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School of Music

**The Symptoms of Music Performance Anxiety Unique
to College Music Majors Attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities**

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

by

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Lynchburg, VA

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THE SYMPTOMS OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE ANXIETY UNIQUE
TO COLLEGE MUSIC MAJORS ATTENDING HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND
UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

Themes related to music performance anxiety (MPA) have recently received much attention in the academic media. Numerous specialists offer a variety of divergent remedies to treat this condition, concentrating on conventional college music majors. Still, there are few substantial studies investigating the hypothesis that MPA may be affected by ethnic origins. Academics currently have no dedicated resources for this information. Using proper research, time-tested philosophies, and pertinent case studies, the researcher investigates perceptions of MPA affecting college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in this project. The symptoms of MPA are becoming increasingly familiar to music majors at the undergraduate level. The condition hinders accuracy, expression, endurance, and enjoyment in musical performance. Although traditional research includes a vast array of causal factors, it remains unclear if cultural influences impact the prevalence of MPA. This qualitative case study examines how college music majors at HBCUs experience MPA during performances. Five individuals were selected to present their distinct perspectives on MPA as students and performers at an HBCU. The researcher collected data for the study through interviews and observation. The data analysis was completed using NVivo 14, a qualitative tool that facilitates the identification of codes in the collected data. The study's findings conclude that HBCU students face MPA similarly to peers at non-HBCUs, but systemic factors heighten their experience. Recommendations for further research include longitudinal studies, preventative workshops, and culturally specific support for sufferers.

Keywords: music performance anxiety, psychological disorders, Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Dedication

This work is lovingly dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, the bedrock upon which my life has been built, and my family. I am profoundly blessed to be surrounded by their unwavering love and support, and it is in their honor that I present this culmination of many years of effort.

To my sisters, Dr. Karen Davis and Carlette Durham: you have been the pillars of strength, grounding me in moments of doubt and celebrating with me in times of triumph. Your faith in me, encouragement, and endless support have been invaluable throughout this journey.

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It is finished. The journey is complete, and I am overwhelmed with gratitude as I present this work. This thesis, which delves into the effects of music performance anxiety on college music majors at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, represents a crucial intersection of music education, performance, psychology, and the distinct culture and history of HBCUs. It is my earnest belief that this research provides a significant contribution to the existing literature.

At the forefront of my acknowledgments is Dr. Jerry Newman, my chair. His unwavering support and expert guidance have been instrumental in shaping this research. I also wish to convey my profound thanks to Dr. Stan Harris, my reader, whose invaluable insights and constructive feedback greatly enriched this work. I express my heartfelt gratitude to all who have contributed in various ways to this endeavor. May God's blessings be upon each one of you.

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Abbreviations

APA	<i>American Psychological Association</i>
CAQDAS	<i>Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software</i>
CBT	<i>Cognitive Behavioral Therapy</i>
DSM	<i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders</i>
HBCU	<i>Historically Black College or University</i>
H1, H2, etc.	<i>Hypothesis 1, Hypothesis 2, etc.</i>
IRB	<i>Institutional Review Board</i>
MPA	<i>Music Performance Anxiety</i>
MTNA	<i>Music Teachers National Association</i>
NASM	<i>National Association of Schools of Music)</i>
NIMH	<i>National Institute of Mental Health</i>
RQ	<i>Research Question</i>
SAD	<i>Social Anxiety Disorder</i>

Chapter One: Introduction

Overview

Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) is a topic that has garnered increasing focus in the academic world in recent years.¹ It is one of the most common issues that music students encounter regularly.² For treating this condition, numerous specialists offer a variety of divergent remedies, concentrating on conventional college music majors attending predominantly White institutions (PWIs). There is, however, little substantial study investigating the hypothesis that MPA may be affected by ethnic origins. Scholars examining this intersection find themselves navigating without comprehensive resources.

This research primarily seeks to shed light on a pivotal question: how does MPA affect college music majors who attend HBCUs? Focusing on a cohort of college music majors from Tennessee State University(TSU), an HBCU in Nashville, Tennessee, this qualitative case study attempts to capture a nuanced understanding of their experiences with MPA. According to the hypotheses, college music majors who attend HBCUs experience MPA at significantly higher rates than those who do not attend HBCUs. The following research questions will be answered:

RQ1: What are the symptoms of music performance anxiety unique to college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities?

RQ2: How do college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities overcome symptoms of music performance anxiety so they can effectively perform?

¹ Marise van Zyl, "The Effects of Virtual Reality on Music Performance Anxiety Among University-Level Music Majors," *Visions of Research in Music Education* 35, no. 15 (2020): 2.

² Mariola Lupiáñez, Francisco de Paula Ortiz, and Miguel A. Muñoz, "Predictors of Music Performance Anxiety in Conservatory Students," *Psychology of Music* 50, no. 4 (2022): 1005.

The researcher, using proper research, time-tested philosophies, and relevant case studies, investigates perceptions of music performance anxiety affecting minority college students in this project. Working with the local college music department at TSU, the researcher utilizes a qualitative case study, including interviewing students, conducting surveys, and recording observations. By the end of this study, the academic community will possess a richer, more detailed understanding of the MPA phenomenon, particularly its manifestation among minority college music majors attending HBCUs.

Background

A significant majority, 96% of undergraduate students pursuing music education, reported experiencing MPA, according to a recent poll.³ Musicians frequently experience MPA, which is characterized by emotions of nervousness, fear, and stress before, during, and after a performance. This condition, which can manifest through a racing heart, perspiring hands, and an anxious mind, is not unusual in music.⁴ Nevertheless, a musician's cumulative history of negative performance experiences can lead to a gradual increase in MPA, which can trigger a cycle that is difficult, if not impossible, to break.⁵ This nervousness can severely affect a musician's ability to perform at the highest level. MPA can be highly disruptive, compelling some student musicians to discontinue their musical studies.⁶ It can, over time, lead to lost confidence, frustration, or even avoidance of performing altogether.⁷

³ Nanako Irie, Yuki Morijiri, and Michiko Yoshie, "Symptoms of and Coping Strategies for Music Performance Anxiety Through Different Time Periods," *Frontiers in Psychology* 14, no. 1138922 (May 2023): 1.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Lesley McAllister, *Yoga in the Music Studio* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 208.

⁶ Irie, Morijiri, and Yoshie, "Symptoms," 1.

⁷ Frank M. Diaz, "Relationships Among Meditation, Perfectionism, Mindfulness, and Performance Anxiety Among Collegiate Music Students," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 66, no. 2 (2018): 150.

A successful professional musician, despite being overwhelmed with concern and fear and the subsequent impairments on their skill, possesses a wide range of cognitive, physiological, and musical skills to control MPA. Previous research reveals that musicians use coping mechanisms to lessen MPA, including deep breathing, self-talk, cognitive restructuring, and enhanced practice skills.⁸ The majority of scholarly works dedicated to assisting musicians in achieving peak performance concentrate on the pathological dimensions of performance, specifically the management of the incapacitating symptoms associated with MPA.⁹

Meanwhile, the proportion of minority students obtaining bachelor's degrees in music is progressively declining across the United States.¹⁰ Between 2011 and 2018, analysis of data from 565 institutions plus 40 extra schools, as reported in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), reveals that out of 29,869 students who earned bachelor degrees in music education, 81% identified as White, 7% as Hispanic/Latino, 4% as Black/African American, 2% as Asian, 0.5% as American Indian/Native Alaskan, 0.1% as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 2% as biracial or multiracial.¹¹ According to Ziye Tang, the decline in minority college music majors may be caused by several intersecting variables.¹² These variables include limited access to quality K-12 music education in classrooms, especially in low-income areas with increased minority student enrollment and financial difficulties, such as high tuition rates and a

⁸ Irie, Morijiri, and Yoshie, "Symptoms," 1.

⁹ Susanna Cohen and Ehud Bodner, "Music Performance Skills: A Two-Pronged Approach – Facilitating Optimal Music Performance and Reducing Music Performance Anxiety," *Psychology of Music* 47, no. 4 (July 2019): 521.

¹⁰ "The Racial Diversity Problem in Music Schools at Universities in the United States," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, January 25, 2021.

¹¹ David R. DeAngelis, "Recent College Graduates with Bachelor's Degrees in Music Education: A Demographic Profile," *Journal of Music Teacher Education* 32, no. 1 (June 20, 2022): 26.

¹² Ziye Tang, "Music Schools Struggle to Diversify," *Columbia Missourian*, January 17, 2021.

lack of financial aid. These factors may make earning a music degree more difficult for students from underrepresented groups. The perception that the music industry offers few job options, earning potential, and lack of diversity and representation in faculty may be unwelcoming for minority students, deterring them from pursuing a music education.¹³

Opportunities to study MPA among minorities will likely decrease without an increasing pool of future minority performers and teachers. It is essential to broaden the range of backgrounds in the music teaching profession, as music teachers often prefer to work in environments that reflect their own experiences and beliefs.¹⁴ It is also necessary to understand as many of the symptoms, causes, and possible contributors to MPA before moving on to investigate therapies and pedagogical strategies for overcoming the disorder.¹⁵ More in-depth qualitative research is needed to understand how MPA affects the slowly dwindling population of minority music majors. This study aims to identify and discuss the growing body of knowledge about the characteristics of MPA among college music majors who attend an HBCU and their culturally distinct perceptions of the disorder.¹⁶ These perceptions can provide valuable insights into how cultural and societal factors can influence the experience of MPA.

Music has played an essential role in the liberal arts curriculum at HBCUs, contributing significantly to developing a positive cultural identity for its students.¹⁷ Since their inception,

¹³ Tang, "Music Schools Struggle to Diversify."

¹⁴ DeAngelis, "Recent College Graduates," 27.

¹⁵ Clara Boyett, "Music Performance Anxiety: The Role of Teachers in Addressing Anxiety in Adolescent Students and Beyond," *MTNA e-Journal* 10, no. 3 (2019): 2.

¹⁶ Samuel Barros, Helena Marinho, Nery Borges, and Anabela Pereira, "Characteristics of Music Performance Anxiety among Undergraduate Music Students: A Systematic Review," *Psychology of Music* 50, no. 6 (2022): 2.

¹⁷ Steven Lewis and Hannah Grantham, "Musical Life at HBCUs," The National Museum of African American History and Culture, Smithsonian Institution, October 13, 2022.

HBCUs have strived to create an inclusive, supportive environment for aspiring minority performers. HBCUs offer opportunities to expand minority performers' understanding of music and refine their performance skills. However, given their historically marginalized status and strong associations with a culturally distinct identity, minority student groups may experience MPA more frequently or intensely than their peers.¹⁸ As a result, minority student groups may have increased experiences with MPA.

Statement of the Problem

Individuals must possess various cognitive, physiological, and emotional abilities, in addition to musical talent, to be an accomplished professional musician. A musician must possess the mental agility to interpret intricate compositions, the physical endurance to endure lengthy performances, and the emotional fortitude to withstand public scrutiny.¹⁹ Most of the literature devoted to assisting musicians in optimally performing focuses on the pathological aspects of performance, which is managing the incapacitating effects of MPA.²⁰ Understanding the symptoms, causes, and possible contributors to MPA is necessary before evaluating therapeutic techniques and strategies for overcoming it.²¹ This study aims to identify and discuss the growing body of knowledge about the characteristics of MPA among minority music majors

¹⁸ Wei Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students Perceived Stress Management and Coping Skills," *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication* 23, no. 1 (2022): 28.

¹⁹ Dorina Geta Iușcă, "Successful Music Performers Personality Traits," *Review of Artistic Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 318.

²⁰ Cohen and Ehud Bodner, "Music Performance Skills," 521.

²¹ Clara Boyett, "Music Performance Anxiety: The Role of Teachers in Addressing Anxiety in Adolescent Students and Beyond," *MTNA e-Journal* 10, no. 3 (2019): 2.

and their culturally distinct perceptions of the condition.²² The presence and severity of MPA are investigated in a small group of minority music majors using qualitative research.

Statement of the Purpose

There is a growing understanding of the experiences of MPA among college music majors. HBCUs provide a welcoming environment for minority musicians to deepen their musical knowledge and develop the necessary performance skills in a culturally enhanced environment. Throughout history, music has played an essential role in HBCU liberal arts curricula and in establishing a positive cultural identity for its students.²³

Minority music majors at HBCUs who have experienced MPA before, during, or after a performance were interviewed and surveyed to aid in the gathering and synthesis of this information. The interviews highlight whether minority students experience MPA more than their non-minority counterparts and what cultural factors contribute to these disparities. The significance of such findings to this thesis study cannot be overemphasized, as they can potentially improve minority college students' understanding of the causes and best therapies for MPA.²⁴

Significance of the Study

Many professional musicians experience performance anxiety, even at the pinnacle of their careers. A musician's history of poor performance experiences can lead to an increase in MPA, which can prompt a cycle of the condition that is difficult, if not impossible, to break.²⁵

²² Barros et al., "Characteristics of Music Performance Anxiety," 3.

²³ Lewis and Grantham, "Musical Life at HBCUs."

²⁴ Barros et al., "Characteristics of Music Performance Anxiety," 2.

²⁵ Lesley McAllister, *Yoga in the Music Studio*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2020), 208.

Despite an abundance of research studies examining the origins and treatment of MPA, there has been little exploration into how ethnicity and culture might affect its development or management.²⁶ More comprehensive and inclusive pedagogical approaches for MPA are imperative.²⁷ Furthermore, the actual impacts of MPA on minority music students at HBCUs are still unknown. No official research on the harmful effects of MPA on specific populations of diversity has been conducted. The outcomes of this study contribute to a better understanding of MPA by balancing conventional studies, which are unlikely to include such data.

The Significance of Focusing on HBCUs

Comparing the effects of MPA on college music majors at HBCUs versus PWIs reveals historical, cultural, and pedagogical significance. HBCUs have been educating the majority of African Americans since the mid-1800s. More than 300,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students from various backgrounds, socioeconomic levels, and academic ability levels are served by these 105 schools.²⁸ These institutions have a special place in American education history: they were formed during a period when African Americans were refused access to conventional higher education, and their establishment was a turning point in the Black community's struggle for educational equality and social advancement.²⁹ Examining the musical traditions and practices of HBCUs reveals that they play a significant role in influencing the

²⁶ Aleta Bok Johnson, "Performance Anxiety among African American College Students," *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy* 20, no. 4 (June 27, 2006): 33.

²⁷ Sang-Hie Lee, Merry Lynn Morris, and Santo V. Nicosia, *Perspectives in Performing Arts Medicine Practice a Multidisciplinary Approach* 1st ed. (Cham: Springer, 2020), viii.

²⁸ Cheron H. Davis, Adriel A. Hilton, and Donovan L. Outten, *Underserved Populations at Historically Black Colleges and Universities: The Pathway to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* (United Kingdom: Emerald Publishing, 2019), 7.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 31.

experiences of music majors by fusing the rich heritage of African and African American music with contemporary practices.³⁰

The adoption of Afrocentric pedagogies in HBCUs introduces a distinctive approach to teaching and learning, frequently incorporating a variety of musical genres, including gospel, jazz, and traditional African rhythms. This fusion not only diversifies the educational experience but also influences the musical performance and comprehension of the students, thereby providing a holistic perspective on the various teaching and learning modalities. The sociocultural environment of HBCUs, characterized by shared historical experiences and cultural awareness, fosters a strong sense of community and belonging.³¹ This unique environment likely contributes to collaborative and supportive musical practices, enhancing performance quality and student engagement.³²

Beyond aesthetic expression, music performances at HBCUs are an effective tool for cultural and personal empowerment, particularly for Black students. Historically, HBCUs have been instrumental in advancing pivotal social justice issues. Though these universities were created in response to the vile institution of slavery, they have generated dynamic leaders who have dismantled oppressive structures.³³ However, the historically lower funding levels received by HBCUs compared to PWIs have tangible effects on the available resources for music education, including instruments, performance spaces, and technology.³⁴ Examining how

³⁰ Lewis and Grantham, "Musical Life."

³¹ Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students," 28.

³² Davis, Hilton, and Outten, "Underserved Populations," 33.

³³ James L. Conyers, Jr., Crystal L. Edwards, and Kevin B. Thompson, *African Americans in Higher Education : A Critical Study of Social and Philosophical Foundations of Africana Culture* (Bloomfield: Myers Education Press, 2020), 64.

³⁴ Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students," 28.

students and educators navigate these obstacles casts light on the realities of music performance within these institutions and its repercussions on the nature and quality of such performances.

In addition, HBCUs are renowned for their robust alumni networks, which actively support current and former students.³⁵ These networks translate in the realm of music to mentorship, collaborative opportunities, and paths to post-graduate success, establishing a comprehensive support system beyond the classroom. These networks shape music industry students' experiences and prospective careers.³⁶ The growing awareness of diversity and representation in the arts highlights the need to increase music performance research at HBCUs. Not only does highlighting the talent arising from these institutions contribute to the larger discourse about fine arts diversity, but it also highlights the crucial role that HBCUs play in curating and showcasing distinctly unique musical perspectives.³⁷ Ultimately, research centered on music performance at HBCUs enhances the understanding of the interrelationships between history, education, cultural identity, and music, providing valuable insights into the future of music education and the enduring legacy of these influential institutions.³⁸

Research Questions

The research questions for the study are as follows:

RQ1: What are the symptoms of music performance anxiety unique to college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities?

³⁵ Davis, Hilton, and Outten, *Underserved Populations*, 124.

³⁶ Lewis and Grantham, "Musical Life."

³⁷ Marybeth Gasman, "The Power of HBCU Choirs," *Forbes*, July 5, 2023.

³⁸ Davis, Hilton, and Outten, "Underserved Populations," 7.

RQ2: How do college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities overcome symptoms of music performance anxiety to perform effectively?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses for the research questions are as follows:

H1: Symptoms of music performance anxiety unique to college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities include emotions of nervousness, fear, and stress before, during, and after a performance.

H2: College music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities can overcome symptoms of music performance anxiety to effectively perform by implementing performance strategies, social coping, and seeking professional assistance.

Core Concepts

Minority students entering college music programs at PWIs have experienced culture shock, a feeling of isolation, and a lack of community within their programs. They have highlighted the value of peer support initiatives and coursework that acknowledges their identity. On the other hand, HBCUs have generally offered supportive and affirming educational settings for their minority students, specifically in music. The cultural importance and community visibility of groups like marching bands or choirs are often emphasized at these institutions.³⁹ This contrast highlights the crucial role of HBCUs in three pivotal areas: fostering a unique cultural identity, resisting disturbing experiences of marginalization, and safeguarding distinctive musical traditions.

³⁹ DeAngelis, "Recent College Graduates," 27.

The Unique Cultural Identity of HBCUs

Research indicates that HBCUs foster a distinctive and influential culture that benefits the personal and social identities of African American students.⁴⁰ However, many academic studies on this subject tend to concentrate on the student experience during their time at these institutions. The enduring and empowering influence of HBCU culture extends beyond the academic years, shaping individuals' lives in lasting ways.⁴¹

A sense of belonging and individuality are greatly influenced by cultural identity. It provides a common ground to build a sense of pride and belonging by associating with a standard set of values and traditions.⁴² In the same way that cultural identification can add to the richness of the human experience, it can also help to broaden an individual's worldview. Still, HBCU music students may feel increased pressure to exist as representatives of their race and culture to the outside world, which may increase MPA.⁴³

Resisting Disturbing Historical Experiences of Marginalization

The history of police brutality against marginalized communities in America is extensive, and the fear of police brutality may be linked to poor mental health in young adults.⁴⁴ The 1950s saw a rise in police brutality during the Civil Rights Movement against African Americans.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Marybeth Gasman and Levon T. Esters, *HBCU* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2024) chap. 2, par. 2.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., chap. 2, par. 65.

⁴³ Tabitha Grier-Reed, "The African American Student Network: An Informal Networking Group as a Therapeutic Intervention for Black College Students on a Predominantly White Campus," *Journal of Black Psychology* 39, no. 2 (2013): 169-170.

⁴⁴ Sirry Alang, Donna McAlpine, and Malcolm McClain, "Police Encounters as Stressors: Associations with Depression and Anxiety across Race," *Socius* 7 (2021): 2.

⁴⁵ Martin Luther King, Jr., *Stride toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (Beacon Press, 2010) chap. 6, par. 1.

Police brutality against minorities came to national attention again in the 1990s when the Rodney King beating occurred in Los Angeles, sparking riots and looting that lasted for one week.⁴⁶ Recent incidents of police brutality against minorities, including the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Eric Garner, have inspired nationwide protests and calls for reform.⁴⁷

The 9/11 terrorist attacks further intensified the practice of racial profiling against Muslims and people of Middle Eastern descent.⁴⁸ Racial profiling is a discriminatory practice that targets individuals based on ethnicity, race, or national origin and has been widely used by law enforcement officials in the United States, particularly against African Americans. The United States also has the highest incarceration rate in the world.⁴⁹ Marginalized communities have been disproportionately affected by the issue.⁵⁰ African Americans and Hispanics make up a disproportionate percentage of the incarcerated population and are more likely to be given longer prison terms than White defendants for the same crimes.⁵¹ From housing and education to employment and healthcare, marginalized communities face significant challenges in accessing resources and opportunities available to other groups.⁵²

⁴⁶ Livia Gershon, “How the Media Covered Police Brutality Three Decades Ago,” *JSTOR Daily*, April 13, 2021.

⁴⁷ Nicole Dungca et al., “A Dozen High-Profile Fatal Encounters That Have Galvanized Protests Nationwide,” *Washington Post*, June 8, 2020.

⁴⁸ Sarah Steege, “Confronting Discrimination in the Post-9/11 Era: Challenges and Opportunities Ten Years Later,” United States Department of Justice. October 19, 2011.

⁴⁹ Becky Pettit and Carmen Gutierrez, “Mass Incarceration and Racial Inequality,” *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 77, no. 3-4 (October 29, 2018): 11.

⁵⁰ Alang, McAlpine, and McClain, “Police Encounters,” 2.

⁵¹ Pettit and Gutierrez, “Mass Incarceration,” 4.

⁵² Alang, McAlpine, and McClain, “Police Encounters,” 2.

On college campuses, minority students face more discrimination and a range of challenges in education, including lower academic achievement, higher dropout rates, and unequal access to resources and opportunities.⁵³ Schools in low-income and minority neighborhoods often lack the resources and funding needed to provide quality education, leading to a cycle of poverty, inequality, and employment discrimination: minority communities also face significant discrimination in the job market.⁵⁴ They are more likely to be unemployed and often face hiring, promotions, and pay discrimination.⁵⁵ The legacy of inequality and discrimination can influence minority performers' sense of self-esteem, resulting in experiencing higher levels of MPA.⁵⁶

Safeguarding Distinctive Musical Traditions

HBCUs maintain a diverse and valuable musical legacy, which includes genres such as gospel, jazz, and blues.⁵⁷ Gospel music, an integral component of African American culture, has its roots in African spirituals and holds significant importance in the musical traditions of HBCUs. In its early evolution phases, gospel music was characterized by simple arrangements. This genre also saw a significant contribution from male quartets, which emerged from HBCUs, most notably Fisk University and Hampton University.⁵⁸ These groups began to embrace gospel

⁵³ Erin Grinshteyn, Reid Whaley and Marie-Claude Couture, "High Fear of Discriminatory Violence among Racial, Gender, and Sexual Minority College Students and Its Association with Anxiety and Depression," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19, no. 4 (2022):1.

⁵⁴ Janis Bowdler and Benjamin Harris, "Racial Inequality in the United States," U.S. Department of the Treasury, July 21, 2022.

⁵⁵ Pettit and Gutierrez, "Mass Incarceration," 11.

⁵⁶ Craig Steven Wilder, *Ebony & Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2013): 10.

⁵⁷ Steven Lewis and Hannah Grantham, "Musical Life at HBCUs," The National Museum of African American History and Culture, October 13, 2022.

