I would at first it was a little bit difficult to catch up the music itself, you know, because for three years in high school, I just listen to music only. I mean, it was like, you know, J-pop anime,

blah blah blah nothing I played. That's why maybe the the teacher needed more knowledge or skill to teach something.

Researcher: OK. OK. That makes sense. That makes sense. OK, so for the last few questions, we're going to switch gears a little bit. So, can you think of any ways your music education incorporated world music or cultural music, so music from like America or South America or other parts of Asia or traditional Japanese music. Anything you can think of in that area?

Student Participant 2: Sorry, I didn't understand the question.

Researcher: So when you in your music studies in elementary through college, was there any sort of incorporation of world music or cultural music?

Student Participant 2: Ah. Well, well, not much mainly. In the elementary school, kind of cultural music of traditional music of Japan. Or do you know, like, you know? It is not gospel, but like, you know, we have to sing some songs which we can sing together. I think it's kind of big differences between Japan and the foreign countries. But I think in foreign countries one lead singer will sing one part and the others will follow that. But in Japan it is not happening. Everyone like for example, there were thirty student in the class in my class and there were ten boys singing boy part and 10 girls lead and sink lead part and another 10 singing kind of alto, you know, second part and no one is lead. I mean, you know what I mean? Yeah, that's why. And with the gospel, I will I will text you later. I don't know how to say that in English, but sounds like looks like in the gospel with piano. And then we sing it. That is we learn it and we have the contest, you know, depending on the class. Each class side very well or not, and which was the first competition in the championships thing. And then I think, in the secondary school in the English class, we sang some music or songs from America or England. Like yeah Michael Jackson or Stevie Wonder or or something. But for study English. It it was not for music. It was like, you know, moving mouth, sing. No Latino, no, no African, no East Asian, I guess. Well, maybe we listen some of them, but just for knowing that. It was only in one class in early resin an hour, that's why not. I don't remember anything about that, only some traditional music from everything. Almost 90% of music I learned in elementary and secondary school are from Japan. I guess I guess. Maybe just because I don't remember very well, so maybe I sang some of them from foreign countries, I guess. But mainly, yeah. That's why maybe I could say I sang some of the foreign music, but everything was translated into Japanese and it is well known as a traditional music in Japan. That's why I am thinking that I, you know, studied only Japanese songs.

Researcher: Mm-hmm. OK. OK, that makes sense. Uh, let's see. So, did you ever or even now, do you look back and wish you had learned more world music or were you satisfied with what you have, what you have?

Student Participant 2: No, I would love to. I mean it was more than lovely if I, you know, studied more world music because you know. Well, maybe just because I studied English and I studied in, I studied abroad as well. That’s maybe why I still like it. But well, after knowing some world music like Latino or something, then you know, I thought, wow, it's amazing. I wanted to know much earlier in my life. You know, with dancing, those music and not well known and not so

many like Latino or African were not there. So, I don't know, but if if I, if there was, you know, the classes to learn some world music inviting some, you know, neighborhood from other countries. Then that would be much amazing, but not so many, you know, foreigners are living in Japanese society even though. That's it. But no, they are not. Well, that the door is not opening for that. Yeah, that's more like a problem I guess.

Researcher: Yes, yes. Yeah. OK. Let's see. The last question I have is umm, could you describe a couple ways or one way in particular that music enriched your life, so made your life more full or what's one way you just or experience you had that that really yeah, made you enjoy music if that makes sense.

Student Participant 2: You were saying, like, you know some like, you know, kind of one moment or something made me think music is amazing.

Researcher: Right, right. Or that you really enjoyed it.

Student Participant 2: Well, yeah, I enjoyed it. And yeah, as I said, I I studied or I enjoyed music. That's why now late later it made it easier to study foreign language. That's why I really appreciate it also. Well, maybe related to the last question, you know about the world music. Now I live in Spain, where so many Latinos live and if I wish I knew more about, you know, Latin American, then I could enjoy more or I could, you know, catch up with them. Or dancing so, but, but overall I enjoyed the music in my life. I almost every day I listen some music kind of J-pop or jazz or something. So, you know, it's kind of more like, you know, it is in the part of my, you know, daily life. Not something like, you know, I enjoy. I am not a clubbing person. That's why I'm not enjoying the, you know, EDM or something. But yeah.

Researcher: Yes, that makes sense. OK, awesome. I think that is all the questions I have. So thank you again for your time. I really really appreciate it.

Student Participant 2: No problem, it's fine. And I enjoyed it as well. It was a good experience. You know, it was the first time to get involved in the American, you know, for American things.

Researcher: Awesome. Thank you so much. And if you wouldn't mind sending me the the name of the school that you went to, that would be awesome.