⁵⁸ Library of Congress, "African American Gospel," 2015.

music in the 1930s, marking a pivotal shift in their musical repertoire. Additionally, the introduction of guitar accompaniment during this period further diversified the sound, adding a new layer of musical complexity to the gospel genre. This evolution reflected a broader trend towards more intricate musical arrangements and contributed to the expansion of the gospel music tradition.⁵⁹

HBCUs helped develop jazz artists like Lil Hardin Armstrong of Fisk University and Una Mae Carlisle of Wilberforce University. These institutions taught them piano and music theory, preparing them for their move to Chicago, where they began successful jazz careers.⁶⁰ Lil Hardin Armstrong was hired by King Oliver as a pianist for his Creole Jazz Band shortly after her arrival, which led to her meeting Louis Armstrong. Hardin Armstrong was a prolific composer, providing jazz classics, including “Strutting with Some Barbeque.”⁶¹ These accomplishments highlight the significance HBCUs played in jazz artists’ early education and development, bridging academic instruction and professional achievement.⁶²

HBCUs have played a significant role in shaping African American music and culture, a role they maintain to this day. The musical tradition at HBCUs reflects African Americans’ rich history and heritage in America. It highlights the importance of these institutions in promoting diversity and inclusion in higher education. This musical culture can, however, increase the stress on students to perform at a high level, following the institution’s traditions and standards.

⁵⁹ Library of Congress, “African American Gospel,” 2015.

⁶⁰ Lewis and Grantham, “Musical Life at HBCUs.”

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

Definitions of Terms

Anxiety: an excessive and intense feeling of nervousness and fear, frequently accompanied by physical symptoms like tension, perspiration, and a heightened heart rate. The condition is also marked by uncertainty about the legitimacy and severity of the perceived threat, as well as by a lack of confidence in the ability to manage the situation.⁶³

Anxiety Attack: a sudden, intense episode of anxiety.⁶⁴

Depression: a psychological condition characterized by a spectrum of emotions such as sadness, despondency, and a sense of isolation. Commonly, it manifests through a lack of motivation, feelings of guilt, difficulty focusing, withdrawal from social interactions, disrupted sleep patterns, and, in some cases, suicidal ideations.⁶⁵

Flow: the subjective psychological state in which a person is completely immersed and fully concentrated in an enjoyable and rewarding activity.⁶⁶

HBCU: a college or university in the U.S. established before 1964 for African American students: a Historically Black College or University⁶⁷

Mental rehearsal: a systematic approach to experiencing the physical motions associated with a skill without physically engaging in the performance of those movements.⁶⁸

⁶³ Merriam Websters Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed., s.v. “anxiety.”

⁶⁴ Merriam Websters Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed., s.v. “anxiety attack.”

⁶⁵ Merriam Websters Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed., s.v. “depression.”

⁶⁶ Susanna Cohen and Ehud Bodner, “Music Performance Skills: A Two-Pronged Approach – Facilitating Optimal Music Performance and Reducing Music Performance Anxiety,” *Psychology of Music* 47, no. 4 (July 2019): 521.

⁶⁷ Merriam Websters Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed., s.v. “HBCU.”

⁶⁸ Claudia Iorio et. al, “The Effect of Mental Practice on Music Memorization,” *Psychology of Music* 50, no. 1 (2021): 230.

Minorities: a subset of a larger population distinguished by unique characteristics, often experiencing different treatment or conditions compared to the main group.⁶⁹

Perfectionism: a trait characterized by striving for flawlessness and high achievement, along with critical self-analysis and concerns about satisfying certain standards.⁷⁰

Stage Fright: is the fear of appearing in front of an audience. Stage fright related to performance typically occurs in the presence of a sizeable audience.⁷¹

Stage Presence: the ability to assertively convey confidence and garner attention during a performance, frequently regarded as a method to mitigate performance anxiety.⁷²

Summary

A significant number of undergraduate music majors suffer from MPA. It is a specific form of social anxiety related to performing music in front of an audience. Before, during, and after performances, numerous music students report feeling uncomfortable, anxious, and panicked. This anxiety can be expressed physically as trembling, sweating, or an upset stomach, worsening the anxiety.⁷³ Pressure to excel in a competitive area, fear of failure or criticism from peers and professors, and exposure to performing in front of an audience may contribute to MPA among undergraduate music majors. This anxiety can impact students' overall health, ability to commit to the best of their abilities, and even their desire to pursue a music career.

⁶⁹ Merriam Websters Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed., s.v. "minority."

⁷⁰ Merriam Websters Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed., s.v. "perfectionism."

⁷¹ Barros et al., "Characteristics of Music Performance Anxiety," 3.

⁷² "Stage Presence," Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford University Press, 2023.

⁷³ Yiqing Tang, and Lee Ryan, "Music Performance Anxiety: Can Expressive Writing Intervention Help?" *Frontiers in Psychology* 11, no. 1334 (2020): 1.

Music students can employ deep breathing exercises, visualization techniques, and cognitive behavioral therapy to manage MPA.⁷⁴ Music programs must acknowledge the prevalence of MPA and give students the necessary resources and support to overcome this chief obstacle. Moreover, college music majors experiencing MPA at HBCUs may experience even more significant obstacles while experiencing MPA. Since its inception, HBCUs continue to provide a congenial environment for aspiring minority performers to broaden their musical knowledge and develop their performance skills.

This chapter outlines the study's approach by summarizing the background, theoretical framework, hypotheses, and core concepts that guide this study. This qualitative case study aims to find newly undiscovered and undocumented perspectives on the perceptions and experiences of music majors at HBCUs who experience MPA. Participants were recruited by the researcher for this study using past professional relationships that the researcher cultivated by working at universities in the area. Once IRB approval was secured, semi-structured interviews and a survey instrument were used to collect data. The researcher abides by specific ethical criteria by preserving anonymity and privacy throughout the research process.

⁷⁴ McAllister, *Yoga*, 208.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

MPA is a complicated psychological phenomenon that is both pervasive and influential in the life of a college music major. It encompasses a variety of emotional, cognitive, and physical responses that students experience when preparing for or participating in musical performances.⁷⁵ These emotions are frequently marked by pronounced nervousness, fear, worry, and physical symptoms such as elevated heart rate, shortness of breath, and trembling. MPA has a significant impact on college music majors, influencing not only their performance quality but also their educational experience and overall well-being.⁷⁶

College music majors are at a pivotal point in their musical development. They are engaged in a setting requiring constant practice, mastery of their musical discipline, and regularly scheduled public performances. The tremendous pressure to succeed stems from personal motives, comparisons to their peers, and mentors' expectations.⁷⁷ The shift from high school to college-level music studies frequently results in a significant rise in performance expectations, forcing students to develop their talents and adapt to more outstanding musical excellence standards.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Anna Wiedemann et al., "How Does Music Performance Anxiety Relate to Other Anxiety Disorders?" *Psychology of Music* 50, no.1 (2022): 205.

⁷⁶ Barros et al., "Characteristics of Music Performance Anxiety," 2.

⁷⁷ Zyl, "The Effects," 2.

⁷⁸ Barros et al., "Characteristics of Music Performance Anxiety," 2.

Factors Contributing to MPA

MPA in collegiate music majors can be traced back to several sources. One of the most prominent is the fear of being judged negatively.⁷⁹ Students know their performances are being reviewed by classmates, teachers, peers, and the audience. This apprehension may immediately impact academics, rank in the music program, and future employment opportunities. The competitive character of music schools, where students compete for coveted seats in ensembles or solo performance chances, intensifies the experience.⁸⁰ Another essential factor in MPA is social comparison. Students invariably compare their abilities and results to their peers, resulting in an informal psychological ranking that can lead to feelings of inadequacy or increased performance pressure.⁸¹ The public quality of musical performances further complicates the dynamics involved. Unlike other private academic activities, concerts put student musicians in the spotlight, making their skills and any mistakes visible to everyone.⁸²

Impacts of MPA on Performance and Academic Development

Instrumental mastery requires precise control of multiple muscle groups. MPA can cause physical symptoms such as trembling, sweating, and shortness of breath. These symptoms, in turn, can impact performance quality, producing a detrimental cycle of nervousness and decreased performance potential. Furthermore, the repetitious nature of practice and performance can result in overuse injuries, further adding to students' anxiety.⁸³ The cognitive component of

⁷⁹ Ioulia Papageorgi, Susan Hallam, and Graham F. Welch, "A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Musical Performance Anxiety," *Research Studies in Music Education* 28, no. 1 (June): 85.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 86.

⁸¹ Irie, Morijiri, and Yoshie, "Symptoms," 4.

⁸² Wiedemann et al., "How Does Music Performance Anxiety Relate," 205.

⁸³ Barros et al., "Characteristics of Music Performance Anxiety," 11.

MPA concerns how students perceive their performances. Catastrophic thinking, in which worst-case scenarios are mentally rehearsed, is widespread in MPA.⁸⁴ Despite previous successful performances or adequate preparation, students may get obsessed with the possibility of mistakes, public embarrassment, or complete failure to perform. This type of thinking interferes with concentration and can result in memory lapses or technical errors during performance.⁸⁵

Treatment Options

Despite MPA's difficulties, some methods and treatments can assist college music majors in managing and mitigating its effects. Creating set practice routines, adopting relaxation techniques, and engaging in positive self-talk are all critical components of dealing with MPA. Creating a supportive community inside the music department can also ease music students' social demands and competitive impulses.⁸⁶ Support from institutions is also essential. Music department faculty should recognize the symptoms and frequency of MPA occurrences and provide tools and initiatives to assist students.⁸⁷ This recognition could include training on MPA, access to performance anxiety-specific mental health practitioners, and a curriculum incorporating discussions on musical performance's psychological components. Students, in turn, can learn to manage their MPA symptoms and learn to thrive in challenging musical activities with the proper support and institutional resources. Addressing MPA is critical for individual student achievement and the advancement of college music programs globally.

⁸⁴ Claudia Spahn, "Treatment and Prevention of Music Performance Anxiety," *Progress in Brain Research* 217 (2015): 133.

⁸⁵ Jane Ginsborg, "WELLNESS: Managing Music Performance Anxiety: Memorization Strategies for Instrumental Musicians and Singers," *American Music Teacher* 68, no. 4 (2019): 16.

⁸⁶ Irie, Morijiri, and Yoshie, "Symptoms," 2.

⁸⁷ Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students," 29.

Theoretical Framework

The Freudian Concept of the Danger Situation

In 1926, Sigmund Freud, a renowned neurologist and psychologist, described anxiety as an emotional warning of risk and the drive to protect against the perceived threat mentally. Freud postulated four primary risk situations: loss of a significant partner, loss of love, loss of physical integrity, and loss of affirmation from an individual's conscience.⁸⁸ The motivation to guard against anxiety is activated when a person detects one of these threat scenarios. Freud also made a distinction between signal anxiety, a type of anticipatory anxiety that warns of the risk of reliving the original traumatic state by repeating it in a weaker form so that precautions can be taken to prevent re-traumatization, and traumatic anxiety, which he defined as a state of psychological powerlessness in the face of overwhelmingly painful influence, such as fear of attack or abandonment.⁸⁹

The danger signal in the case of musicians with MPA refers to both internalized early danger experiences, such as pressure or failure to perform effectively under situations of evaluative threat, and present interpersonal experiences of performance and performance anxiety, which occur between the performer and the audience but are perceived and processed within the framework of the previous, internalized anxiety experiences. Detecting the performer's current sensations of endangerment in the performance context is possible by paying attention to both sets of dangerous experiences: the internalized past and the interpersonal present.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Dianna Kenny, *The Psychology of Music Performance Anxiety* (Oxford: Oxford Academic, 2012), 18.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

Freud suggested that personality comprises the id, ego, and superego, three structural components. People are only their “id” at birth: a collection of gratifying-seeking impulses. The ego, the reality-testing aspect of the personality that mediates between the desires of the id and the constraints imposed by reality, grows alongside the child. The young person gradually learns to put off immediate satisfaction, negotiate, acknowledge boundaries, and handle unavoidable disappointments. The superego begins to form between the ages of four and six. The superego, which develops from the ideals that parents and society instill in a person, serves as their conscience and the yardstick by which they judge themselves. The ego’s job is to control the harsh and punitive superego and the primal id’s instincts. Several defensive mechanisms are deployed, repression being the most important, to achieve this control, but second-line defenses could be used to live peacefully with suppressed desires and dreams.⁹¹

A socially adapted method of managing sexual and violent energy is known as sublimation. Competition and sports are two examples. When sublimation fails, one could fall back on denial and refuse to acknowledge the true nature of their actions. For instance, an alcoholic might deny having a drinking problem. Giving an academically sound justification for an individual’s action while denying its underlying motivation is a process known as rationalization. A person who cannot accept certain traits, motivations, or acts in themselves will project them onto others as self-defense. An ambitious and competitive person could, for instance, criticize his coworkers for being excessively ambitious and competitive. When one displaces, they direct emotions in the wrong direction. When he returns from work, a man upset with his boss may yell at his wife and kids. A youth upset with his instructor could be hostile and disrespectful to their mother. Occasionally, as a way of reining in strong urges, people may

⁹¹ Kenny, *Psychology*, 111.

overreact because they fear their intensity, also known as reaction formation. The external behavior provides a veiled outlet for the inclinations it seems to oppose.⁹² For instance, a person who fears dependence can act rebellious, individualistic, and independent. A person who is highly critical or confrontational may work quietly or compliantly. These actions are typically strictly followed because the person worries that a minor loss of control would trigger the repressed urges to surface. People who engage in such protective conduct may feel extreme anxiety, and this uneasy sensation prompts the person to seek assistance.⁹³

Etymology of the Word “Anxious”

Singers and wind musicians might find it fascinating that the word “anxious” derives from terms that indicate “pressing tight,” “strangling,” and “constriction,” and that, in contrast to how the word is used now, it originally meant unease and melancholy. The breathless, choking voices of fearful actors or singers or the weak, breathy tone of nervous wind musicians may attest that the sense of strangulation relates fear with the throat and the source of vocal function.

Anxiety is central to most psychiatric problems, including MPA. In both adolescents and children, anxiety disorders are the psychiatric disorders that are most often diagnosed.⁹⁴ The nature of anxiety and its origins have been addressed in almost all the humanities and social science fields. Many have tried to set anxiety apart from its near conceptual neighbors: stress, activation, arousal, concern, and dread. The study area has been prevented from fully developing since no definition of MPA is widely accepted.⁹⁵

⁹² *American Psychological Association Dictionary of Psychology*, s.v. “reaction formation.”

⁹³ Kenny, *Psychology*, 111.

⁹⁴ Angela Chiu, Avital Falk, and John T. Walkup, “Anxiety Disorders among Children and Adolescents,” *FOCUS* 14, no. 1 (January 2016): 26.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

The fact that MPA can be influenced by an individual's history, personality, and surroundings also complicates efforts to agree upon a universally accepted definition. Additionally, no single method exists for relieving or preventing nervousness before a musical performance. Though no widely accepted definition exists for MPA, it is a significant problem for musicians and performers. Fortunately, there are many approaches to coping with the symptoms and returning an individual's confidence onstage.

Understanding Defensive Mechanisms in Musicians

While Freud's defensive mechanisms provide a foundation, recent discoveries uncovered that musicians frequently exhibit unique defense mechanisms, such as over-practicing or avoiding certain musical genres, to reduce MPA.⁹⁶ The connection between the physical and psychological can manifest in symptoms such as muscle tension, particularly in the neck and shoulders, among violinists. Remarkably, with time, a musician may lose the ability to perform without a baseline, self-imposed, unphysiological strain.⁹⁷

The Yerkes-Dodson Law

A degree of arousal, which has no pathological value but increases muscle blood flow, perception, focus, and attention, is necessary for a successful musical performance. This state of arousal is referred to as "Lampenfieber" (meaning "stage fright") in German literature. The Yerkes-Dodson Law is an inverted U-shaped link between arousal level and performance standard. The Yerkes-Dodson law states that moderate arousal produces the optimum results. It serves as a model for how stress affects how well individuals perform tasks. It suggests an

⁹⁶ Robert H. Woody, "Flip the Script on Performance Anxiety" *Psychology Today*, May 23, 2019.

⁹⁷ Zahavah Zinn-Kirchner et al., "For Fiddlers on the Roof and in the Pit: Healthcare and Epidemiology of Playing-Related Problems in Violinists," *Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare* 16, no. 2485-2497 (2023): 2493.

individual can function at their best level with mild anxiety. Too little or too much arousal affects performance. The inverted U-curve model of arousal is another name for this.

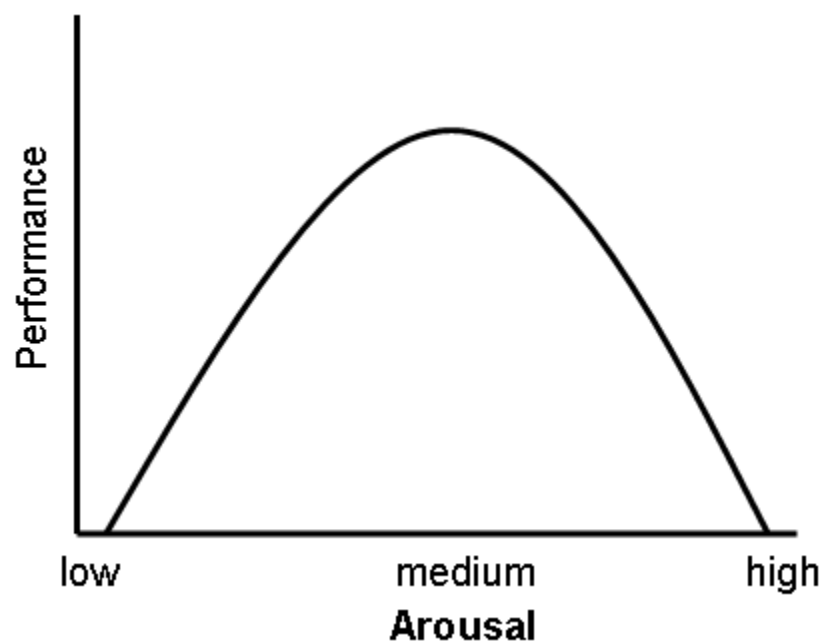


Figure 1. Yerkes-Dodson Law Graph

Once the appropriate amount of arousal has been attained, the musician enters what is known as the “flow” state, the optimal performing condition with the maximum possible responsiveness and focus and a sensation of ease of performance. If, however, the intensity of excitement, the degree of anxiety, and the level of performance decline, it may develop into MPA. MPA can happen in various circumstances and to varying degrees of severity; it does not matter how musical the performer is. The symptoms affect physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral levels. The symptoms are frequently instrument-specific on a physiological level. For example, string-playing musicians are more prone to feel bow tremors, piano players are more likely to have cold or sweaty hands, and wind players have parched mouths. On an emotional level, there appears to be a profound experience of stress, fear, and, in some cases, panic. Self-doubt, anticipation of failure, negative thinking, and catastrophizing are often reported cognitive

symptoms. When it comes to conduct—avoidance, poor performance, and drug use are regularly observed.⁹⁸

These theories, the Yerkes-Dodson Law and the concept of the Danger Situation, collectively propose that MPA may emerge from excessive arousal in response to the pressure inherent in the Danger Situation. This heightened state of arousal can manifest as physical symptoms and result in diminished performance. To manage MPA, performers may need to find ways to reduce their arousal level or reframe their perception of the danger situation as a challenge rather than a threat. Techniques like visualization, deep breathing exercises, and cognitive behavioral therapy can help achieve this state.⁹⁹ Substantial adjustments and additions have recently been made to the concept of an inverted U-shaped link between performance and arousal. It has been discovered that this link might differ based on an individual's previous experiences and instruction. For example, experienced professionals in particular industries may require a higher arousal level than beginners.¹⁰⁰

Catastrophic Thinking and Cognitive Behavioral Theory

While the root causes of MPA can be complex, catastrophic thinking, where individuals compulsively imagine potential adverse outcomes of a situation, stands out as a significant cognitive contributor.¹⁰¹ This form of thinking, intertwined with cognitive behavioral theory (CBT) principles, can be both the problem and part of the solution. Delving deep into the

⁹⁸ Jennifer Mumm et al., "Performance Anxiety Among Musicians Current State of Research on Causes, Treatment Options, and Prevention," *Zeitschrift für Neuropsychologie* 31, no. 2 (2020): 76.

⁹⁹ Spahn, "Treatment and Prevention," 129.

¹⁰⁰ Sarah Sinnamon, *Achieving Peak Performance in Music: Psychological Strategies for Optimal Flow* 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2020), 8.

¹⁰¹ Spahn, "Treatment and Prevention," 133.

relationship between catastrophic thinking, CBT, and MPA provides insights into the mental states of anxious performers and offers pathways to overcoming these conditions.

Understanding Catastrophic Thinking in Musicians

Catastrophic thinking is quite common among musicians. This mental state can give rise to various fears, including the fear of omitting sections of a piece, deviating from the correct pitch, technological malfunctions, or facing criticism from audiences.¹⁰² Some musicians may reflect upon a single performance as the sum of their entire value, thus amplifying the significance of any mistakes. This mindset can lead to physiological manifestations such as tremors, perspiration, and even cognitive impairment.¹⁰³ CBT offers a framework for managing this phenomenon, highlighting the interconnectedness of thoughts, emotions, and actions. MPA is also characterized by catastrophic thinking, such as the fear of failure or embarrassment, resulting in feelings of trepidation and despair.¹⁰⁴ These negative emotions can lead to avoiding challenging musical compositions or performances altogether. A comprehensive understanding of this cycle is essential for developing efficient strategies to control and alleviate distressing thoughts and subsequent outcomes.¹⁰⁵

CBT's Role in Addressing MPA

Understanding the complex relationship between ideas, emotions, and actions is essential. CBT provides practical techniques to change unhealthy patterns, which is particularly helpful for

¹⁰² Spahn, "Treatment and Prevention," 133.

¹⁰³ Alini D. V. Sabino, Marcos H. N. Chagas, and Flávia L. Osório, "Acute Effects of Oxytocin in Music Performance Anxiety: A Crossover, Randomized, Placebo-Controlled Trial," *Psychopharmacology* 237, no. 6 (2020): 1758.

¹⁰⁴ Spahn, "Treatment and Prevention," 133.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

musicians dealing with MPA. Cognitive restructuring directs musicians to recognize and confront catastrophic thoughts, substituting them with more optimistic ones.¹⁰⁶ As an illustration, thinking such as, “I will make mistakes during the performance,” is rephrased as “I have diligently rehearsed, and although I may commit a few errors, they will not define the entirety of the performance.”¹⁰⁷

Exposure therapy is another effective technique. This method enables performers to confront their anxieties, systematically reducing their sensitivity to MPA.¹⁰⁸ This process could begin with a primary activity, such as engaging in play while facing a mirror, advancing to presenting before a small gathering of acquaintances, and gradually improving self-assurance at each successive phase. In addition, musicians utilize relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and meditation to manage the physical manifestations of anxiety effectively.¹⁰⁹ This ability is crucial for enhancing focus during performances.

The practical consequences and achievements of these CBT approaches for major depressive disorders are substantial. Adopting these techniques has yielded significant benefits for both amateur and professional musicians. They develop heightened self-confidence due to diminished fear, restoring faith in their abilities and training.¹¹⁰ There is an improvement in performance quality due to the absence of paralyzing fear. This absence of fear allows musicians to concentrate more effectively, enhancing both their delivery’s technical and emotional

¹⁰⁶ Irie, Morijiri, and Yoshie, “Symptoms,” 2.

¹⁰⁷ Sinnamon, *Achieving Peak Performance*, 31.

¹⁰⁸ Lupiáñez, Ortiz and Muñoz, “Predictors of Music Performance Anxiety,” 1017.

¹⁰⁹ Irie, Morijiri, and Yoshie, “Symptoms,” 2.

¹¹⁰ Diana Kenny and Naomi Halls, “Development and Evaluation of Two Brief Group Interventions for Music Performance Anxiety in Community Musicians,” *Psychology of Music*, 46, no.1 (2018): 76.

components. Furthermore, a heightened appreciation for music arises in the same musicians. The fundamental nature of music is in the experience of pleasure and the act of conveying emotions.¹¹¹ Musicians can reignite this sense of delight by applying CBT to MPA. With greater confidence, musicians frequently explore compositions or genres of music they previously refrained from due to fear of failure, enhancing their artistic expression.¹¹²

A musician's journey is one of continuous learning—not just of technique and practice but also of the self. Catastrophic thinking can shorten or stop the journey altogether. However, with the tools and insights provided by CBT, musicians can confront and conquer MPA. Instead of being a place of anticipated disasters, the stage can become a sanctuary of expression, creativity, and connection.

Perfectionistic Self-presentation

Self-representations significantly impact how individuals think, feel, and behave. These representations pertain to beliefs of individuals' professional personas.¹¹³ Perfectionism is a personality trait involving extremely high standards and causes musicians to be overly critical of themselves. Rooted in social psychology, Perfectionistic Self-presentation revolves around the inherent desire to control the impressions of others.¹¹⁴ At a fundamental level, humans are intrinsically social creatures driven by a desire for acceptance within their communities. In professional music, perception can be a powerful determinant of opportunities and growth. Self-

¹¹¹ Sinnamon, *Achieving Peak Performance*, 16.

¹¹² Claudia Spahn, Franziska Krampe, and Manfred Nusseck, "Classifying Different Types of Music Performance Anxiety." *Frontiers in Psychology* 12, no. 538535 (April 2021): 2.

¹¹³ Claudia Castiglione, Alberto Rampullo, and Silvia Cardullo, "Self-Representations and Music Performance Anxiety: A Study with Professional and Amateur Musicians," *Europe's Journal of Psychology* 14, no. 4 (November 2018): 794.

¹¹⁴ Andrew P. Hill et al., "Perfectionistic Self-Presentation and Emotional Experiences in Music Students: A Three-Wave Longitudinal Study," *Psychology of Music* 48, no. 6 (February 2019): 767.

worth, self-esteem, and identity often intertwine with the external perceptions of others. A musician's applause, or the lack of it, can feel like validation or critique of the very essence of a performer.¹¹⁵

For musicians, the stage becomes a microcosm of self-presentation challenges. It is not merely a platform to showcase talent but a place where skills, emotions, and identity converge and are displayed for all to see.¹¹⁶ The immediacy of this environment is unparalleled. Unlike many professions where feedback might be delayed, in music, every note, every chord, and every pause resonate in real-time. The reactions are instant, and the performer is acutely tuned in.¹¹⁷ There is also the undeniable factor of visibility. The focus is on the musician or musicians. Every movement, every expression, and every emotion is under scrutiny. For many, music is their identity. Professional critique can seem deeply personal if the applause falters or notes go awry.¹¹⁸

Visualization

This intersection of identity, art, and public perception can lead to heightened anxiety. A musician might worry about technical aspects before a performance. Beyond the technical, there is the emotional landscape of a piece. Frequently appearing in the public eye often results in fluctuations in emotional well-being, which cannot always be anticipated during the preparation

¹¹⁵ Castiglione, Rampullo, and Cardullo, "Self-Representations," 793.

¹¹⁶ Papageorgi, Hallam, and Welch "A Conceptual Framework," 88.

¹¹⁷ Erinë Sokoli, Horst Hildebrandt, and Patrick Gomez, "Classical Music Students Pre-Performance Anxiety, Catastrophizing, and Bodily Complaints Vary by Age, Gender, and Instrument and Predict Self-Rated Performance Quality," *Frontiers in Psychology* 13, no. (June 2022): 3.

¹¹⁸ Castiglione, Rampullo, and Cardullo, "Self-Representations," 793.

phase without an audience.¹¹⁹ The physicality of being on stage, from attire choices to posture, becomes a part of the self-presentation narrative. Furthermore, in music, where comparisons are often inevitable, preparation can be a musician's greatest ally.

Visualization, or imagining a performance, can create a positive mental framework. Additionally, visualizing movement stimulates regions of the cerebral cortex and nerve pathways involved in executing physical action. This stimulation is the foundation for utilizing visualization techniques in performance planning and facilitating mental exercises during live rehearsals.¹²⁰ Visualizing an audience as collaborators in the musical journey can also positively shift performers' perspectives.

Mindfulness

Practicing mindfulness, the technique of staying centered in the moment, can help manage symptoms of MPA. Mindfulness is becoming more prevalent in some secular and Westernized settings, including clinical and educational fields.¹²¹ There is limited empirical evidence about the impact of mindfulness on other facets of music training, such as instrumental lessons and individual practice. Enhanced bodily awareness, concentration, and attentiveness have been proposed as factors that can aid persons in cultivating proficient instrumental practice and performance abilities, amplify sound volume and ensure tone stability in violinists, and facilitate learning and practicing singing.¹²² One of the most beneficial strategies against MPA

¹¹⁹ Julia Kaleńska-Rodzaj, "Music Performance Anxiety and Pre-Performance Emotions in the Light of Psychology of Emotion and Emotion Regulation," *Psychology of Music* 49, no. 6 (October 2020), 1759.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1764.

¹²¹ Anne-Marie Louise Czajkowski, Alinka Elizabeth Greasley, and Michael Allis, "Mindfulness for Musicians: A Mixed Methods Study Investigating the Effects of 8-Week Mindfulness Courses on Music Students at a Leading Conservatoire," *Musicae Scientiae* (July 2020), 260.

¹²² Czajkowski, "Mindfulness for Musicians," 261.

can be seeking feedback during the preparation phase. Trusted peers or mentors can offer credible assessments, helping musicians gauge where they stand regarding their presentation and performance.¹²³

Music, with its confluence of emotion, skill, and the public gaze, is challenging for self-presentation. Although some students may associate fear with adverse outcomes, it is essential to consider that their performance in tests or auditions could have been influenced by other factors such as their skills, presentation, qualifications, musical style, and more.¹²⁴ While the challenges can be unique and overwhelming, understanding the roots of anxiety while anchored in self-presentation theory can offer pathways to navigate them.

Flow Theory

The concept of “flow” is integral to understanding optimal performance in various activities. Flow is a modified state of awareness defined as the seamless integration of mental and physical faculties that arises when an individual becomes fully engrossed in a particular task. During a state of flow, individuals experience a complete absence of difficulty, unwavering self-assurance, mastery, unwavering concentration, a lack of self-awareness, and a seamless coordination between the body and mind.¹²⁵ In this state, external pressures, self-consciousness, and even time can appear to fade away. The concept of flow has garnered significant interest from researchers due to its potential to connect feelings of enjoyment and subjective well-being with optimal cognitive and physical performance.¹²⁶ Individuals who have encountered the state

¹²³ Papageorgi, Hallam, and Welch “A Conceptual Framework,” 84.

¹²⁴ Regina Studer, “Stage Fright: Its Experience as a Problem and Coping with It,” *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health* 84, no. 7 (January 6, 2011): 761.

¹²⁵ Sinnamon, *Achieving Peak Performance*, 8.

¹²⁶ Clara Alameda, Daniel Sanabria, and Luis F. Ciria, “The Brain in Flow: A Systematic Review on the Neural Basis of the Flow State,” *Cortex* 154 (September 2022): 349.

of flow articulate a sense of profound wonder, perceiving themselves as capable of achieving and possessing complete mastery over their actions.

The Flow State in Musical Performance

The phenomenon of flow represents the zenith of the musical experience. When musicians achieve the flow state, they can deliver emotionally and technically flawless performances. However, the converse also stands true: obstacles to achieving flow can amplify MPA. Existing research has not fully addressed the relationship between flow and MPA.¹²⁷ The following delves into the relationship between flow theory and MPA, examining how the former can potentially improve the latter.

The Nine Aspects of Flow

Flow consists of nine separate but interconnected characteristics.¹²⁸ The initial three functions are the fundamental prerequisites required to attain a state of flow. These factors encompass the following items: perceived skill/challenge balance; the subjective equilibrium between an individual's abilities and the difficulty of the task, clear goals; the existence of explicit and achievable objectives, and clear, immediate feedback; and the accessibility of prompt and unambiguous feedback. Collectively, these components create the conditions for an individual to achieve a flow state.¹²⁹

The six aspects of flow that remain are experiential attributes that precisely delineate the flow state itself. Central to this is a state of control characterized by a deep absorption that restricts one's attention solely to the current work. The experience itself may be inherently

¹²⁷ Susanna Cohen and Ehud Bodner, "The Relationship between Flow and Music Performance Anxiety amongst Professional Classical Orchestral Musicians," *Psychology of Music* 47, no. 3 (February 11, 2018): 422.

¹²⁸ Sinnamon, *Achieving Peak Performance*, 15.

¹²⁹ Cohen and Bodner, "The Relationship," 421.

rewarding. It may offer a feeling of delight and satisfaction from the activity itself, independent of the result; an amalgamation of action and awareness takes place, making the distinction between the individual performing the activity and the action itself indistinct.¹³⁰ There is control: a seamless quality where actions appear to occur with near automaticity. In addition, those in a state of flow enjoy a deep sense of mastery, not only in their actions but also in terms of the results they achieve, even in the face of difficulties. Self-awareness diminishes into the backdrop. Anxieties over failure or external judgment diminish, allowing individuals to fully immerse themselves in the activity. Finally, the state of flow is accompanied by an alteration in the perception of time.¹³¹

At the heart of flow in music lies the challenge-skill balance. This delicate equilibrium is crucial. Musicians report entering flow when the performance piece is sufficiently challenging to engage them but still within their capabilities.¹³² Another cornerstone of flow is the merging of action and awareness. In this state, the musician, the instrument, and the music become one. There is no room for negative internal dialogue or self-doubt; they are exchanged for a seamless, harmonious unity. This merging is critical, eliminating any sense of separation that might disrupt the performance.¹³³

Clear goals and feedback are also vital. Each note played contributes to the melody and provides immediate aural feedback to the performer. This feedback acts as a guide, offering

¹³⁰ Cohen and Bodner, "The Relationship," 421.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Laura Moral-Bofill, Andrés López de la Llave, and M^a Carmen Pérez-Llantada, "Predictors of Flow State in Performing Musicians: An Analysis with the Logistic Regression Method," *Frontiers in Psychology* 14 (November 23, 2023): 3.

¹³³ Sinnamon, *Achieving Peak Performance*, 16.

direction and purpose, and keeping the musician aligned with the flow of the music.¹³⁴

Concentration on the task at hand is vital. A deep, uninterrupted focus insulates musicians from external distractions and internal apprehensions. This intense concentration is the shield that protects the integrity of the flow state.¹³⁵

Amid the complexities of a challenging piece, musicians in flow experience a profound sense of control or mastery of their performance. This sense diminishes vulnerability and fear of failure, which is essential for maintaining flow.¹³⁶ Flow can act as a powerful antidote to the effects of MPA: one of the characteristics of MPA is heightened self-consciousness, where the musician's focus turns inward, becoming a critique rather than a conduit. Flow counters this by diminishing self-consciousness and replacing it with an intrinsic focus on the music.¹³⁷

Loss of time awareness, or time transformation, is another aspect of flow that mitigates MPA. Musicians absorbed in flow lose track of time and, with it, the tendency to dwell on past errors or anticipate future ones, common triggers for anxiety.¹³⁸ Optimal challenge selection is vital to musicians and educators in encouraging flow. Pieces should be just challenging enough to engage without being overwhelming. Mindfulness and meditation, as stated earlier, can enhance concentration and reduce distractions. Positive feedback can boost confidence and

¹³⁴ Amélie Guyon et al., "How Audience and General Music Performance Anxiety Affect Classical Music Students Flow Experience: A Close Look at Its Dimensions," *Frontiers in Psychology* 13 (October 28, 2022), 2.

¹³⁵ Ibid, 3.

¹³⁶ Moral-Bofill, de la Llave, and Pérez-Llantada, "Predictors of Flow State," 2.

¹³⁷ Sinnamon, *Achieving Peak Performance*, 19.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 20.

control, and familiarity with the piece can free the mind to engage more deeply with the music.¹³⁹

While MPA encapsulates the anxieties and vulnerabilities musicians face, flow represents the pinnacle of musical expression, transforming challenges into opportunities for deep immersion.¹⁴⁰ Understanding and striving for flow can offer musicians a potent tool to combat MPA and elevate their performances to unprecedented artistic heights. Flow is a form of anxiety management that involves embracing and transcending MPA, turning what was once an obstruction into access for artistic and personal growth.¹⁴¹

HBCUs: Their History, Mission, and Cultural Importance

To fully understand the complex dynamics of MPA at HBCUs, further in-depth research is required into the various societal, cultural, and educational factors that influence the phenomenon. This research explores MPA inside an HBCU and suggests practical insights and measures to reduce its effect on students. By combining theoretical viewpoints with the cultural and educational goals of HBCUs, the complex nature of MPA and its significant impact on students' musical and academic growth can be expressed.

The First HBCU

HBCUs in the United States have a rich history and are essential in providing African Americans with higher education opportunities.¹⁴² These institutions were formed primarily in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to provide education to African Americans who

¹³⁹ Czajkowski, "Mindfulness for Musicians," 270.

¹⁴⁰ Guyon, "Audience and General Music," 3.

¹⁴¹ Sinnamon, *Achieving Peak Performance*, 171.

¹⁴² Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students," 30.

were otherwise denied access to higher education due to systematic racism and segregation.¹⁴³ HBCUs have also played a crucial role in influencing education for minority students by providing academic guidance and serving as a secure environment for cultural identity and expression.¹⁴⁴ The musical programs at these universities frequently showcase the diverse heritage of African American music, encompassing genres such as gospel, jazz, R&B, and classical music that connect with their student's cultural backgrounds and histories.¹⁴⁵ The distinctive educational purpose emphasizes the importance of music performance at HBCUs, not just as a subject of study but as a crucial element of cultural heritage and tradition.

Cheyney University of Pennsylvania was established on February 25, 1837, making it the first Historically Black College and University in the United States. This institution set a precedent for creating educational environments that provided safety and support for African Americans.¹⁴⁶ HBCUs have made significant contributions to the cultural and economic fabric of the United States by encouraging diversity and inclusivity in higher education. These institutions were critical in developing America's Black middle class, generating many African American professionals, educators, scientists, and artists.¹⁴⁷

HBCUs have enormous cultural relevance in addition to their academic offerings. They are epicenters of African American culture, heritage, and pride. HBCUs offer African American

¹⁴³ Crenshaw, Kimberlé Williams, Luke Charles Harris, Daniel Martinez HoSang, and George Lipsitz, eds. *Seeing Race Again: Countering Colorblindness across the Disciplines*. 1st ed. (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), 160.

¹⁴⁴ Johnson, Glenn et al., "Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the Twenty First Century: An Exploratory Case Study Analysis of Their Mission," *Race, Gender & Class* 24, no. 3-4 (2017): 52.

¹⁴⁵ Lewis and Grantham, "Musical Life."

¹⁴⁶ "The First HBCU," Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, 2024.

¹⁴⁷ Johnson et al., "Historically Black Colleges and Universities," 49-50.

students an Afrocentric perspective on their history and culture, enhancing their understanding of these areas.¹⁴⁸ Campuses are frequently alive with cultural festivals, rituals, and activities commemorating African American history and legacy.

Music Performance Anxiety in HBCUs: Research

The study of MPA at HBCUs is a largely unexplored field. It is, however, a fundamental topic of study since it sheds light on the unique experiences of students in these contexts. Music programs at HBCUs frequently stress genres and forms rooted in African American culture, such as gospel, jazz, and R&B. HBCU performance cultures are known for their excellence, vibrancy, and profound energy, particularly in music departments and marching bands.¹⁴⁹ Students in these programs learn about music, actively participate in, and contribute to preserving African American musical legacy.

Increasing research on MPA in HBCUs will begin to highlight how these schools' cultural and social dynamics influence minority students' experiences of the disorder. The community atmosphere of HBCU campuses, as well as many students' strong sense of belonging, may be both a source of support and pressure. From one perspective, the close-knit community offers a network of peers and mentors familiar with the specific obstacles and expectations of performing in HBCU environments. Conversely, high expectations and the desire to uphold the legacy of excellence in HBCU music programs can increase MPA.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Johnson et al., "Historically Black Colleges and Universities," 52.

¹⁴⁹ Kristie Rieken, "For HBCUs, the Bands Are about Much More than the Show to the Black Community: This Is Family," *AP News*, September 12, 2023.

¹⁵⁰ Johnson, "Performance Anxiety," 35.

The Impact of Cultural and Social Dynamics on HBCU Performance Anxiety

Cultural and social variables at HBCUs have a substantial impact on minority students' experiences with MPA. The social anxiety disorders experienced by minority college students may be influenced by the stigma and harsh scrutiny they face.¹⁵¹ They may experience physiological activation of anxiety due to a sense of threat caused by undue attention from others. As a result of internalized racial stigma, they may also be critical of themselves or others. Minority students, African Americans in particular, can face hostile attitudes, unfavorable stereotypes, and open discrimination from the community at large.¹⁵² MPA is experienced in a unique context because of the emphasis on community, legacy, and cultural preservation.¹⁵³

Intersection of Cultural Identity and Performance Pressure

At HBCUs, music plays a pivotal role that transcends mere performance, embodying a profound cultural heritage and a source of communal pride. These performances showcase remarkable talent and vibrant celebrations of cultural identity infused with historical depth and significance.¹⁵⁴ The intertwining of performance with cultural identity elevates the stakes for students, transforming MPA from a personal challenge into a collective experience deeply rooted in the essence of identity and legacy. Furthermore, the overrepresentation of White individuals is a widespread issue in education, affecting all subjects and levels. Teachers of color often have a deeper understanding of cultural backgrounds and experiences, which enables them to establish meaningful connections with students of color.¹⁵⁵ The sense of community intrinsic to HBCUs

¹⁵¹ Johnson, "Performance Anxiety," 36.

¹⁵² Polishchuk, "Mental Health Needs."

¹⁵³ Ibid, 33.

¹⁵⁴ Rieken, "For HBCUs."

¹⁵⁵ DeAngelis, "Recent College Graduates," 28.

plays a crucial role in supporting students as they navigate the complexities of MPA. This environment, rich in shared cultural experiences and mutual understanding, fosters a space where students can freely express their faculty concerns and seek guidance from mentors.¹⁵⁶ Teachers and staff attuned to the nuances of MPA within the context of HBCUs are uniquely positioned to offer specialized support and insight, further enriching the student experience.

The legacy of excellence within HBCU music programs establishes a high standard for students, instilling performances with a sense of duty to uphold ongoing traditions. This responsibility can intensify MPA as students grapple with the dual pressures of personal achievement and cultural representation. Engaging with music at HBCUs often means engaging with the core of African American cultural traditions, adding a layer of complexity to MPA. Students are tasked with excelling in their musical endeavors and honoring and perpetuating a rich cultural heritage.¹⁵⁷ Professor Antoine Alston of North Carolina A&T State University, in the book *HBCU*, says the following:

You had that pride that an HBCU instills in you, letting you know this is who I am. I'm proud to be African American, my heritage, the traditions, the history of our people, the struggles, and the achievements of our people. Because more than any other group in society, society is built on the backs of literally, of African Americans, and so HBCUs train you about your heritage, that you have an intellect and that you need to express your intellect, that you need to go back and lead your community. So, we train leaders, we train scientists, we provide that confidence for African American students, but also non-African American students, too.¹⁵⁸

The fear of not measuring up to revered traditions can heighten anxiety, underscoring the unique challenges faced by students in these programs.

¹⁵⁶ Johnson et al., "Historically Black Colleges and Universities," 48.

¹⁵⁷ Rieken, "For HBCUs."

¹⁵⁸ Gasman and Esters, *HBCU*, chap. 2, par. 54.

Social Support Systems and Expectations

The HBCU experience involves a community that serves as both a support system and a source of pressure, necessitating the use of techniques to manage and balance these opposing forces effectively. Facilitating open discussions about MPA, establishing peer support groups, and offering culturally and socially relevant mental health resources for HBCU students are crucial in addressing this issue.¹⁵⁹ Given the history of racism and segregation in the United States, HBCUs were created as places where African Americans could pursue higher education without fear of racial discrimination.¹⁶⁰ However, the country's more significant social and racial dynamics can permeate these spaces still, adding another layer of anxiety. While HBCUs have played an essential role in giving educational opportunities to African Americans, they have also encountered funding and resource issues. HBCUs in the 21st century encounter numerous obstacles, including poor graduation and retention rates, decreasing enrollments, diminishing endowments, and decreased financial backing.¹⁶¹ These discrepancies can influence the facilities, equipment, and opportunities available to music students, potentially contributing to MPA.¹⁶²

Summary

In the context of HBCUs, MPA is a complex problem influenced by the institutions' rich histories, mission, and cultural relevance. Drawing on Freud's concept of the Danger Situation the Yerkes-Dodson Law, and Flow Theory, the experience at HBCUs could be influenced by stress levels and performance expectations. Students benefit from the communal aspect of

¹⁵⁹ Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students," 35.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 28.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 30.

¹⁶² Johnson et al., "Historically Black Colleges and Universities," 51.

HBCUs, the tradition of excellence, and an emphasis on cultural preservation. Though a strong sense of community and support can help reduce certain aspects of MPA, high expectations, a responsibility to preserve legacies, and broader racial and social factors complicate the MPA experience at HBCUs. Additionally, Flow Theory suggests that optimal experiences in performance can mitigate MPA, highlighting the need for a specialized grasp of cultural and socioeconomic issues and a commitment to provide unique assistance and tools to students in managing the specific demands of performance at HBCUs.

Chapter Three: Methods

Introduction

This research aims to explore the specific impacts of MPA symptoms on collegiate music majors attending HBCUs. Exploring the impact of MPA at HBCUs is crucial due to their distinctive cultural and educational environments, which may affect outcomes differently compared to PWIs. This chapter details the research design and methodological technique used to scrutinize these scenarios. The text will describe the method used to choose individuals who accurately reflect the demographic and experience range of music majors at HBCUs. This chapter also emphasizes the importance of performing the study in the dynamic and culturally diverse context of an HBCU. This environment is rich in cultural camaraderie and has a long-standing tradition of musical achievement, which is expected to influence the study's results significantly. Developing significant findings that can influence practices and policies at HBCUs and beyond is key. The number of participants is selected to enable a more detailed examination of individual experiences.

Design

This research adopts a qualitative case study approach to delve into the effects of MPA on college music majors at an HBCU. Opting for a qualitative methodology allows an in-depth exploration of non-quantifiable data, capturing participants' rich, detailed perspectives, lived experiences, and insights.¹ This approach is especially suited to examining the complex interplay of factors influencing MPA, a topic that has seen limited exploration in existing scholarly literature. Qualitative research distinguishes itself through its capacity to enable researchers to

¹ John W Creswell and Cheryl N Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2018), 44.

immerse themselves in subjects' lived experiences through various mediums like interviews, field notes, and recordings. Therefore, this study leverages qualitative research's interpretive and material practices to bring new insights into how MPA affects college music majors at an HBCU.²

Data collection in this study comprises both survey questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, offering a multifaceted view of the participants' experiences with MPA. The participants, five non-White male college music majors attending an HBCU aged between 18 and 22, provide insight into their perceptions of MPA and their coping strategies through responses to nine open-ended questions framed around a five-point Likert scale. This scale, created by Rensis Likert in 1932, serves as a tool for assessing attitudes by gauging levels of agreement or disagreement with presented statements, thus offering quantifiable insights into subjective experiences.³ Understanding the Likert scale's historical context and its application in the study underscores its significance in translating complex, subjective attitudes into analyzable data. This scale's use in the study facilitates a structured understanding of participants' attitudes toward MPA and their coping mechanisms, enriching the qualitative data with quantifiable insights. Through this methodological approach, the researcher aims to contribute meaningful, previously uncharted insights into the phenomenon of MPA among college music majors at HBCUs, offering potential pathways for further research and intervention.

Questions and Hypotheses

The researcher addresses the following research questions and hypotheses in this study:

² Norman K Denzin and Yvonna S Lincoln, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005), 3.

³ Gail M. Sullivan and Anthony R. Artino, "Analyzing and Interpreting Data from Likert-Type Scales," *Journal of Graduate Medical Education* 5, no. 4 (December 5, 2013): 541.

RQ1: What are the symptoms of music performance anxiety unique to college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities?

H1: Symptoms of music performance anxiety unique to college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities include emotions of nervousness, fear, and stress before, during, and after a performance.

RQ2: How do college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities overcome symptoms of music performance anxiety to perform effectively?

H2: College music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities can overcome symptoms of music performance anxiety to effectively perform by implementing performance strategies, social coping, and seeking professional assistance.

Participants

The researcher engaged five participants through convenience sampling. This non-probability sampling technique selects respondents based on their accessibility and participation readiness.⁴ The selected individuals are all students from Tennessee State University (TSU) located in Nashville, Tennessee, selected for the ease with which the researcher can approach potential participants. This ease of access is primarily due to the researcher's prior professional relationships and established rapport with the faculty at the university. Thus, convenience sampling emerges as the most practical approach for this research.

To be considered for this study, participants must adhere to the following eligibility criteria:

- Age requirement: each participant must be at least 18 years old.

⁴ John Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5th ed., (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishing Company, 2018), 140.

- Academic status: participants must be actively pursuing a music degree at an HBCU and currently enrolled.
- Academic standing: each participant must have passing grades and maintain a good standing within the music department.

Adhering to these criteria ensures the collection of reliable and relevant data, thereby enhancing the integrity of the research findings. Furthermore, the researcher collected demographic information from each individual to gain a comprehensive understanding of the participants' backgrounds; the information encompasses the gender, age range, educational level, the specific type and level of HBCU they are attending, and their duration of study in the music program. These details help to contextualize the study's findings and provide an understanding of the diverse experiences and perspectives of music majors at HBCUs. This methodical approach to participant selection and data collection aims to contribute valuable insights into the study's primary research questions.

Setting

The research methodology for this study includes conducting interviews over the phone utilizing the Rev Call Recorder application on the researcher's iPhone. This approach to data collection, centered around telecommunications, offers significant advantages in terms of flexibility regarding the scheduling of interviews and the geographical scope of data collection. By interviewing each student individually, the researcher ensures a focused and personalized interaction, allowing an in-depth exploration of each participant's experiences and perspectives.⁵ The recorded interviews were transcribed and analyzed, providing a rich dataset for the study.

⁵ Bojana Lobe, David Morgan, and Kim A. Hoffman, "Qualitative Data Collection in an Era of Social Distancing," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 19, no. 2 (January 1, 2020), 2.

The Benefits of Phone Interviews

One of the most significant benefits of phone interviews is the flexibility they offer.⁶ Interviewers may occasionally be unable to conduct face-to-face meetings and must instead depend on alternative methods such as telephone or email.⁷ Participants and researchers can engage in the study regardless of their physical location, making it easier to schedule interviews at convenient times for both parties. This flexibility is particularly advantageous when participants are spread across different time zones or have varying schedules. Conducting interviews over the phone can substantially reduce the costs associated with travel and venue arrangements for both the researcher and participants. This aspect makes phone interviews an economical choice for data collection, especially in studies with limited budgets.⁸

Participants might be more comfortable and less self-conscious during phone interviews, as the absence of a physical presence can reduce the pressure and anxiety associated with face-to-face interactions. This comfort level can lead to more candid responses and a willingness to share personal experiences.⁹ Phone interviews can be more accessible for participants with mobility issues or who cannot travel to a specific location for an in-person interview. This method ensures that more participants can contribute to the research, enhancing the study's inclusivity.¹⁰

⁶ Laurie Drabble et al., "Conducting Qualitative Interviews by Telephone: Lessons Learned from a Study of Alcohol Use among Sexual Minority and Heterosexual Women," *Qualitative Social Work: Research and Practice* 15, no. 1 (May 14, 2015): 10.

⁷ Irving Seidman, *Interviewing as Qualitative Research : A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*, 3rd ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2013), 47.

⁸ Drabble et al., "Conducting Qualitative Interviews by Telephone," 2.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

The Disadvantages of Phone Interviews

The difficulties in establishing rapport, the inability to react to visual cues, and the possible loss of contextual data (e.g., the ability to observe the individual in a work or home environment) are among the most frequently voiced concerns regarding telephone interviews.¹¹ One of the main disadvantages of phone interviews is the absence of visual cues, such as body language and facial expressions. This limitation can make it more challenging for researchers to interpret the participants' emotions and reactions, potentially impacting the depth of qualitative analysis. Establishing a rapport with participants can also be more challenging over the phone, as the personal connection developed through face-to-face interactions becomes complicated. This limitation can impact the depth of the conversation and the level of detail that participants are willing to share.

Dependence on technology means that phone interviews are susceptible to technical difficulties, such as poor signal quality, dropped calls, or issues with recording equipment. Concerns regarding the technology employed can overshadow mobile phone interviews; for instance, the inability to regulate the quality of participants' network coverage may pose a challenge.¹² These problems can interrupt the flow of conversation and affect the quality of the data collected. Phone interviews may also be more prone to distractions: participants are not in a controlled environment. Background noise, interruptions, or multitasking during the call can detract from the interview's focus and quality.¹³

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Azadé Azad et al., "Conducting In-Depth Interviews via Mobile Phone with Persons with Common Mental Disorders and Multimorbidity: The Challenges and Advantages as Experienced by Participants and Researchers," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18, no. 22 (November 11, 2021): 8.

¹³ Azad et al., "Conducting In-Depth Interviews," 6.

Focus groups, telephone interviews, and in-person interviews are all used by researchers to gather information for qualitative research projects. These interviews are designed to get viewpoints and ideas from the participants and consist of a limited number of unstructured, open-ended questions.¹⁴ While phone interviews offer a range of benefits regarding flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and accessibility, they also present challenges. This includes the lack of non-verbal cues, potential technical difficulties, distractions, and limitations on rapport building. Carefully considering these factors should inform the decision to use phone interviews in the context of the research objectives and the study's specific needs.¹⁵

Data Collection Method

Every effort will be made to ensure that interviews remain confidential despite the fact that phone interactions are remote in nature. The researcher is committed to creating an environment where participants feel secure in sharing their experiences, knowing that their anonymity and the integrity of their responses are safeguarded. Developing the interview questions was meticulous to ensure that each question contributed meaningfully to the investigation. The questions were crafted to align directly with the study's central problem statement, its objectives, and the specific research questions it seeks to answer. This alignment was crucial for maintaining the focus of the study and ensuring that the data collected would be relevant and capable of contributing insight into the research problem.

¹⁴ John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative & Mixed Methods Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 168.

¹⁵ Drabble et al., "Conducting Qualitative Interviews by Telephone," 2.

Survey Instrument

The researcher developed the survey instrument for this case study. It consists of a list of demographic questions followed by a series of five-point Likert-scale survey questions in the main section presented by the researcher. In the first section, participants are asked about their age, gender, class standing, major area of study, the number of years they have received formal music training, and how frequently they perform music in public settings. These questions aim to gather basic demographic information and understand the participant's background in music. The Music Performance Anxiety Survey section delves into the participants' experiences with MPA. The questions explore how often participants feel anxious or nervous about performing music in front of others, whether this anxiety affects their performance, and if cultural factors at their HBCU influence their level of anxiety. Participants are also asked if they believe more practice and preparation help reduce their anxiety, if they feel their HBCU offers sufficient resources and support for managing MPA, and if being a minority influences their MPA experience. Additionally, the survey seeks to understand if MPA leads participants to avoid performance opportunities and how MPA affects their relationships with peers and instructors. Finally, it asks if attending an HBCU impacts their experience with performance anxiety differently compared to attending larger public institutions. This comprehensive set of questions is designed to capture various insights into how MPA affects music majors at HBCUs.

Interview Questions

The researcher also formulated the interview questions. The interview questions are designed to explore various aspects of MPA among students at HBCUs, starting with an introduction to personal experiences and definitions of MPA. Participants are asked to share their personal encounters with MPA and how they define it, including any symptoms they associate

with the condition. The next set of questions delves into the culture at HBCUs, specifically within the music department. Interviewees are prompted to describe the culture and how it might differ from non-HBCUs. They are also asked about the impact of HBCU culture on their experiences with MPA and whether some cultural practices or traditions affect their anxiety levels before performances. The discussion then shifts to the support and resources available for managing MPA at HBCUs. Questions focus on the types of resources or support systems in place, interaction with these resources, and whether cultural elements within the HBCU foster an understanding and supportive environment for dealing with MPA. Participants are also asked about the responses of peers and faculty to MPA and to share any experiences that underscore the role of culture in addressing MPA at their institution. Finally, the interview examines performance opportunities and challenges, asking how these relate to MPA and whether specific cultural events or practices at the HBCU influence comfort levels with performance. Participants are encouraged to offer suggestions for addressing MPA within the HBCU cultural context and to discuss ways the music department and the HBCU could incorporate cultural elements to assist students with MPA. This comprehensive set of questions aims to capture a complete view of MPA experiences within the unique cultural and educational environment of HBCUs.

Procedures

The researcher applied to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Liberty University, adhering to a crucial step in ensuring the ethical conduct of the study. The IRB functions as a committee within universities or other research-conducting organizations that receive federal funding. Its primary role is to review research proposals to ascertain their compliance with ethical principles and federal regulations to protect human subjects involved in research. The IRB can approve, reject, or request modifications to research projects to ensure they meet ethical

standards. IRB approval information for this research is available in Appendices A and B of this document. This study necessitated an IRB review due to its direct interaction with human subjects and the collection of personal data through recordings. Following approval from the Liberty University IRB, the researcher proceeded with the recruitment and data collection processes delineated in the research plan.

Recruitment

The recruitment process involved undergraduate music students at TSU, with five students ultimately participating in the research. At the recruitment event, the students were provided with consent forms. They were required to sign as an indication of their voluntary agreement to participate in the study. The consent form contains detailed information about the study, emphasizing that participation was voluntary and that the students could withdraw at any moment without impacting their academic standing. The researcher thoroughly explained the study's requirements to ensure the participants were fully informed. Each participant consented to be recorded during phone interview sessions, where they responded to a series of questions. Additionally, they completed Likert-scale surveys comprising twelve questions designed to assess various aspects of their experience and perspectives.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Several measures are implemented to uphold the privacy and confidentiality of the participants. All identifying information is kept confidential, and participants are assigned pseudonyms in all research documentation and the final thesis. This approach safeguards their anonymity and protects sensitive information. Furthermore, to ensure the security of the collected data, it is stored in an encrypted file with password protection. This file is scheduled for deletion on April 1, 2027, as an additional measure to guarantee the long-term confidentiality of

the participant's information. It is important to note that participants received no financial compensation for their involvement in the study, reinforcing the voluntary nature of their participation. These procedures, from IRB approval to participant recruitment and data protection, highlight the researcher's commitment to ethical research practices, participants' privacy, and the integrity of the study's findings.

Researcher Positionality

Positionality is a central concept in research, referring to the unique perspective and stance the researcher brings to a study, shaped by their own social, cultural, and political contexts. It discloses the researcher's relationship with the study's setting, including the community, organization, or participant group involved.¹⁶ In this case, the researcher is an African American male with a history of navigating MPA personally and professionally as an undergraduate piano performance major at Stillman College, a southern HBCU. This personal experience with MPA provides the researcher with a deeply empathetic understanding of participants' challenges. It offers a unique lens through which the researcher views the study, informed by lived experience and academic inquiry. This dual perspective enriches the researcher's approach, enabling a subtle exploration of MPA within the context of HBCUs.

Moreover, the researcher acknowledges his ongoing journey of learning about MPA. Open to exploring new ideas, thoughts, and methodologies in the field; he aims to contribute to developing strategies and interventions that can assist others in overcoming this condition. This openness to learning and adaptation underscores the dynamic nature of research and the importance of remaining receptive to evolving insights and understandings.

¹⁶ David Coghlan and Mary Brydon-Miller, "The SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research," *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research* 1-2, no. 1 (2014), 2.

The researcher's role in this study is manifold. As a former student who has navigated challenges like those of the participants, he brings insight and empathy to the research process. His position involves observing, reflecting, and asking questions that probe deeply into the experiences of music majors dealing with MPA. This approach is grounded in a commitment to developing practical tools, processes, and literature reviews that reflect the ongoing changes and discoveries in the field of MPA research. The researcher's positionality inevitably influences his interpretation of the qualitative data collected. However, this unique perspective has the potential to significantly contribute to the broader understanding of how MPA impacts music majors at HBCUs nationwide. Through this lens, the researcher aims to uncover findings that advance academic knowledge and offer practical implications for supporting students in managing and overcoming MPA.

Data Analysis

The researcher employed a two-pronged data collection approach in this qualitative case study, utilizing semi-structured interviews and printed questionnaires. The questionnaires were designed with a five-point Likert scale, offering responses from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," with options to minimize response bias by listing negative choices first. This design choice was aimed at encouraging thoughtful participant responses. Following data collection, the researcher transcribed the interviews for detailed analysis. Utilizing NVivo 14, a software widely used in academic research, allowed for efficient coding and thematic analysis of the collected data. NVivo's capabilities facilitated the identification of significant patterns and themes within the responses. To enrich the analysis further, the researcher compared interview findings against the questionnaire responses, employing Microsoft Excel for data recording and organization.

This methodical approach to data analysis, leveraging both NVivo and Excel, will ensure a thorough examination of the data, aiming to uncover nuanced insights into the research topic.

Summary

This qualitative case study aims to uncover unexplored perspectives on the experiences and perceptions of music majors at HBCUs regarding MPA. The research involved recruiting five participants for data collection through semi-structured interviews. Adherence to stringent ethical guidelines ensures the confidentiality and privacy of participant information. This chapter provides the study's methodological framework, detailing the design, research questions, and hypotheses that guided the investigation. It also covers vital areas such as the study's context, the criteria for participant selection, the instruments used for data collection, and the procedural steps undertaken. A comprehensive plan for data analysis is outlined, laying the groundwork for Chapter Four, which presents the study's findings.

Chapter Four: Results

Introduction

This research focuses on the effects of MPA on music majors attending HBCUs and its unique symptoms. In a society striving to transcend racial division, understanding how MPA affects minority students is critical. Acknowledging the literary gap in this area is an advancement toward developing solutions to improve the quality of assistance available at these institutions. The research questions presented for the study by the researcher are:

RQ1: What are the symptoms of music performance anxiety unique to college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities?

RQ2: How do college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities overcome symptoms of music performance anxiety to perform effectively?

This qualitative case study aims to recognize new perspectives on the experiences and perceptions of music majors at HBCUs, independent of the perspective of PWIs. After collecting consent forms and distributing printed surveys, the researcher conducted interviews over the phone. This chapter will outline the study's findings and discuss the key themes identified through qualitative analysis.

Survey Results

Created in Microsoft Word and distributed to five randomly selected participants, the survey consists of nine questions investigating MPA among music majors at a Historically Black University. The researcher is conducting this case study using students at Tennessee State University. TSU, founded in 1912, is Tennessee's sole state funded land-grant HBCU. The most

recently reported statistics on student enrollment by race identify TSU as 74 % Black, 15 % White, and 2 % Hispanic.¹

The researcher distributed printed surveys to ten music majors at a recruitment event. The researcher randomly selected five of the ten students who completed surveys and consent forms for phone interviews. The survey aims to explore the potential influence of race and culture on these students, acknowledging the unique educational and cultural environments of HBCUs. The researcher ultimately seeks to uncover how racial and cultural identities might intersect with MPA. This data is recorded in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Participant Survey Results by Question

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q1	2	1	0	1	1
Q2	2	1	1	1	0
Q3	2	2	0	1	0
Q4	0	0	0	2	3
Q5	0	0	3	2	0
Q6	1	0	2	2	0
Q7	2	2	1	1	0
Q8	1	1	3	0	0
Q9	0	1	2	1	1

Table 1 provides an overview of the responses made by all five participants in the survey. Each column represents a different degree of response on the Likert scale. The rows beneath the

¹ Tennessee State University Enrollment by Race: University Enrollment Fall 2017 –Spring 2022.

header present nine questions. The numbers on the table represent how many respondents replied with a particular Likert-style response to each question.

The survey's first question asks participants, "I often feel anxious or nervous about performing music in front of others." Analysis of the completed responses revealed that 40% of the participants strongly disagree with feeling anxious, 20% disagree, none were neutral, and the remaining 40% felt anxiety to varying degrees (20% agree and 20% strongly agree). Figure 1 highlights that most respondents (60%) do not frequently experience MPA, indicating a general confidence among the group when performing publicly.

In a recent study by Sun, minority students perceived stress and coping mechanisms are recognized and examined, along with the social and emotional support required to manage stress that arises from societal causes. The results of Sun's study suggest that the stigma surrounding mental health could be contributing to mixed responses to the first survey question.²

² Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students," 27.

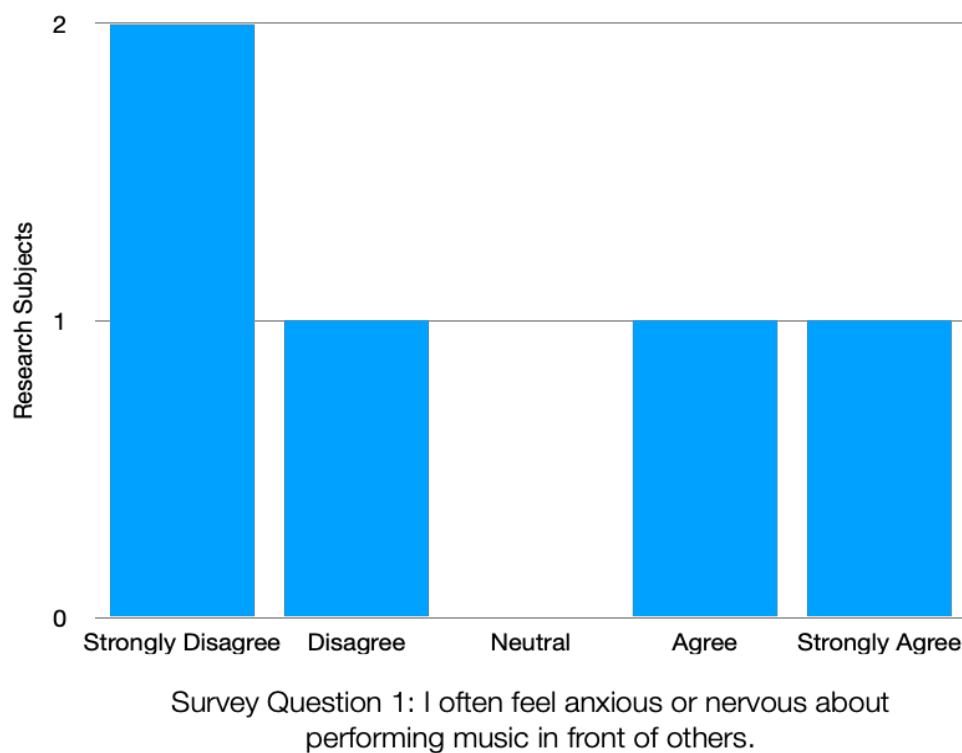


Figure 2. Survey Question One Results

The second survey question investigates how MPA influences the overall ability of musicians to perform, asking, “My anxiety about performing negatively impacts my overall performance.” The findings show varied experiences: 40% strongly disagree, indicating they do not feel anxiety affects their performance, while 20% disagree, and another 20% are neutral, showing mixed feelings. The last 20% agree, recognizing that anxiety does negatively affect their performance. Participant C, who disagrees, believes that they do not feel anxious while performing and had this to say during their phone interview:

Researcher: Describe any personal experiences with music performance anxiety.

PC: I usually don't get it. But I kind of get it. I mean, anxiety when performing. I mean, it's not really a big issue because most of the time when I'm up and performing, most people say you look very confident in what you're doing. I believe you can get over that. When you know when you're practicing, you're more prepared, and you're just really confident in what you're doing.

The account of Participant C may not necessarily demonstrate a complete absence of MPA but rather a lack of awareness regarding the disorder, a state of denial, or effective use of strategies that minimize its impact on their performance.

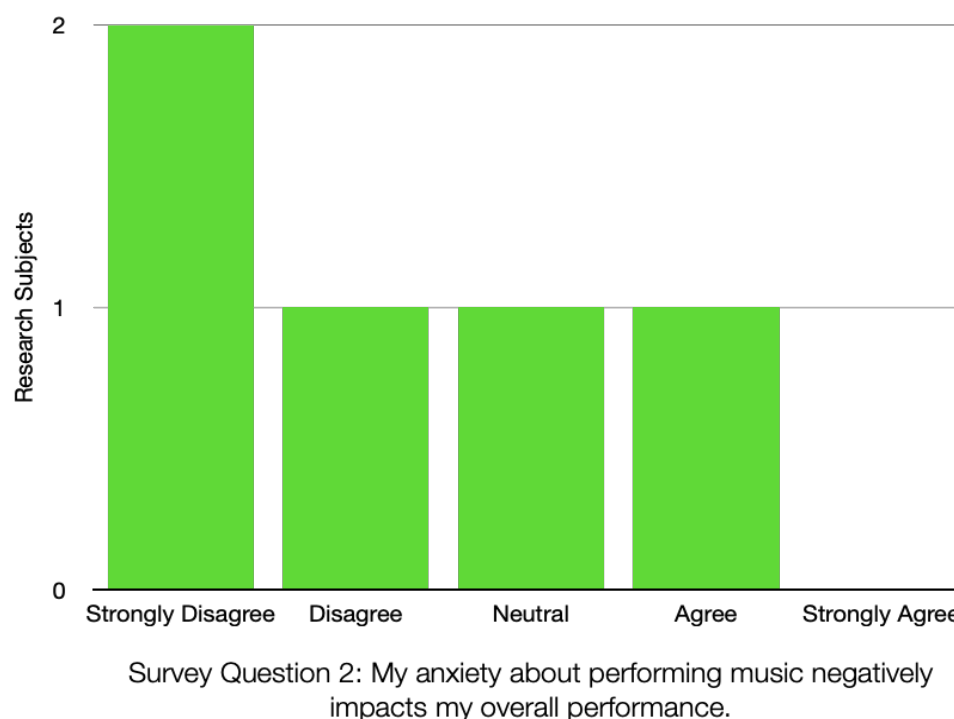


Figure 3. Survey Question Two Results

Survey question three examines whether cultural factors influence MPA at HBCUs. A minority, 20%, disagrees that cultural factors impact their MPA, with an even split of 40% neutral and 40% agreeing. The results suggest that most students associate cultural elements as a significant source of their performance anxiety, which in turn is a unique experience of MPA at an HBCU. Interview responses indicate these cultural factors include, but are not limited to, the challenges of executing complex, culturally diverse musical numbers.

PC: The culture here is that at my HBCU here at Tennessee State, we get a lot of opportunities, especially in the band. The band is part of the music department. We get a lot of opportunities from going to the Rose Bowl Parade in 2020, going into 2022 and going and winning the two Grammys for the Tennessee State Aristocrat of Bands (AOB). Honestly, its more about opportunities and the way the culture is run. The staff around

the music department really pushes us to get that experience so that we are prepared for the real world, and they're trying to really set us up for success in our future careers. So, I really think the culture is more of a driving type of culture with you really digging deep into your craft and really trying to learn the literature of music.

the resilience required to navigate life as a minority in a society that presents itself as post-racial,

PC: I'm going to be completely honest about the culture here. Here, you see a lot more familiar faces. Most of the time, we see a lot more people like us. And so, with that being said, we relate more, I guess, and we understand each other more. And when you see somebody else doing that, a familiar face, such as you, it makes you want to do it. And then we really want you to strive. And then also in this culture, something I learned is that you really have to dig down deep in your craft and really learn for yourself because, at a non-HBCU, most of the time the resources are really there for you to actually be successful more than at an HBCU.

and the daunting legacy of excellence upheld by alumni and the broader community.

PB: Yes, it'll be every Homecoming. Everybody's just on edge in a way. It's just nerve-racking because you know the whole crowd is alumni and friends of alumni. The whole crowd is like everybody who has ever attended. And that's when everybody expects the best of the best.

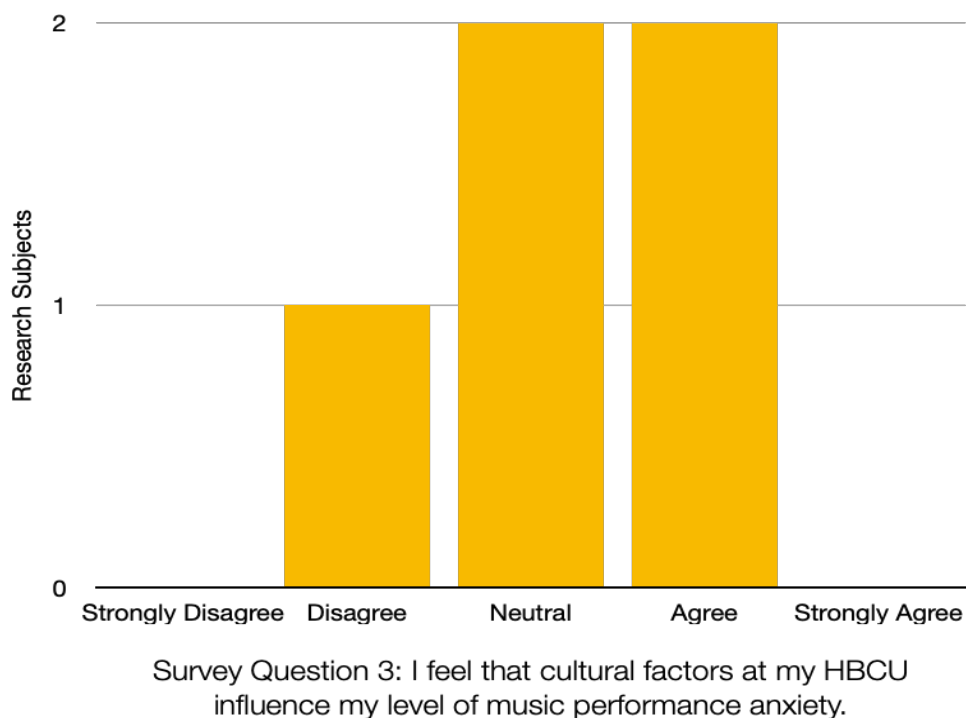


Figure 4. Survey Question Three Results

Question four inquires whether participants feel their “music performance anxiety improves with more practice and preparation.” The majority aligns, with 40% agreeing and 60% strongly agreeing, indicating a strong belief in the benefits of preparation. These results also align with Papageorgi, Hallam and Welch’s findings: they highlight how inadequate preparation, low confidence in memorization, and choosing too difficult repertoire increase the fear of failure and amplify MPA.³

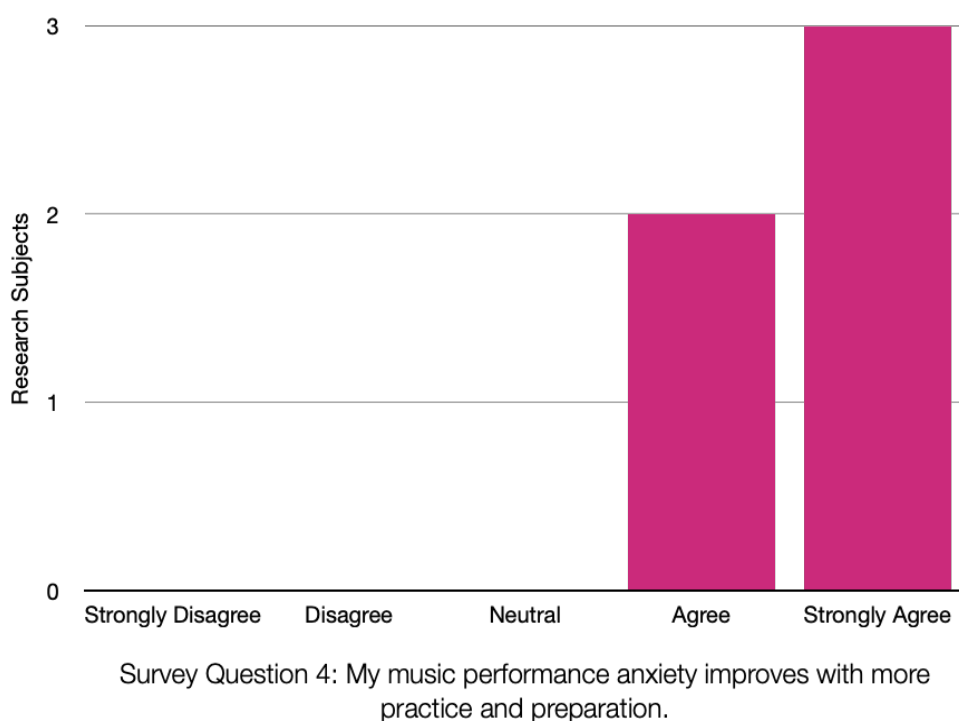


Figure 5. Survey Question Four Results

The fifth survey question asks participants about resources and support for MPA at their HBCU. The survey results show various opinions regarding the availability of support for MPA at HBCUs, with three respondents selecting neutral and two agreeing that their needs are well

³ Papageorgi, Hallam, and Welch “A Conceptual Framework,” 89.

addressed. A neutral response implies a lack of information or strong attitudes regarding the available resources, whereas the number of respondents who agree indicates that some feel supported.

The researcher notes that a reluctance to critique the institution, which participants hold in high regard, could influence their responses. This potential bias towards protecting the university might lead to an underreporting of dissatisfaction with the available resources and support for MPA. Ultimately, this situation presents an opportunity for HBCUs to critically assess and expand their existing resources to effectively address MPA, encouraging communication in an environment where every student feels supported in managing this disorder.

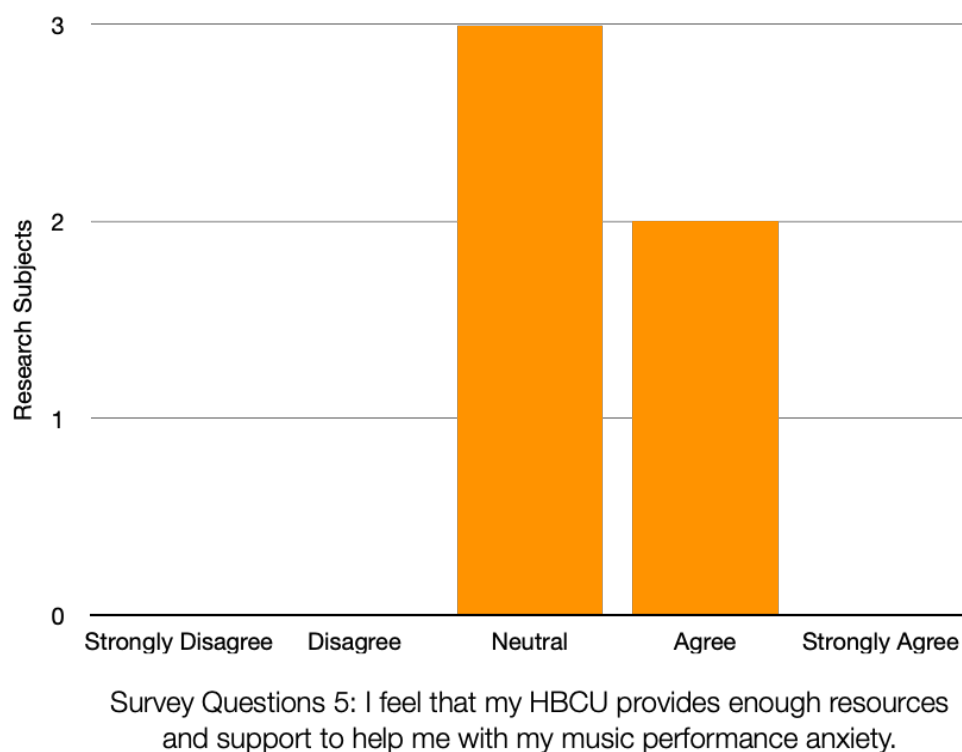


Figure 6. Survey Question Five Results

The survey results of question six regarding the connection between minority status and MPA show a varied perspective among five participants: two are neutral, two agree that their minority status contributes to their anxiety, and one strongly disagrees that minority influence affects their anxiety. Two respondents, Participants B and C, agree and highlight the same significant impact of minority status on the experience of MPA. Correlating their respective interview responses with responses to the survey question provides more details:

Researcher: Can you share any specific interactions or experiences that highlight the influence of culture on music performance anxiety at your HBCU?

PB: Yes, it'll be every Homecoming. Everybody's just on edge in a way. It's just nerve-racking because, as you know, the whole crowd is alumni and friends of alumni. The whole crowd is like everybody who has ever attended. And that's when everybody expects the best of the best. I feel like you only experience that at an HBCU because of the magnitude of people that come by to see the band and to see football.

An excerpt from Participant C's interview highlights the ethnocultural influences of MPA:

Researcher: Can you give any examples of how the culture of your HBCU might be different from that of a non-HBCU?

PC: I'm going to be completely honest about the culture here. Here, you see a lot more familiar faces. Most of the time, we see a lot more people like us. And so, with that being said, we relate more, I guess, and we understand each other more. And when you see somebody else doing that, a familiar face, such as you, it makes you want to do it. And then we really want you to strive. And then also in this culture, something I learned is that you really have to dig down deep in your craft and really learn for yourself because, at a non-HBCU, most of the time the resources are really there for you to actually be successful more than at an HBCU.

Additional research in the MPA study field should investigate the extent of minority influence on MPA, considering more diverse experiences and perspectives than are currently available.

Understanding these dynamics can help create specialized support at HBCUs, guaranteeing that all students have the necessary resources regardless of their ethnocultural status.

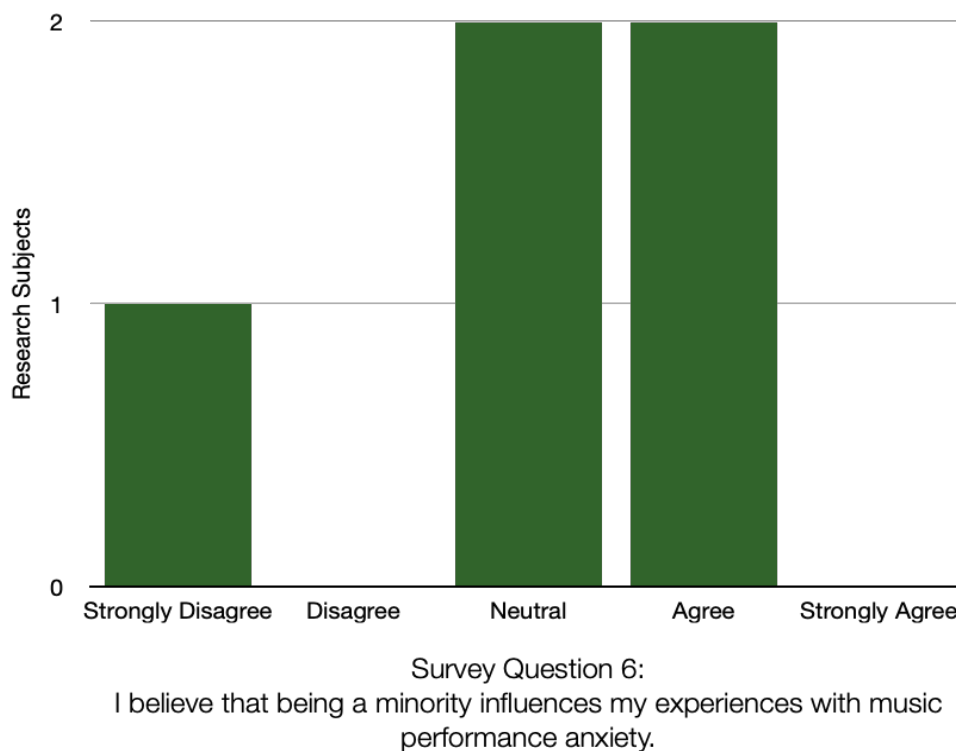


Figure 7. Survey Question Six Results

Responses to the seventh survey question, which investigates the avoidance of music performances due to MPA, reveal a predominantly negative association between MPA and avoidance behavior among the participants. With two respondents strongly disagreeing and another two disagreeing, the majority indicate that they do not avoid music performance opportunities because of anxiety. Responses from Participant C, again, offer insight:

Researcher: Describe any personal experiences with music performance anxiety.

PC: I mean, it's not really a big issue because most of the time when I'm up and performing, most people say you look very confident in what you're doing. I believe you can get over that. When you know when you're practicing, you're more prepared and you're just really confident in what you're doing.

As the interview progresses, Participant C continues:

Researcher: How do your peers and faculty within the HBCU respond to or recognize music performance anxiety?

PC: ...we see the same people almost every single day. And when you have a connection with those people, they can elevate your confidence and really get rid of that anxiety. You know, you see these people every day. So now you just go in, and you're playing for them. So, there's really no anxiety at all. Some people still get it, but. You know, it's kind of like with performing. I'll just say be confident in what you're doing because we have a lot of talented musicians within our music department.

The researcher notes that the belief in confidence alone can diminish MPA and overlooks the role of skill development in managing anxiety symptoms. The practice of “behavioral masking,” a psychological technique where individuals project confidence to conceal their internal anxiety, often observed in autism, illustrates this process.⁴ This behavior might cause the false impression that MPA is under control since it conceals the outward signs. However, relying solely on the facade without addressing the root causes of MPA can exacerbate the problem, leaving students unequipped to deal with the underlying symptoms effectively.

⁴ Blythe A. Corbett et al., “Camouflaging in Autism: Examining Sex-Based and Compensatory Models in Social Cognition and Communication,” *Autism Research* 14, no. 1 (November 21, 2020), 128.

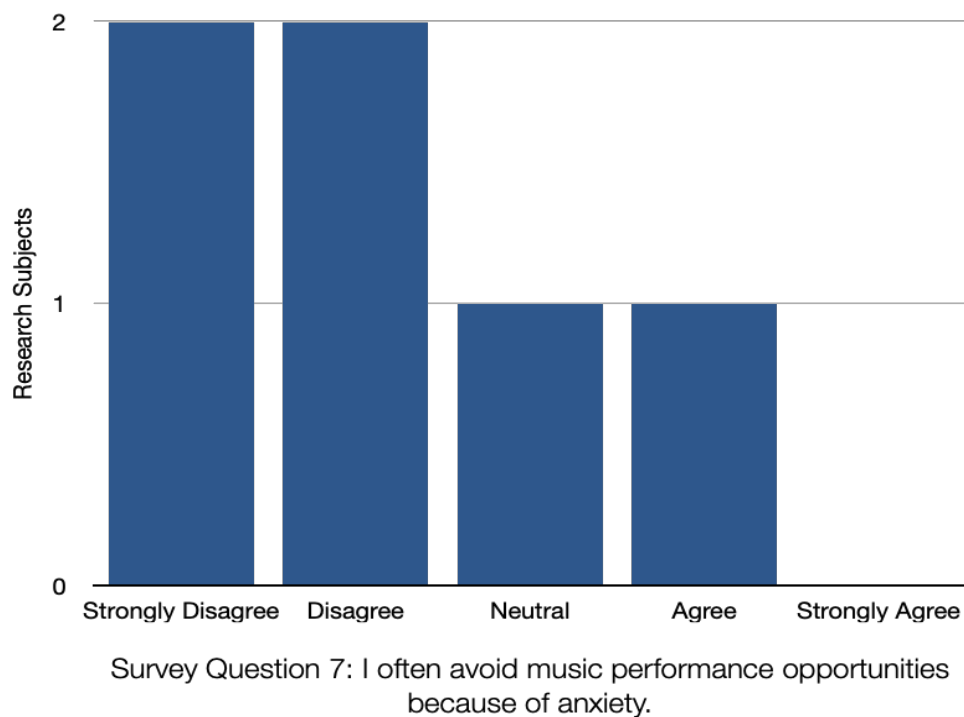


Figure 8. Survey Question Seven Results

The responses to the question about the impact of MPA on relationships with peers and instructors at an HBCU offer insights into the various perceptions of the subject. One respondent strongly disagrees, and another disagrees with the statement, indicating that these individuals do not perceive their MPA as affecting their relationships within their academic environment. This result implies that individuals either manage anxiety without it affecting their connections or fail to recognize a clear connection between their anxiety and their relationships. The three neutral responses indicate a high level of uncertainty (60%) around the impact of anxiety on their relationships, suggesting that these individuals might not have observed an apparent influence or are unsure about the extent of any effect.

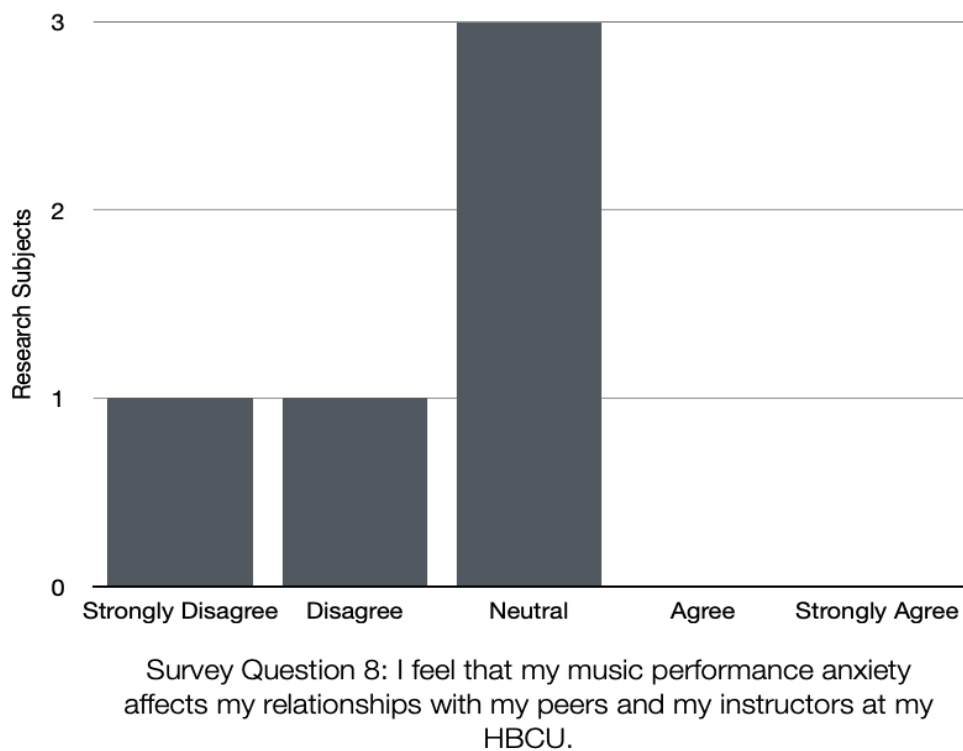


Figure 9. Survey Question Eight Results

Question nine asks: “I believe that attending an HBCU has a unique impact on my experience with performance anxiety compared to larger public institutions.” Three respondents are neutral; two agree with the statement, acknowledging that their MPA influences their interactions and connections with peers and instructors. One respondent disagrees. The instances of agreement indicate a recognition of the broader social and academic effects of MPA beyond personal stress or performance challenges. The results highlight the diverse ways MPA can permeate aspects of students’ academic and social lives, emphasizing the need for comprehensive support systems that address the performance aspect and the interpersonal dynamics affected by MPA within educational environments.

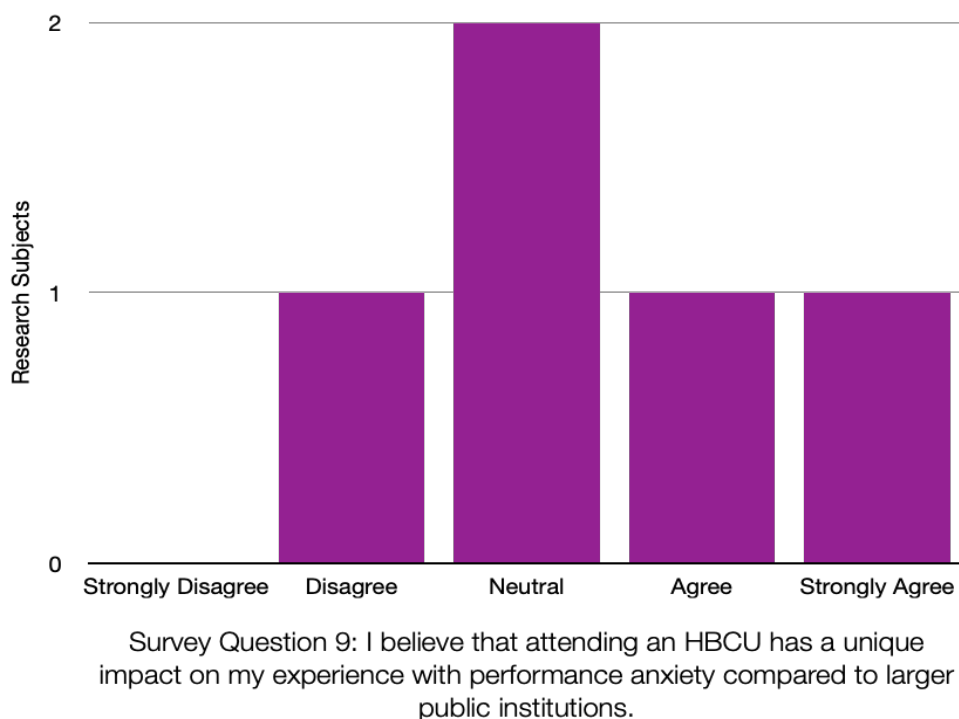


Figure 10. Survey Question Nine Results

Interview Responses

The researcher interviewed five respondents, randomly selected from ten music majors at Tennessee State University in Nashville. The researchers conducted interviews with students over the telephone and recorded their responses. The researcher transcribed the interviews and applied thematic coding using the NVivo 14 program. The researcher identified and documented quotes aligned with the theme codes during the transcript review. The researcher independently coded each transcript and subsequently grouped and classified the codes into themes based on their similarities. This systematic approach allowed for an intimate understanding of the participant's perspectives regarding MPA.

Table 2 presents the identified qualitative data themes. The subject corresponding to research question one (RQ1) is “Unique symptoms of MPA among HBCU students.” The theme related to question two (RQ2) is “Overcoming MPA at an HBCU.”

Table 2. Research Questions with Associated Themes and Codes from Interviews

Research Question	Theme	Codes	References
RQ1: What are the symptoms of music performance anxiety unique to college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities?	Unique MPA symptoms at HBCUs	Feelings of nervousness ; anxiety	9
		Physical symptoms like sweating, shaking and uneasiness.	3
		The pressure to succeed either from music faculty, alumni, the legacy of the institution or the public at large.	6
		Heightened emotion ; passion; alertness/awareness	2
		Lack of confidence /lack of preparation	3
RQ 2: How do college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities overcome symptoms of music performance anxiety to perform effectively?	Overcoming MPA at HBCUs	Faculty support , including counselors and mental health professionals	3
		Peer support /verbal affirmation from friends and bandmates; affirming relationships.	3
		Adaptation ; channeling the feelings of MPA into increased awareness; harnessing MPA.	4

Interview Results

Responses Related to Research Question One

RQ1 asks, “What are the symptoms of music performance anxiety unique to college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities?” One significant theme developed from RQ1 is “Unique MPA Symptoms at HBCUs.” The researcher created a total of

seven codes from this theme. The top five codes identified for use in this research are:

“Nervousness,” “Physical Symptoms,” “The Pressure to Succeed,” “Heightened Emotion,” and “Lack of Confidence.”

Nervousness

Nervousness often manifests as feelings of tension, anxiety, fear, or dread.⁵ Three of five participants describe experiencing this symptom during interviews. Participant B describes nervousness as an “anxious feeling deep inside you.” Participant D mentions, “it’s like, oh my gosh, nervous, you know. But that’s at least how I feel nervous.” Participant E adds: “[MPA] made me a lot more nervous and kind of maybe gave me a little bit of anxiety when it came to being on a stage and playing.” Nervousness and its related themes are coded nine times throughout five interviews, the most occurrences of any of the thematic codes. The theme of nervousness also correlates directly with questions seven and eight of the survey:

7. I often feel anxious or nervous about performing music in front of others.
8. My anxiety about performing music negatively impacts my overall performance.

The researcher notes that the interview format provided a more comfortable backdrop for thoughtful reflection than the survey’s restrictions. The open-ended nature of the interviews likely facilitated deeper insights into participants’ experiences and perspectives, underscoring the significance of a two-pronged approach to gathering more comprehensive data. The researcher also notes that participants recorded the survey responses well before the interviews, before they had any personal interaction with the researcher or gained a deeper understanding of the research project. Participant B is the only participant who agrees with experiencing nervousness in their interview and survey responses. This inconsistency in participant reactions prompts the

⁵ Sokoli, “Classical Music,” 3.

researcher to speculate that admitting to nervousness may induce nervousness in participants, influencing their responses. This finding highlights the complex relationship between self-awareness, social dynamics, and the sincere disclosure of emotions in research settings.

Physical Symptoms

Members of minority groups may develop symptoms of social phobia because of the scrutiny they face from others. A physiological arousal of anxiety symptoms may develop because of the excessive scrutiny that they perceive as a threat. They may also engage in negative self-reflection or criticism due to internalized racial stigma. Colleges are especially susceptible to bias-related issues. Minority students, especially African Americans, often face visible societal antagonism, disrespect, or negative stereotyping.⁶

A performer's preoccupation with how others perceive their performance may hinder the joyful experience of creating music. Physiological symptoms can manifest. These symptoms include increased heart rate, muscle tension, difficulty breathing, impaired vision, and dizziness.⁷ Some describe experiencing intense sensations induced by the release of adrenaline into the bloodstream. These sensations include a churning stomach, sweaty hands, parched mouth, and shaking.⁸

When participants are asked, "How would you define music performance anxiety, and what symptoms do you associate with it?" The responses mention physical symptoms only three times; however, they list various physical symptoms. Participant A mentions gastro-intestinal

⁶ Johnson, "Performance Anxiety," 33.

⁷ Dianna T. Kenny and Naomi Halls, "Development and Evaluation of Two Brief Group Interventions for Music Performance Anxiety in Community Musicians," *Psychology of Music* 46, no. 1 (May 17, 2017): 67.

⁸ Dianna T. Kenny, *Music Performance Anxiety: Theory, Assessment and Treatment* (Deutschland, Germany: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2016), 7.

and other symptoms: “Me, you know, I get a little “not easy” feeling in my stomach. You know, my heart starts to beat a little fast, and then my hands get really sweaty.” The list of physiological symptoms continues with the response of Participant D, “Um, like probably like shaking, you know, like a hand shaking, like, uh, something hurting maybe, you know, stuff like that. You have to use the bathroom. Yeah, stuff like that.” Participant E shares, “Some people maybe get really hot or maybe get really sweaty and stuff like that. Maybe the regular things with anxiety just get tight. Maybe they can’t breathe as well and stuff like that.”

Pharmaceuticals can manage physiological symptoms, but certain medications, like benzodiazepines, can quickly become addictive. Furthermore, drugs that lessen physiological symptoms do not lessen cognitive anxiety; that is, they do not lessen dread or low self-esteem-related thoughts. Because they reduce the feeling of self-efficacy and lead to external attributions, they may, therefore, introduce an anxiety-inducing element.⁹

The Pressure to Succeed

When asked about the cultural differences between an HBCU and a non-HBCU, most participants respond positively about their decision to enroll, some alluding to the interplay between the desire to succeed versus the pressure to succeed. Note the excerpt from the interview with Participant E expressing the pressures of a legacy of excellence at an HBCU:

Researcher: How would you describe the culture at your HBCU, especially within the music department?

PE: Very strong and rich, very broad culture. And very old culture too.

Researcher: Good. So, can you give an example of how the culture at your HBCU might be different from other non-HBCUs?

PE: Yeah, like I would say like the membership in our band. I feel like it means a lot more at HBCUs than it does at like non-HBCUs. I would think that a lot of the way its

⁹ Kaleńska-Rodzaj, “Music Performance Anxiety,” 1766.

run is very differently. We have to operate in a more different way. In the end, yeah, I think that's what I could think about right now.

Researcher: Okay. That's good. All right. Question number five. In what ways, if any, do you feel the culture at your HBCU influences or impacts your experiences with music performance anxiety?

PE: I think that one way is like the expectation that the culture will bring to it. Like say like, you know, as an HBCU marching band. Being in front of an HBCU crowd, especially since TSU doesn't really go against a lot of HBCUs in football, but like this last like Homecoming against Norfolk. We were actually against another HBCU, and that culture is a lot more, you know, widespread and more, you know, direct with us. The expectation that is set upon being, you know, face to face with another HBCU could bring a lot of anxiety too, especially for, you know, a band that doesn't really go against a lot of HBCUs. So, like maybe the expectation isn't as high for the band. Of course, expectations are always high, but like the mental expectations for like the personal self. Like it's not as high for some people. If we were going against like a school that's maybe not well known or like a PWI maybe, but going against an HBCU can bring, like, a lot of anxiety because of that expectation of performance that they're supposed to have.

Minority students, because of historical and socioeconomic issues, are more prone to stress and have a higher likelihood of needing psychological support compared to their White American counterparts.¹⁰ African American students are disproportionately affected. Occasions arise when they are the only members of their minority group and unjustly face the expectation to represent an entire racial group by providing the African American perspective.¹¹

At PWIs, minority students might experience a sense of excessive scrutiny from their peers or instructors, whom they perceive to be examining whether their admission was granted based on merit or ethnicity. African American students frequently face inconsiderate, subtle microaggressive slights that contribute to perpetuating feelings of inadequacy and diminished

¹⁰ Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students," 28.

¹¹ Johnson, "Performance Anxiety," 33.

self-esteem. African American pupils might develop symptoms of social phobia as a result.¹²

Participant D speaks positively of pressure as a motivator, saying,

Every time I go into class, it's always something different, something new, something challenging every single time. So that's just the culture that they built up because the program is such a rich program. And so, it has a standard to uphold, right? So that's the culture, I was ready to accept that culture. So that's why I went into the culture. And now I'm sitting here like, yes, it's definitely stressful to have a lot of stuff on your plate. At the same time, the culture makes you become better. It lifts you up so you can pass your own expectations.

The positive dynamic ingrained within the culture of HBCUs is more significant than maintaining a legacy; it encompasses a broader approach to education that values the individual's growth, resilience, and success. This culture, deeply rooted in the history and mission of HBCUs to empower minority students, provides a nurturing environment that contrasts with some student's experiences in non-HBCU settings. Non-HBCUs, while diverse and offering various supports, may not always provide the same level of cultural understanding of the specific challenges faced by minority students. This difference can significantly impact a student's ability to thrive. Choosing an HBCU transcends mere education; it involves finding a space where the educational journey affirms, celebrates, and integrates an individual's identity. Therefore, regardless of the pressure and challenges, the supportive and enriching culture of HBCUs plays a pivotal role in meeting and exceeding personal and academic expectations, affirming the decision to enroll in such institutions.

Heightened Emotion

Individuals in college may be susceptible to the detrimental effects of racism and stereotyping, which are still prevalent in higher education today. They are under more pressure than ever before to perform well in their development, making them more prone to the onset of

¹² Johnson, "Performance Anxiety," 33.

MPA.¹³ Two participants admit feeling overwhelmed or heightened emotions before or during a performance. Participant A admits:

Specifically, we have a weekly performance seminar, juries, and you have our yearly performance. We'll go up and perform in front of the whole seminar each week. That is always a big deal for a lot of people, including me, of course. So, I'll say that that's, where you really see and feel all the emotions that come with performance anxiety on a regular basis.

Participant E states, "When you get nervous, maybe before or during the performance, I would think that there are symptoms like maybe you get overwhelmed."

The difficulty in predicting and managing the emotional outcomes associated with MPA during performances arises from the fact that performers may pursue multiple emotional goals in one performance. MPA's impact on performance can vary, it can either hinder execution or, conversely, enhance it.¹⁴ This variability suggests that musicians can adopt diverse emotional strategies. While some may seek to harness and display anxiety to boost performance and gain audience empathy, others might prefer to internalize the anxiety to enhance performance while maintaining a calm exterior. Conversely, certain musicians might choose to outwardly display anxiety to evoke audience sympathy, ensuring it does not affect their performance internally. Meanwhile, some aim to completely exclude anxiety from their performance by neither feeling nor showing it.¹⁵

¹³ Johnson, "Performance Anxiety," 34.

¹⁴ Margaret S. Osborne, Brendan Munzel, and Katharine H. Greenaway, "Emotion Goals in Music Performance Anxiety," *Frontiers in Psychology* 11, no. 1138 (June 15, 2020), 3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Lack of Confidence

Musicians must feel entirely secure in their abilities to play and complete the challenge when performing. Careful and extensive musical and mental preparation is what encourages musicians facing a considerable performance to experience confidence and release themselves from fear of failure, concerns about errors, memory lapses, audience disapproval, or crippling embarrassment.¹⁶ The observations of Participant C highlight a challenge encountered by many minority music students, particularly in the context of formal academic or extracurricular performances: a lack of prior exposure to structured performance environments,

Most people tend to get anxiety, especially when it's just you and solo performance, maybe. I see most people get up there and you know, they're not, you could tell that they're not very confident in what they're doing. You could tell that they know the music, but they're really not comfortable in that setting because most people don't really get that experience.

This lack of exposure often results in unease or uncertainty when these students are required to engage in performances publicly. Many minority music students have reported having minimal musical training or study beyond their high school ensemble experiences. This lack of extensive background has made the college admissions and audition processes challenging for them. Typically, gaining acceptance into undergraduate music education programs involves successfully auditioning at the music school, where applicants must demonstrate considerable proficiency in Western European music.¹⁷ The issue manifests as part of broader systemic inequities that affect the educational opportunities and resources available to minority communities. These inequalities frequently translate into a scarcity of access to platforms where

¹⁶ Moral-Bofill, de la Llave, and Pérez-Llantada, "Predictors of Flow State," 9.

¹⁷ DeAngelis, "Recent College Graduates," 27.

young individuals might develop and refine their public speaking, performance skills, or even become accustomed to the expectations and norms of formal presentation settings.

Furthermore, communities facing socioeconomic disadvantages often deal with an oversaturation of negative stereotypes of minorities in popular culture, detracting from the appeal and promise of a more wholesome life that early engagement with traditional musical performance could facilitate.¹⁸ The issue intensifies with the significant lack of minority role models in classical music styles. This gap remains even as modernization transforms most religious services, where traditional music was previously the most accessible and prevalent in communities. Consequently, the cycles of disadvantage have perpetuated and undermined efforts towards achieving equitable educational outcomes.

HBCUs should especially prioritize developing programs and initiatives to bridge the experiential gap. The programs and initiatives could include workshops on public speaking, performance art instruction, and opportunities for students to engage in formal presentations in a supportive setting. Participant E has this to say about workshops for combating MPA:

Researcher: What suggestions or improvements would you propose to better address music performance anxiety within the cultural context of your HBCU?

PE: I think, like, um, like performance workshops kind of sort of, but not necessarily. I mean, like, a mental thing to prepare students to let them know how to get over certain things or how to prepare themselves mentally and emotionally. So, like a performance and stuff like that. A lot of times we were just preparing ourselves skill-wise and with muscle memory and stuff like that. Just making sure that we have the material down and that we are able to perform it well, but actually, being in the right mental space to perform, I feel like that's not talked about as much as, you know, if you're about to, if you have a piece that you're about to play, you're going to play every piece. You're going to play that piece up and down, up and down to where you know it, know it, and well, you can memorize and stuff like that. But then they don't really talk about when we actually are about to go on to the stage. A lot of times I feel like, you know, that performance anxiety can make you forget a lot of that music that you just ran up and

¹⁸ Evi Taylor et al., "The Historical Perspectives of Stereotypes on African American Males," *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work* 4, no. 3 (May 7, 2019): 213.'

down. So, I think a workshop would help you prepare mentally before a performance and give you skills to help yourself. I feel like that would be a good thing.

Mentorship programs can also play an important role, providing minority students with role models who can share strategies for navigating and excelling in performance situations. Perhaps a greater emphasis should be placed on trauma-focused interventions that are effective and beneficial.¹⁹ Ultimately, by recognizing and addressing the specific challenges faced by minority students in performance settings, educators can take significant steps toward fostering a more inclusive and equitable educational environment.

Responses Related to Research Question Two

RQ2 asked, “How do college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities overcome symptoms of music performance anxiety to perform effectively?” One significant theme developed from RQ2 was “Overcoming MPA at HBCUs.” The top three codes identified for use in this research are: “Faculty Support,” “Peer Support,” and “Adaptation.”

Faculty Support

The keys to success in college are an inclusive campus environment that fosters cultural diversity, a sense of belonging, peer support, and adequate institutional support.²⁰ Moreover, research has indicated that some characteristics, such as racial identification, feeling of community participation, and sense of belonging, are particularly significant in the success of minority college students.²¹ The interactions of faculty, staff, and administrators with students are crucial in determining how students cope with stress. These personnel have the express

¹⁹ Taylor, “Historical Perspectives,” 222.

²⁰ Sun, “HBCU Undergraduate Students,” 29.

²¹ Ibid.

ability to either inspire or discourage students.²² Participant A confidently shares their belief in the faculty/peer support system:

Researcher: How do your peers and faculty within the HBCU respond to or recognize music performance anxiety?

PA: Um, just with support. You know, because having that shared space, because everybody feels music performance anxiety to some degree. So, yeah, I feel like just having that means being able to talk to your peers or faculty.

Researcher: So, you feel like there are people on the staff that you could go to?

PA: Yes sir, of course.

Participant B expresses a similar sentiment:

Researcher: What resources or support are available at your HBCU for students experiencing music performance anxiety?

PB: We have a psychiatrist. You can set up an appointment with them, call them, and talk to them. But for me, it's with the people in the band. Because like I'm going through the same thing to what they're going through. So, I'll say it's the people that are in the band with me.

Though most students seek assistance for music-related stress, their support sources are typically informal and unprofessional. Previous studies indicate that students favored peer groups as their primary support system, with formal counseling considered an absolute last resort.²³ The preference for peer support, as articulated by Participant B, may reflect broader themes of trust, relatability, and immediate accessibility that peer networks offer, which professional services may not always successfully emulate or convey.

It is also imperative to acknowledge the need for support mechanisms explicitly geared toward minority students, underscored by employing professionals adept in culturally responsive practices. Such individuals must possess a profound understanding of the unique challenges

²² Ibid., 34.

²³ Barros et al., "Characteristics of Music Performance Anxiety," 8.

faced by minority students, including navigating the complex array of daily microaggressions. This approach builds a comprehensive framework of support that integrates cultural competency with other support services, ensuring that all professionals are aware of the specific socio-cultural dynamics and equipped with the skills to address them effectively.

The researcher observes that the factors presumably hindering minority students simultaneously contribute to their development. While not consistent, the support provided by faculty appears to have sufficed, potentially due to the obscure presence of alternative support structures, such as peer networks, and a deeply ingrained legacy of resilience among these communities. This phenomenon suggests an interdependence of adversity and resilience, where the hardships faced by minority students, ranging from systemic barriers to individual instances of discrimination, simultaneously act as catalysts for the development of robust ecosystems of coping.

Peer Support

Students feel more at ease when they confide in friends and family about stressful situations. While some students may isolate themselves when anxious or depressed, for many, connecting with others, such as friends and family members, has provided significant relief.²⁴

Participant A describes the synergy of a music department where peer support is at the forefront, saying:

Researcher: How do your peers and faculty within the HBCU respond to or recognize music performance anxiety?

PC: I think with my peers, I've seen some people get frustrated, but I think the way we react is helping each other out. We really encourage each other around the music department. That's what we do. And so, it's almost like with, with the music in the music department on any campus, I feel like family. So, we see the same people almost every single day. And when you have a connection with those people, they're able to elevate your confidence and really get rid of that anxiety. You know, you see these people every

²⁴ Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students," 33.

day. So now you just go in, and you're playing for them. So, there's really no anxiety at all. Some people still get it, but. You know, it is. It's kind of like, with, with performing. I'll just say be confident in what you're doing. We have a lot of talented musicians within our music department.

Researcher: Can you share any specific interactions or experiences that highlight the influence of culture on understanding and addressing music performance anxiety at your HBCU?

PC: Yeah, I can highlight a couple of experiences I had where, um, you know, sometimes the faculty and staff during our Performance Seminar, we meet on Wednesdays. And so, during that time in the recital hall, everybody within the music department comes up and tells us, even during my classes, how performing sometimes can cause anxiety, but they believe in us. The whole point of a performance seminar in general is for us to perform in front of a crowd because they're preparing us for our senior recital. We have a brass performance ensemble coming up. We have to do a solo at the performance seminar. That is ultimately preparing us for the biggest stage, so I think that is one thing that really highlights our music anxiety within our music department.

The description provided by Participant A highlights the relationship between students and faculty, where daily interactions and the establishment of close-knit relationships in ensembles serve as a foundation for alleviating MPA. The cultural setting of HBCUs, which is characterized by a strong sense of community and collective resilience, further enhances the effectiveness of these support systems. Moreover, the structured approach to confronting and mitigating MPA through regular, formal performance opportunities (e.g., Performance Seminars, brass ensemble performances, solo recitals) exemplifies a proactive and responsive educational strategy. It prepares students for future professional demands by gradually acclimating them to public performances in a supportive environment. This method underscores a pedagogical commitment to academic and musical excellence and student's holistic development and well-being.

As described by Participant A, the emphasis on culture and community within the HBCU music department suggests a model where the educational experience is deeply ingrained in cultural identity and community support. This approach not only aids in reducing MPA but also

fosters a conducive environment for personal growth, confidence building, and the mastery of musical gifts. Such insights contribute valuable perspectives to the discourse on educational practices within HBCUs and how they navigate challenges such as MPA among their student bodies.

Adaptation

Study findings suggest that educating individuals to understand perceived physiological symptoms as the body's mobilization or excitement can enhance well-being and aid in accepting or diminishing uncomfortable physiological symptoms.²⁵ Increasing the awareness of emotional goals in MPA may have consequences for developing treatments. For example, many therapies presume that people desire to reduce anxiety in general without considering the potential that people prefer to minimize anxiety expression but not experience, or vice versa. For example, Participant B expresses a desire to experience MPA for the sake of remaining mentally sharp and in the moment:

Researcher: Describe any personal experience with music performance anxiety.

PB: I've been playing music since middle school and since high school, right, and yeah, we all kind of experience music performance anxiety. Even now as a junior, I mean, like, you still have anxiety. It's very funny. It gets you nervous, but at the same time, I'm kind of glad it does because I don't want to feel dull in the moment. I don't want to feel like the moment is not that much that important, you know.

Effective evaluation requires understanding how individuals desire to emote and practical strategies for altering an individual's current emotional state. One approach to treating MPA could be to first ask musicians about their emotional goals before providing anxiety reduction techniques.²⁶ Positive emotions stem from self-efficacy, and the flow experience is enhanced

²⁵ Kaleńska-Rodzaj, "Music Performance Anxiety," 1759.

²⁶ Osborne, Munzel, and Greenaway, "Emotion Goals," 11.

when the attention is less on oneself.²⁷ In addition to improving attention, systematic mindfulness exercises help individuals become more adept at deccentration, focusing on the task rather than on themselves, and cultivate acceptance of their shortcomings and current artistic state. Gaining self-compassion and understanding an individual's own body leads to this kind of acceptance. These abilities could lessen MPA and boost an artist's self-worth.²⁸

Summary

This case study examines the symptoms of MPA unique to music majors enrolled at an HBCU and whether those symptoms are typical or have origins rooted in ethnicity. It also explores the methods of coping with the disorder from a college student's perspective. The study involves five research participants selected from TSU. All participants are male members of the wind ensemble and marching band. The study utilizes two different forms of data collection: five-point Likert-scale surveys and open-ended, semi-structured interviews. This case study applies qualitative methods. Every potential participant received the five-point Likert-scale survey along with the consent forms. The researcher then collected the surveys and consent forms and applied randomized convenience sampling to select the five final participants. The researcher gathered the survey information into an Excel spreadsheet for analysis. The researcher then used the data in the spreadsheet to create a bar chart representing the results of each survey question. The semi-structured interviews were conducted over the phone using the iPhone application Rev Call to record. The researcher then transcribed each interview, using NVivo 14 to analyze and encode recurring themes and sub-themes, placing the information in an Excel

²⁷ Sinnamon, *Achieving Peak Performance*, 18.

²⁸ Kaleńska-Rodzaj, "Music Performance Anxiety," 1764.

spreadsheet. The researcher supported each subtheme with quotes from the transcribed interviews.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Overview

This study explores the symptoms of music performance anxiety (MPA) unique to college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). It aims to identify a significant correlation between the ethnicity of students and their experiences of MPA, addressing an apparent gap in the existing academic literature concerning the topic. This gap highlights the importance of understanding how cultural and ethnic identities intersect with the psychological and emotional challenges of MPA. Chapter Five summarizes the study, its objectives, methodologies, and procedures for navigating the research questions. This chapter combines the study's results with prior knowledge in the field. The researcher compares the findings with those of similar studies. The goal is to demonstrate how this research adds to the existing knowledge on MPA, primarily focusing on how it is relevant to the unique social and cultural environment of HBCUs.

This chapter also delves into the broader implications of the study's findings for practical application. In it, the researcher articulates how insights derived from this research could inform the development of improved interventions and support systems within HBCU music programs directly aimed at mitigating the influence of MPA among students of diverse ethnic backgrounds. These discussions are crucial because they turn theory into practical actions that improve music students' learning and performance experiences. The researcher also acknowledges the study's limitations, discussing how these might limit the broad application of the findings and the understanding of the data. This acknowledgment is essential for setting the proper scope for the research and for helping guide future studies in this area.

Finally, the chapter concludes with recommendations for further research, suggesting an investigation into the complex connection between MPA and ethnicity. Future research could involve long-term studies comparing different types of schools and adding quantitative data to support statistical findings. This research is vital for better understanding MPA and developing support strategies that fit the varied experiences of music majors who attend HBCUs.

Summary of Study

The researcher used a case study method, allowing for a detailed look at the topic within a well-defined setting. The researcher gathered and analyzed data from various sources, including surveys with a five-point Likert scale, answers to open-ended questions during interviews, and notes on observations and personal reflections. The study focused on five participants, chosen randomly through convenience sampling for their varied perspectives on experiencing MPA at an HBCU. This small, carefully selected group helped the researcher examine individual experiences closely. The researcher also reviewed existing studies on MPA, noting its well-known prevalence and symptoms. However, the researcher found little research on how ethnic background might affect MPA, making this study vital for satisfying part of the literary gap.

The significance of this research extends beyond academic contributions, offering practical implications for minority students grappling with MPA. The study investigates how ethnic background might connect to MPA to assist in creating specific support and resources designed for the unique challenges minority music students face at HBCUs. The goal is to produce a more supportive and understanding environment where students can achieve their goals without being hindered by MPA in a community that values and responds to the needs of individuals of all diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Summary of Findings and Prior Research

The research questions presented for study by the researcher are:

RQ1: What are the symptoms of music performance anxiety unique to college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities?

RQ2: How do college music majors attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities overcome symptoms of music performance anxiety to perform effectively?

Commonality of MPA Symptoms among HBCU Students

When studying MPA symptoms among students at HBCUs, it is crucial to understand that they are no different from those seen in music students at non-HBCUs. However, the intensity of these symptoms and how regularly students experience them can vary due to the unique socio-cultural and institutional settings of HBCUs. These students often navigate compounded stressors, including experiences of discrimination and the pressures to succeed academically and professionally within a society that frequently marginalizes them.¹ Several intersecting factors contribute to the amplification of MPA symptoms among HBCU music majors. A primary factor is the tradition of excellence and resilience at HBCUs, which, while inspiring pride and motivation, also places additional pressure on students to meet high expectations to honor the history and culture of their institutions and communities. Furthermore, the experiences of minority students at HBCUs add stress that students at PWIs may not encounter as intensely.² These stressors can exacerbate the psychological and emotional challenges associated with MPA, heightening the anxiety felt during performances.

¹ Grinshteyn, Whaley and Couture, "High Fear of Discriminatory Violence," 1.

² Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students," 28.

In contrast, students at PWIs face challenges and pressures but do not regularly experience the combination of factors that can worsen MPA for minority students at HBCUs. The diverse upbringing of HBCU students, affected by the school's histories, community relationships, and attitudes towards race and identity, determines how MPA is experienced and handled. Understanding MPA in the HBCU context highlights the need for support systems and personnel aware of cultural and circumstantial differences. To assist HBCU music students with MPA requires a more comprehensive approach that recognizes the roles of cultural history, shared experiences of discrimination, and the pressure to succeed. The approach should focus on reducing MPA symptoms to allow students to overcome specific problems and achieve in their studies and music.

Resource and Funding Constraints in HBCU Music Programs

While closely examining the issues that music programs at HBCUs face, it becomes evident that a lack of resources and funding significantly affects the prevalence and management of MPA among student performers. Limitations such as staffing inadequacies and insufficient financial support for programs specifically designed to address MPA, particularly in the context of large music ensembles, worsen the stress related to MPA. The scarcity of resources at HBCUs is not a new phenomenon but a systemic issue that has long-term implications for the quality of education and support services available to students. This lack of resources in music education presents itself in several important ways. For example, music departments often have too few staff members, so teachers must handle teaching and administrative support while supporting students simultaneously. This shortage can lead to a lack of personalized attention and

mentorship for students navigating MPA, as faculty may not have the bandwidth to address individual students' needs effectively.³

Furthermore, funding constraints directly affect the availability and quality of programs to mitigate MPA. Initiatives such as performance anxiety workshops, individual counseling, and specialized training for faculty in recognizing and addressing MPA require financial investment. Without adequate funding, these essential services are either underdeveloped or absent, leaving students with fewer resources to manage MPA. Large music ensembles, a cornerstone of the musical experience and education at many HBCUs, present unique challenges in this context. The dynamics of performing in such groups can intensify MPA feelings due to the visibility and pressure associated with these performances.⁴ Without the necessary support structures, from access to performance psychologists or counselors to programs that build coping skills for performance-related stress, students may find these experiences more daunting, impacting their overall educational and personal development.

Due to limited resources and funding, the perpetuation of MPA points to a critical area where action is needed. Addressing this challenge requires a concerted effort from institutional leaders, policymakers, and the broader community to secure the necessary resources for HBCU music programs. Investments in staffing, programming, and facilities dedicated to the arts and students' well-being can create a more supportive environment for managing MPA. Enhancing the capacity of HBCUs to provide comprehensive support for students facing MPA benefits the individuals directly affected and enriches the cultural and educational offerings of the institutions themselves.

³ Gasman and Esters, *HBCU*, chap. 8, par. 5.

⁴ Rieken, "For HBCUs."

MPA Caused by Institutional Frustrations

Research of MPA among college music students usually examines how individuals respond psychologically and physically in typical performance situations. However, an emerging body of evidence suggests that institutional factors, particularly frustrations stemming from administrative mishandling and lack of resources, may also significantly increase MPA. This study focuses on how issues at HBCUs, including problems with financial aid, bureaucratic delays, and insufficient resources, affect students' experiences.⁵ This study aims to extend the discourse on MPA at HBCUs by exploring how institutional frustrations, including financial aid issues, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and inadequate provision of essential resources, impact students' experiences at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Participants' narratives from this research highlight the complex problems caused by institutional issues and how they, directly and indirectly, affect students' performance experiences. Participant D highlighted the challenges TSU faced due to systemic problems:

Well, yeah, I would say yes, the department does cause performance anxiety. Um, just because of the lack of. Um, I would say preparation, but the lack of giving, you know, I'm saying not a lot of people at TSU go through like, a great four years. You know, and I would say that because there's always something, like financial aid, problems with the bursar's office, or not being able to get an instrument because, you know, something is just always going on. Like I know as of right now, we have an issue with getting instruments because students keep breaking them. And the people that's breaking them, they're not, you know, paying up the money that is needed to fix them. And then we can't get money from the university because the university is saying something else, and it's just like a lot of stuff going on, you know, so I would say they caused it. They're causing anxiety.

Participant D added :

Like, one day your performance is on Friday, and on Thursday your instrument breaks. Not because of you, but probably because you left it in the locker that you're assigned to or something and, you know, somebody broke in and stole it or, like, you know, anything can happen, right, but you not knowing what like the possibility of like being able to... It's an indirect issue.

⁵ Gasman and Esters, *HBCU*, chap. 8, par. 1.

These feelings highlight an essential aspect of MPA that goes beyond the performance, exposing that the more comprehensive institutional climate plays a role in causing and increasing anxiety. Further complicating this issue is the reported lack of accountability and support for maintaining and replacing instruments. Instances where instruments are damaged or stolen, often through no fault of the student, increase the uncertainty and stress inherent in performance preparation. Such institutional shortcomings indirectly foster an environment of insecurity and anxiety, underscoring the need to reevaluate administrative practices and support systems within music departments.

The findings highlight a critical need for institutional changes to tackle the core issues causing these problems. Suggestions for improvement include better financial aid systems, more transparent and effective administrative procedures, and increased funding to repair existing and purchase new musical instruments. Establishing open communication channels between students and administrators and addressing student concerns could reduce the feelings of helplessness and frustration that worsen MPA. This study shows that internal problems at institutions can increase MPA, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive strategy to deal with MPA. Future research should investigate how institutional practices impact student well-being, aiming to develop thorough strategies that support a positive environment for performance.

TSU Owed \$2.1 Billion Dollars

Tennessee State University represents the difficulties many land-grant HBCUs face, caught in a significant financial gap highlighted by federal authorities. Communications from the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Agriculture to governors nationwide have shed light on the stark funding disparities between land-grant HBCUs and their predominantly White

land-grant counterparts, underscoring a profound inequity in the distribution of resources.⁶ This revelation, grounded in an analysis of data spanning from 1987 to 2020 by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through the Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System (IPEDS), articulates a significant fiscal imbalance where the apportioned state funding per student for HBCUs pales in comparison to that of 1862 land-grant institutions.⁷ IPEDS annually collects data from all post-secondary institutions participating in federal student financial aid programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, including FAFSA, Pell Grants, and Stafford Loans. These institutions must provide information on enrollment, program completion, graduation rates, faculty and staff numbers, financial operations, tuition costs, and student financial aid.⁸

The impact of this inequitable funding is significant, with differences in funding ranging from \$172 million to a staggering \$2.1 billion.⁹ This lack of funds has had considerable consequences, seriously limiting the ability of these schools to improve their infrastructure, better their student services, and create an environment that supports academic and research success. For over thirty years, this lack of funding has hindered the development and competitive position of HBCUs like TSU and limited their ability to enhance educational opportunities for their students.¹⁰ Additionally, this financial strain directly affects students dealing with MPA, as

⁶ Danielle Douglas-Gabriel, “States Should Fix Underfunding of Land-Grant HBCUs, Biden Administration Says,” *Washington Post*, September 18, 2023.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ DeAngelis, “Recent College Graduates,” 29.

⁹ Douglas-Gabriel, “States Should Fix Underfunding.”

¹⁰ Ibid.

insufficient resources can lead to inadequate support systems and services for addressing such issues, intensifying the challenges these students face.

Hyper-Resilience Among Music Students at HBCUs: Navigating Adversity

The hyper-resilience shown by music students at HBCUs is an essential topic for study, especially as it relates to cultural adjustment, heritage, and mental health. HBCU students face a challenging environment requiring them to be skilled in classical music, often focusing on European traditions while profoundly connecting with and adding to their cultural music styles. This dual challenge increases their resilience to succeed, placing their academic and artistic efforts in the context of maintaining and excelling in their culture.

The pursuit of excellence at HBCUs is a tradition passed down by African American scholars, artists, and activists who have significantly shaped America's cultural and intellectual life. Music students at HBCUs carry forward this tradition, striving to excel and reflect the resilience and talent of those who came before them. However, their journey unfolds in a society where they often face microaggressive challenges to their cultural identity and legitimacy as artists and scholars.¹¹ These challenges have evolved from the direct racial confrontations of the Civil Rights Era, employing more indirect forms of bias and exclusion. This reality requires them to navigate their culture with a detailed understanding of how to affirm themselves and their heritage.

Music students at HBCUs struggle to excel in European classical and African American musical traditions, highlighting a broader cultural issue.¹² This issue involves merging their artistic and cultural identities in environments that often sideline non-European art forms.

¹¹ Grinshteyn, Whaley and Couture, "High Fear of Discriminatory Violence," 2.

¹² DeAngelis, "Recent College Graduates," 27.

Achieving proficiency in both arenas is more than an academic exercise, but a powerful act of artistic resistance against the historical undervaluation of African American contributions to mainstream culture.

The effort required to excel in a challenging environment can negatively affect the mental health of music students at HBCUs. Balancing their cultural identity with the demands of music education often leads to increased stress and anxiety.¹³ This problem is made worse by a lack of mental health services designed for the unique needs of minority students at HBCUs, exposing a significant gap in support from both these institutions and society at large. These students display what can be called hyper-resilience, a heightened form of resilience developed from facing ongoing cultural and academic challenges. While this resilience demonstrates their strength and determination, it also raises significant concerns about the length of time they can maintain this level of coping. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that mental health services and support provided to HBCU students recognize and specifically address issues of trauma and healing.¹⁴ Resilience demonstrates the need for better support systems that help with both the academic and artistic requirements and the mental health issues that come from dealing with subtle biases and systemic discrimination. Thus, it demands a more culturally attuned academic and institutional response that recognizes these students' unique challenges and provides the support necessary to sustain their well-being and artistic development.

The Necessity for Culturally Attenuated Approaches in HBCU Contexts

Culturally attuned strategies include counseling that acknowledges cultural methods of expressing stress, workshops with culturally relevant coping methods, and peer groups for shared

¹³ Sun, "HBCU Undergraduate Students," 28.

¹⁴ Kenneth Polishchuk, "Mental Health Needs of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Students" (American Psychological Association Services, Inc., May 2022).

support. Culturally aware methods for handling MPA in HBCUs aim to do more than just improve how individuals deal with stress; they seek to make the educational environment more inclusive and supportive of different types of anxiety experiences. This effort could involve training faculty and staff to recognize and respond to MPA in culturally resonant ways. The need for such approaches highlights the value of the rich cultural heritage at HBCUs and stresses the importance of diversity and inclusion in music education. These factors ensure that students of all backgrounds can achieve their musical goals in environments that understand and support their specific challenges and needs.

Limitations

This study used a qualitative research method to delve into the complex experiences of MPA among students at HBCUs. This approach, while offering depth and insight into the personal experiences of the participants, inherently carries several limitations. First, the study is limited to five male students from TSU, Tennessee's only state-funded land grant HBCU. While these individuals provide rich, varied perspectives on their experiences with MPA, the limited sample size and the absence of female participants restrict the breadth of experiences represented in the study. This limitation might prevent the findings from fully encapsulating the range of views and experiences of MPA among minority music students at various HBCUs. To lessen this issue, the researcher designed the study with detailed interview questions to thoroughly explore the topics found in existing research and satisfy any literary gaps. The exclusion of students from other HBCUs, such as Fisk University, due to the absence of professional connections further limits the widespread representation of this sample. Including participants from multiple institutions would have enriched the study by providing a more comprehensive range of

institutional contexts and experiences, offering a more generalized understanding of MPA within the HBCU ecosystem.

Additionally, due to the researcher's demanding work schedule and proximity to TSU, the study had to rely on remote interviews instead of meeting participants in person. While this approach enabled the study to proceed, it may have influenced the depth and quality of the data collected. In-person interviews usually provide a richer exchange of information and the opportunity to observe non-verbal cues, enhancing the researcher's understanding of the participant's experiences. Additionally, the timing of the research, conducted when TSU's music department was experiencing a heightened level of activity following a recent Grammy win, rehearsing for a winter concert, and preparing for a historic Thanksgiving Day parade appearance, may have impacted both the availability of participants and the context of their experiences with MPA. These circumstances could have influenced the students' perceptions and experiences of MPA, adding a layer of complexity to their responses that may not be representative of more typical conditions.

This study offers valuable insights into MPA among a select group of HBCU music students. However, individuals must interpret its findings with an awareness of the limitations presented by the sample size, gender representation, selection of the research site, and methodological constraints. Future studies should aim for a larger, more varied group of participants, use both qualitative and quantitative research methods, and perhaps consider the impacts of significant departmental achievements or events on the phenomenon of MPA. These steps would lead to a more comprehensive understanding of MPA in the context of HBCUs.

Recommendations for Future Study

The cultural setting of HBCUs significantly influences the experience of MPA among minority music majors. This influence highlights the urgent need for more research to understand and reduce MPA within these institutions. Future studies should focus on creating effective support mechanisms and fostering an educational atmosphere that addresses or greatly minimizes MPA. There are several recommendations for upcoming research on this subject. First, researchers should conduct longitudinal studies to track the development of MPA among HBCU music majors from their first year to graduation. These studies could highlight when students are most vulnerable and what interventions are effective. Second, researchers should compare the MPA experiences of HBCUs and PWIs, which could clarify how HBCU-specific factors worsen MPA, including institutional support, funding differences, and cultural aspects. Third, researchers should evaluate the effectiveness of current support services and interventions at HBCUs, which will identify the most effective strategies, aiding in creating focused, culturally aware programs. Lastly, exploring how cultural competency training for faculty and staff can reduce MPA among students may lead to improved training programs that make faculty more attuned to the unique challenges minority students face. Focusing on these areas could greatly aid in developing methods and interventions to assist minority music majors at HBCUs, striving towards an educational environment where individuals can adequately address and perhaps significantly reduce MPA.

Implications for Practice

This study on MPA at HBCUs offers valuable insights that can significantly benefit music education professors, administrators, and graduate assistants. By shedding light on the unique experiences and challenges faced by music majors at HBCUs, the findings provide a

foundation for developing practices that can enhance student well-being and performance. The research underscores the importance of professors developing a deeper understanding of the factors contributing to MPA. With this knowledge, they can adopt teaching methods that are empathetic and supportive, incorporating mental health awareness and stress management into their curriculum. This approach improves student's musical skills and equips them with strategies to manage anxiety, creating a more holistic music education experience.

Graduate assistants are crucial in bridging the gap between students and faculty. This study highlights the training of individuals to recognize signs of MPA and directs students to appropriate support services. Equipped with insights from the research, graduate assistants can offer peer support and guidance, fostering an environment where students feel understood and supported. Administrators can leverage the study's findings to implement targeted support systems and allocate resources more effectively. These resources include providing counseling services and stress reduction facilities and developing policies that address MPA comprehensively. By prioritizing students' mental health and well-being, administrators can foster a more nurturing and supportive educational landscape at HBCUs.

The implications of this research for practice are profound. By proceeding based on the study's insights, professors, graduate assistants, and administrators at HBCUs can work together to create an educational environment that acknowledges and addresses the complexities of music performance anxiety. Ultimately, this collaborative effort will support music majors' mental health and academic success and enrich the overall quality of music education at HBCUs.

A Biblical Perspective

Drawing wisdom from the Bible can also address the symptoms of MPA. The story of David and Goliath, found in 1 Samuel 17, establishes a framework for understanding and

overcoming MPA from a biblical perspective. The essence of the David and Goliath story revolves around conquering fear. A young shepherd, David, confronts the Philistine giant Goliath despite the overwhelming odds against him. This act of bravery serves as a reminder to those suffering from MPA that facing fear, rather than avoiding it, can be the first step towards overcoming MPA.

David's unwavering faith in God and self-confidence fueled his victory over Goliath. Drawing strength from God or self-assurance can provide the courage to perform under pressure for those struggling with MPA. David's confidence was also rooted in past experiences protecting his flock from predators. He utilized his past victories to justify his ability to face Goliath. Similarly, individuals facing MPA can draw upon their previous successes to bolster their confidence. Recognizing that past achievements indicate an individual's ability to succeed again is crucial to overcoming MPA.

A pivotal element in David's victory was his perspective. He saw the giant as a challenge, not an insurmountable obstacle. Changing the perspective on performance, from viewing it as a threat to seeing it as an opportunity, can significantly reduce anxiety. This shift encourages a positive approach to performance, focusing on the potential for success rather than the fear of failure. This story emphasizes the importance of facing fears, maintaining faith and confidence, drawing on past experiences, and adopting a positive outlook. For students at HBCUs, these spiritual principles can guide them to navigate and overcome the challenges of MPA, enabling them to perform at maximum proficiency.

Summary

This study provides a detailed look into MPA among college music majors at HBCUs, focusing on how students' ethnic backgrounds affect their experiences with MPA. A key aim

was to highlight a significant gap in current research about the link between cultural and ethnic identity and MPA, especially within the HBCU context. Understanding this relationship is crucial due to the unique psychological and emotional aspects of MPA that may be more pronounced at HBCUs. In Chapter One, the researcher explains the topic, scope, and research question of the study, thereby establishing the foundational context for the entire thesis. Chapter Two begins with a comprehensive summary and critical evaluation of relevant literature and theoretical frameworks, including Freud's concept of the Danger Situation, the Yerkes-Dodson Law, and Flow Theory, positioning these within the broader scholarly landscape. In Chapter Three, the researcher articulates the methodological approach employed to investigate the research questions, detailing the processes and strategies used to derive meaningful insights. Chapter Four summarizes the research, outlining the study's objectives, methods, and approaches to the research questions. It integrates the findings with existing literature on MPA, noting where they align or differ. The researcher collected data for the study through interviews and observation. The researcher completed the data analysis using NVivo 14, a qualitative tool that facilitates the identification of codes in the collected data. This analysis contributes to academic discussions about MPA and highlights the study's relevance to the unique socio-cultural setting of HBCUs. The study's findings conclude that HBCU students face MPA similarly to peers at non-HBCUs, but systemic factors heighten their experience. Chapter Five suggests interventions that consider student's diverse backgrounds to help reduce MPA's effects. This chapter aims to turn research insights into actionable strategies that improve the education and performance of HBCU music majors. Recommendations for future research include longitudinal studies, preventative workshops, and culturally specific support for sufferers. By focusing on academic

and practical outcomes, the study aims to support the success of music students at HBCUs, emphasizing the importance of continuing research and action in studying MPA.

Appendices

Appendix A: IRB Approval (Part 1)

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

October 4, 2023

Kevin Durham
Jerry Newman

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-189 The Symptoms of Music Performance Anxiety Unique to College Music Majors Attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Dear Kevin Durham, Jerry Newman,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

Appendix B: IRB Approval (Part 2)

Date: 3-21-2024

IRB #: IRB-FY23-24-189

Title: The Symptoms of Music Performance Anxiety Unique to College Music Majors Attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Creation Date: 8-4-2023

End Date:

Status: **Approved**

Principal Investigator: Kevin Durham

Review Board: Research Ethics Office

Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Limited	Decision	Exempt - Limited IRB
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Key Study Contacts

Member	Jerry Newman	Role	Co-Principal Investigator	[REDACTED]
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Member	Kevin Durham	Role	Principal Investigator	[REDACTED]
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Member	Kevin Durham	Role	Primary Contact	[REDACTED]
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Appendix C: Recruitment: Verbal Script (Phone or In Person)

Hello [Potential Participant],

As a graduate student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Music Education degree. The purpose of my research is to determine if music students at a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) experience the symptoms of performance anxiety differently than their mainstream counterparts. The goal is to find out how varied cultural backgrounds play a role in shaping their perspectives. If you meet my participant criteria and are interested, I would like to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older and a college music major attending an HBCU. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Participants, if willing, will be asked to:

1. Participate in an audio-recorded interview that will take no more than 1 hour.
2. Fill out a brief survey that will take no more than ten minutes.

It should take approximately one hour and fifteen minutes to complete the procedures listed. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

Would you like to participate?

[Yes] Great, could I get your email address so I can send you the link to the survey? Would you mind completing this survey and returning it by mailing it or handing it to me at the time of the interview? Can we set up a time for an interview?

[No] I understand. Thank you for your time.

A consent document will be provided as the first page of the survey, which will be given to you at the time of the interview. This 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. After you have read and signed the consent form, please proceed to complete and return the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the study.

Thank you for your time. Do you have any questions?

Appendix D: Interview/ Survey Consent

Title of the Project: **The Symptoms of Music Performance Anxiety Unique to College Music Majors Attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities**

Principal Investigator: Kevin Durham, Doctoral Candidate, 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 18 years of age or older and a college music major attending a Historically Black College or University. 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 the study is to determine if minority music students at a Historically Black College or University experience the symptoms of anxiety differently than their mainstream counterparts. The goal is to find out how varied cultural backgrounds play a role in shaping their perspectives.

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:

3. Participate in an audio-recorded interview that will take no more than 1 hour.
4. Fill out a brief survey that will take no more than ten minutes.

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 improving music education for all groups of people. Teachers and institutions can use the information gathered by this research to develop strategies to help minority music students by learning if they are more anxious when performing and why. This might also clarify our understanding of and reactions to various cultures and backgrounds, making music something that unites people rather than something that divides them.

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.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

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.

- Participant responses during the interview and survey will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted, and all hardcopy records will be shredded.
- Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years until participants have reviewed and confirmed the accuracy of the transcripts, and then deleted. The researcher and members of his doctoral committee will have access to these recordings.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

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 inform the researcher that you wish to discontinue your participation and do not submit your study materials. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Kevin Durham. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Jerry Newman, 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 part of 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 of 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 audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Printed Subject Name

Appendix E: Survey Questionnaire

The Symptoms of Music Performance Anxiety Unique to College Music Majors Attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Personal Information (this will be kept confidential)

Name: _____ Email: _____

Demographic Information

1. What is your age?
 Under 18 18 – 24 25-34 35-44 45 or older
2. What is your gender?
 Male Female Non-binary Prefer not to say Other:
3. What is your class standing?
 Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate Student
4. What is your major area of study? (check all that apply)
 Music Education Liberal Arts Other _____
5. How many years of formal music training have you had?
 Less than 1 year 1-3 years 4-6 years 7-9 years 10 or more years
6. How often do you perform music publicly?
 Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

Music Performance Anxiety Survey

7. I often feel anxious or nervous about performing music in front of others.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
8. My anxiety about performing music negatively impacts my overall performance.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
9. I feel that cultural factors at my HBCU influence my level of music performance anxiety.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
10. My music performance anxiety improves with more practice and preparation.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

11. I feel that my HBCU provides enough resources and support to help me with my music performance anxiety.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
12. I believe that being a minority influences my experience with music performance anxiety.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
13. I often avoid music performance opportunities because of anxiety.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
14. I feel that my music performance anxiety affects my relationships with my peers and my instructors at my HBCU.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
15. I believe that attending an HBCU has a unique impact on my experience with performance anxiety compared to larger public institutions.
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

Appendix F: Interview Script

Hello, and thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Kevin Durham, and I am conducting research as a graduate student at Liberty University to explore the influence of culture at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) on music performance anxiety (MPA). Before we begin, I want to go over a few important details:

Recording and Transcription: *This interview will be recorded, and a transcript will be created for analysis. Rest assured, all of your personal identifying information will be kept confidential, and the recordings and transcripts will be used solely for the purpose of this research.*

Compensation: *While I will not be offering compensation for your time, your participation will help to fill a significant gap in the literature. The knowledge gained from this study may lead to better understanding and support for minority music students dealing with MPA.*

Duration: *This interview will last no more than an hour and accompanies the 10-minute survey you filled out earlier.*

If you have any questions or concerns at any point, please feel free to ask, and you can end the interview at any time. Again, thank you for your participation. Your experiences and perspectives will be instrumental in furthering this area of study. Let's begin.

Introduction

1. Describe any personal experiences with music performance anxiety.
2. How would you define music performance anxiety, and what symptoms do you associate with it?

Understanding Culture at HBCU

3. How would you describe the culture at your HBCU, especially within the music department?
4. Can you give any examples of how the culture at your HBCU might be different from other non-HBCUs?
5. In what ways, if any, do you feel the culture at your HBCU influences or impacts your experiences with music performance anxiety?

6. Are there cultural practices or traditions within the music department that either alleviate or aggravate your feelings of anxiety before a performance?

Support and Resources

7. What resources or support are available at your HBCU for students experiencing music performance anxiety? How have you interacted with these resources, if at all?
8. Do you think there are cultural elements within the HBCU that promote understanding and support for music performance anxiety?
9. How do your peers and faculty within the HBCU respond to or recognize music performance anxiety?
10. Can you share any specific interactions or experiences that highlight the influence of culture on music performance anxiety at your HBCU?

Performance Opportunities and Challenges

11. How do performance opportunities and expectations at your HBCU relate to music performance anxiety?
12. Are there cultural events or practices specific to your HBCU that have affected your comfort level with music performance?
13. What suggestions or improvements would you propose to better address music performance anxiety within the cultural context of your HBCU?
14. How do you think the music department and the HBCU as a whole can incorporate cultural elements to help students with music performance anxiety?

Interview Transcripts

Participant A (PA)

Call begins.

Researcher: Hello, are you available to talk?

PA: Oh, yes, sir.

Researcher: I have a statement that I need to read first, and then I'm going to go into the questions.

PA: Okay.

Researcher: So, thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Kevin Durham, and I'm conducting research as a graduate student at Liberty University to explore the influence of culture and Historically Black College or Universities on music performance anxiety. Before we begin, I want to go over a few important details: this interview will be recorded, and a transcript will be created for analysis. Rest assured, all of your personal identifying information will be kept confidential, and the recordings and transcripts will be used solely for the purpose of this research. While I will not be offering compensation for your time, your participation will help to fill a significant gap in the literature. The knowledge gained from this study may lead to better understanding and support for minority music students dealing with MPA. This interview will last no more than an hour and accompanies the ten-minute survey you filled out earlier.

If you have any questions or concerns at any point, please feel free to ask, and you can end the interview at any time. Again, thank you for your participation. Your experiences and perspectives will be instrumental in furthering this area of study. Let's begin. Are you ready?

PA: Yes, sir.

Researcher: Okay. Question one, describe any personal experiences with music performance anxiety.

PA: Okay, I remember. So, this is my freshman year of high school, and basically there was a solo in the piece that we were playing. My band director wanted us to audition for it. That meant, you know, we had to go in front of the whole ensemble to play. I was standing there for, like, ten minutes. I couldn't even get a note out.

Researcher: Oh, wow.

PA: It was pretty bad, yeah.

Researcher: I've had experiences with music performance anxiety. I was a piano major in college, and my hands would become sweaty while I was trying to play, and, as you know, sweat on the keyboard is not good. So, I can relate to that. Question two: How would you define music performance anxiety and what symptoms do you associate with it?

PA: Me, you know, I get a little "not easy" feeling in my stomach. You know, my heart starts to beat a little fast, and then my hands get really sweaty.

Researcher: Remind me of what instrument you play again.

PA: I play trumpet.

Researcher: Oh, excellent. Question three: How would you describe the culture at your HBCU, especially within the music department?

PA: Well, in my experience, I'll say the culture here is based on honesty and accountability.

Researcher: Mm hmm.

PA: You know, hard work is just something that is appreciated here.

Researcher: That's incredible. Okay, question number four: can you give any examples of how the culture at your HBCU might be different from other non-HBCUs?

PA: I'll say the biggest thing because my best friend goes to a PWI. And, you know, we talk about, you know, how campus life is and how it is in the band. The biggest difference, I'll say, is just how practice goes, especially for the band. You know, it's a lot, it's a lot more rigorous than ours, a lot more work.

Researcher: Which leads to question number five. In what ways, if any, do you feel the culture at your HBCU influences or impacts your experiences with music performance anxiety?

PA: I'll say because, you know, accountability and just working hard are such big things that impact how you approach performing. Because I'll say for me, you know, I just do the best I can to excel.

Researcher: So, you kind of feel an obligation to excel.

PA: Yes, sir.

Researcher: Good, let's go to the next question. Question number six: Are there cultural practices or traditions in the music department that either alleviate or aggravate your feelings of anxiety before a performance?

PA: I wouldn't say there is culturally. What helps alleviate it for me is just having a routine—something that I can go to consistently to be able to produce a consistent product.

Researcher: Okay, well, give me an idea—maybe just a little bit of that routine.

PA: Well, so before I play, I make it a point to just get into the headspace to play. Then I'll do a similar warm-up anytime I approach the horn. So, you know, just make sure, you know, I'm still in the headspace to produce a good sound.

Researcher: That's excellent. Thank you. So, we're about halfway through. I would like to ask question number seven. What resources or support are available at your HBCU for students experiencing music performance anxiety?

PA: I'll say the biggest thing is really just having people around you.

Researcher: Okay.

PA: Yes, sir, just having that community.

Researcher: And how have you interacted with those resources, if at all?

PA: Well, just for me, the big thing is just talking, you know, with my people, practicing together, doing whatever.

Researcher: Alright, we're coming up the homestretch. Question eight: Do you think there are cultural elements within the HBCU that promote understanding and support for music performance anxiety?

PA: So right now, all I can think of is that there aren't necessarily any cultural elements. It's more of a musician-to-musician thing. You know, just having that shared experience of performance. And, you know, what it's like to play together.

Researcher: Okay, I understand. Number nine, how do your peers and faculty within the HBCU respond to or recognize music performance anxiety?

PA: Um, just with support. You know, because of that shared space, everybody feels music performance anxiety to some degree. So, yeah, I feel like just having that means being able to talk to your peers or faculty.

Researcher: So, you feel like there are people on the staff that you could go to?

PA: Yes sir, of course.

Researcher: Okay, that's wonderful, which leads me to question number ten: can you share any specific interactions or experiences that highlight the influence of culture on understanding and addressing musical performance anxiety?

PA: Well, being here and, you know, being a music major doing this, you know, day in and day out, you do get a better understanding of it. Specifically, we have a weekly performance seminar,

juries, and our yearly performance. We'll go up and perform in front of the whole seminar each week. That is always a big deal for a lot of people, including me, of course. So, I'll say that that's where you really see and feel all the emotions that come with performance anxiety on a regular basis.

Researcher: Question number eleven: How do performance opportunities and expectations at your school relate to music performance anxiety?

PA: You know, the more you do something, the more experience you have. That is what performance is for. The more you do it, the more accustomed you get to it. And I feel like the less anxious I am going into it, So, it's like training.

Researcher: So, you're saying, performance opportunities are like training that are helping to reduce your experience of anxiety.

PA: Yes.

Researcher: I can understand that. Question number twelve: Are there cultural events or practices specific to your HBCU that have affected your comfort level with music performances?

PA: There's nothing I can think of at this moment.

Researcher: Okay. Question number thirteen: We're almost through. What suggestions or improvements would you propose to better address music performance anxiety without the cultural context of your HBCU?

PA: Something that I would propose is that expressing that music performance anxiety is, you know, something that's natural. People get really caught up in, like, "Oh, I feel this way; what if I can't do this? What if I can't do that?" So, I feel like just having an open space to be able to feel it would be great.

Researcher: Yeah, I'll give you a good example from my own personal experience. When I was a freshman at my HBCU, there was no one talking about music performance anxiety. I was very, very nervous. I didn't have anybody to talk to. I didn't even know what it was to express and talk to somebody about it. So, I was very confused about it. I learned a lot more about it in graduate school, but I just kind of struggled through my undergraduate degree as a result. Which leads to our last question: how do you think the music department and the HBCU as a whole can incorporate cultural elements to help students with music performance anxiety?

PA: The biggest thing I can really think of is just exposure.

Researcher: Okay.

PA: Whether that's, you know, having more opportunities to perform.

Researcher: For clarity, I'm going to ask: would this exposure be more mainstream, or would it be more culturally diverse? How do you see that?

PA: Honestly, anything would really help.

Researcher: Okay, thank you. Alright, so that wraps up the interview. Your responses are going to help me out tremendously. Thank you so much.

PA: No problem.

Researcher: You have a good night. Okay.

PA: You too.

Researcher: Thank you.

Call ends.

Participant B (PB)

Call begins.

Researcher: Good evening, are you ready for your interview?

PB: Okay.

Researcher: I do have a brief, like, little transcript to read beforehand, and then we'll proceed with fourteen questions.

PB: Okay.

Researcher: Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Kevin Durham, and I'm conducting research as a graduate student at Liberty University to explore the influence of culture and Historically Black College or Universities on music performance anxiety. Before we begin, I want to go over a few important details: This interview will be recorded, and a transcript will be created for analysis. Rest assured, all of your personal identifying information will be kept confidential, and the recordings and transcripts will be used solely for the purpose of this research. While I will not be offering compensation for your time, your participation will help to fill a significant gap in the literature. The knowledge gained from this study may lead to better understanding and support for minority music students dealing with MPA. This interview will last no more than an hour and accompanies the ten-minute survey you filled out earlier. If you have any questions or concerns at any point, please feel free to ask, and you can end the interview at any time. Again, thank you for your participation. Your experiences and perspectives will be instrumental in furthering this area of study. Let's begin. Are you ready?

PB: Yes, sir.

Researcher: Alright. Describe any personal experience with music performance anxiety.

PB: I've been playing music since middle school and since high school, and yeah, we all kind of experience music performance anxiety. Even now as a junior, I mean, like, you still have anxiety. It's very funny. It gets you nervous, but at the same time, I'm like kind of glad it does because I don't want to feel dull in the moment. I don't want to feel like the moment is not that important, you know.

Researcher: Yeah, that's very good. Thank you. So, that leads me to question number two: how would you define music performance anxiety and what symptoms do you associate with it?

PB: How would I define it? Um, I would define it as a nervous feeling, an anxious feeling that's deep inside you like, yeah, that's how I would describe it.

Researcher: And when does it occur?

PB: It occurs right before I play a note on my instrument. It happens right before it is, like, like at the count off of the drum.

Researcher: Excellent. Okay, question number three: how would you describe the culture at your HBCU, especially in the music department?

PB: Um, I would describe it as, well, the culture is, I would say, rich. Because, you know, it's not every day you get to play for such an audience. I'll say rich as well because of the music we play in the band.

Researcher: Excellent. So, can you give any examples of how the culture at your HBCU might be different from other non-HBCUs?

PB: I think it'd be different because of the people that attend. It's always groovy. It has a lot of spirit, I feel like.

Researcher: And let me give an example for clarity. If you are not attending an HBCU, how would your experience be different in the music department?

PB: I feel like my experience would be different because of the intensity and because of the fast pace you have to get it.

Researcher: Okay, I understand. That's really good. Alright, question number five: in what way?

If any, do you feel the culture at your HBCU influences or impacts your experience with music performance anxiety?

PB: I feel like it does because the staff are like the biggest motivators to not give in to anxiety.

Researcher: So, it sounds like you're describing like a culture of excellence that you're expected to rise to that may be greater than just the general college experience.

PB: Yeah, because I don't think any other professor will like to push me as hard here as anywhere else. That's a basic way to explain it.

Researcher: That's a great way to explain it. But you're also describing it more like a personal touch with you being at this particular HBCU. That's really great. Question number six: Are there cultural practices or traditions within the music department that either alleviate or aggravate your feelings of anxiety?

PB: I don't think so. No, we just go ahead and get it done. We go ahead and get it over with. There's nothing, like, to alleviate it.

Researcher: I understand. Alright, question number seven, what resources or support are available at your HBCU for students experiencing music performance anxiety?

PB: We have a psychiatrist. You can set up an appointment with them, call them, and talk to them. But for me, it's with the people that's in the band. Because like I'm going through the same thing to what they're going through. So, I'll say it's the people that are in the band with me.

Researcher: That's wonderful. Thank you. Question number eight: Do you think there are any cultural elements within the HBCU that promote understanding and support of music performance anxiety?

PB: It's always a performance over here. It's always like somebody to play for or an event to play for, so you deal with the anxiety over and over and over and over, to the point where like it doesn't go away, but it's like you understand more of yourself.

Researcher: That's really great. Question number nine: How do your peers and faculty within the HBCU respond to or recognize music performance anxiety? So, how do you all support each other?

PB: Mainly, we just enjoy that we have this happening. Like, for example, marching in California for the Rose Bowl parade. That anxiety is part of the performance; that's part of the experience, and so we just enjoy the moment together and feel better.

Researcher: So, you all rely on shared experiences of fun and shared experiences of triumph to overcome together.

PB: In a way, but it's not triumph, because it's not like it's something bad. You're just a little anxious and, you know, that's okay.

Researcher: It's a normal to you, is what you're saying?

PB: Basically, yeah.

Researcher: Okay, thanks. Question number ten: Can you share any specific interactions or experiences that highlight the influence of culture on music performance anxiety? HBCU?

PB: Yes, it'll be every Homecoming. Everybody's just on edge in a way. It's just nerve-racking because you know the whole crowd is alumni and friends of alumni. The whole crowd is like everybody who has ever attended. And that's when everybody expects the best of the best. I feel like you only experience that at an HBCU because of the magnitude of people that come by to see the band and to see football.

Researcher: That's really great. You're actually describing something that I wrote about earlier in my paper about the weight of heritage at an HBCU and the perception and prestige. the pressure to maintain and lift up the heritage. We have four more questions to go. Number eleven, how do performance opportunities and expectations at your HBCU relate to music performance anxiety?

PB: It relates by. I will say the crowd. So, uh, primarily the crowd, like, they're very picky. What they see and what they want. So, they're kind of satisfied. Everybody's the same way.

Researcher: That's a great answer. It seems as if you're describing a much younger, more culturally rich audience who has high demands and high expectations, and that is creating some of the anxiety that you experience. Not all of it, but some of it. Um, number twelve. Are there cultural events or practices specific to your HBCU that have affected your comfort level with music performance anxiety? Does being an HBCU help?

PB: I would say yeah, it has a lot. Especially being in the marching band because it's like performance after performance every weekend. Every weekend we have to play, so you have to get to a sort of point where it's like okay, you want to play to the best of your ability, that's what's expected of you, so the nerves will slowly calm down and just like go away.

Researcher: So, you see the marching band like a brotherhood group or family; do you see that?

PB: Most definitely, I see it as a family, because we spend endless amounts of hours together.

Researcher: Okay, that makes a lot of sense. Alright, two more questions. Number thirteen, what suggestions or improvements would you propose to better address music performance anxiety within the cultural context of your HBCU?

PB: So, just play to your heart's content. If you're playing your best, if you're actively trying to get better, then it will come to you no matter what. Because you are the one who's putting in the time, the work, the hours, the time, the energy, and the effort. So, it'll all just come to you.

Researcher: Alright, number fourteen, how do you think the music department and your HBCU as a whole can incorporate cultural elements to help students with music performance anxiety?

PB: Um, I would, like, force events in public. I think that's what helped me. People are like scared sometimes. I feel like the more performances you have in public, outside, or anywhere that there's people, instead of being in a practice room or practicing in a building, the better it is for you.

Researcher: Excellent. Thank you so much for answering these questions. I appreciate you taking the time out of your schedule to do this. Thank you for your time. Have a good night, bye.

PB: Yes, sir.

Call ends.

Participant C (PC)

Call begins.

Researcher: Alright. Thank you so much. Let's see, are you ready to start the interview?

PC: Yes.

Researcher: Okay, great. Did you have any questions before we get started?

PC: No, not at all.

Researcher: All right. I'm going to read a quick introduction. And then after that, we'll go into the questions: Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Kevin Durham, and I'm conducting research as a graduate student at Liberty University to explore the influence of culture and Historically Black Colleges and Universities on music performance anxiety. Before we begin, I want to go over a few important details: This interview will be recorded, and a transcript will be created for analysis. Rest assured, all of your personal identifying information will be kept confidential, and the recordings and transcripts will be used solely for the purpose of this research. While I will not be offering compensation for your time, your participation will help to fill a significant gap in the literature. The knowledge gained from this study may lead to better understanding and support for minority music students dealing with MPA. This interview will last no more than an hour and accompanies the ten-minute survey you filled out earlier.

If you have any questions or concerns at any point, please feel free to ask, and you can end the interview at any time. Again, thank you for your participation. Your experiences and perspectives will be instrumental in furthering this area of study. Okay. So, starting with number one, describe any personal experiences with music performance anxiety.

PC: I usually don't get it. But I kind of get it. I mean, anxiety when performing. I mean, it's not really a big issue because most of the time when I up and I'm performing, most people say you look very confident in what you're doing. I believe you can get over that. When you know when you're practicing, you're more prepared, and you're just really confident in what you're doing.

Researcher: Okay, great. Thank you. Question number two: how would you define music performance anxiety and what symptoms do you associate with it?

PC: You know, when you feel like you're not confident enough in what you're playing or the music you're learning. Most people tend to get anxiety, especially when it's just you and your solo performance, maybe. I see most people get up there, and you know, they're not, you could tell that they're not very confident in what they're doing. You could tell that they know the music, but they're really not comfortable in that setting because most people don't really get that experience. So, I think when you get more experience, that's when you overcome that.

Researcher: Thank you. Now on to the question for three. How would you describe the culture at your HBCU, especially within the music department?

PC: The culture here is that at my HBCU here at Tennessee State, we get a lot of opportunities, especially in the band. The band is part of the music department. We get a lot of opportunities from going to the Rose Bowl Parade in 2020, going into 2022 and going and winning the two Grammys for the Tennessee State of Aristocrat of Bands (AOB). Honestly, it's more about opportunities and the way the culture is run. The staff around the music department really pushes us to get that experience so that we are prepared for the real world, and they're trying to really set us up for success in our future careers. So, I really think the culture is more of a driving type of culture, with you really digging deep into your craft and really trying to learn the literature of music.

Researcher: Excellent. Alright. Question number four: Can you give any examples of how the culture of your HBCU might be different from that of a non-HBCU?

PC: I'm going to be completely honest about the culture here. Here, you see a lot more familiar faces. Most of the time, we see a lot more people like us. And so, with that being said, we relate more, I guess, and we understand each other more. And when you see somebody else doing that, and that's a familiar face, such as you, it makes you want to do it. And then we really want you to strive. And then also in this culture, something I learned is that you really have to dig down deep in your craft and really learn for yourself because, at a non-HBCU, most of the time the resources are really there for you to actually be successful more than at an HBCU.

Researcher: Okay. Question number five: in what ways, if any, do you feel the culture of your HBCU influences or impacts your experience with these employees?

PC: I believe that it influences society in a good way, in my opinion, because, like I said, if you're going to go do something, the music department staff and the faculty are really going to push you to really do that and do what you want to do. But you have to go get the confidence. You have to; they're going to instill the confidence in you, but you have to get the confidence yourself as well, whether that's going out and doing your own thing, such as practicing and all that. So, yeah.

Researcher: Okay, question number six: are there cultural practices or traditions within the music department that either alleviate or aggravate your feelings of anxiety before a performance?

PC: Um, no, not really. I mean, you tend to have the faculty and the staff. Well, I would say, um, push you; they push you more than the average person would. And I think their influence is great on us because, you know, they don't have to do that. They're there to, they can, they can be there to just teach to me teach the literature to us and that'd be it. But it's more of a life lesson to me because of music. There's various different ways you can express yourself within it. So, I believe that anxiety goes all the way, especially when the faculty and staff are pushing us.

Researcher: All right. Question number seven. What resources or support are available at your HBCU for students experiencing music performance anxiety? How have you interacted with these resources, if at all?

PC: Um, I think the resources that are there are all around us. I think the faculty and the staff are two of our resources. I believe the practice rooms are a resource for just getting the reps in. And um, the recital hall, the theatre, going in there. I do it. I do it sometimes myself, where I go to the recital hall, just so I can hear myself before performing. Um, when I'm doing the solo performance for Performance Seminar, and I go in there and really try to play and fill up the room to see what it's going to actually feel like when I'm up there on that stage and under the bright lights, trying to really portray the song and bring the full song out so the audience can enjoy it. So, I think the resources are all around us in the, um, in the music department. Could there be a little bit more? Maybe so, but for what we're doing right now and we're pushing ourselves. I think we're heading in the right direction.

Researcher: Excellent. Number eight. Do you think there are cultural elements within the HBCU that promote understanding and support for music performance anxiety?

PC: Yes. There are a lot of cultural elements, such as, I'll say within our department we have, we have the, I'm going to go to the faculty and staff again, where we have them. They just spend so much time around us. So, what they're feeding us, the knowledge that they're feeding us, we're just taking that all in and soaking it up and really trying to dig down and deep into the literature that we're learning. But being at a HBCU just brings it out and makes it a little bit sweeter.

Researcher: I got you. Question number nine. How do your peers and faculty within the HBCU respond to or recognize music performance anxiety?

PC: I think with my peers, I've seen some people get frustrated, but I think the way we react is to help each other out. We really encourage each other around the music department. That's what we do. And so, it's, it's almost like. With the music in the music department on any campus, I feel like it's a family. So, we see the same people almost every single day. And when you have a connection with those people, they're able to elevate your confidence and really get rid of that anxiety. You know, you see these people every day. So now you just go in, and you're playing for them. So, there's really no anxiety at all. Some people still get it, but. You know, it's. It's kind of like, with, with performing. I'll just say be confident in what you're doing. We have a lot of talented musicians within our music department.

Researcher: Awesome. All right. Question ten. Can you share any specific interactions or experiences that highlight the influence of culture on understanding and addressing music performance anxiety at your HBCU?

PC: Yeah, I can highlight a couple of experiences I had where, um, you know, sometimes the faculty and staff during our meet on Wednesdays. And so, during that time in the recital hall, everybody that's within the music department comes up and tells us, even during my classes, that when performing, sometimes you can have anxiety, but they believe in us. The whole point of a

performance seminar in general is for us to perform in front of a crowd because they're preparing us for our senior recital. We have a brass performance ensemble coming up. We have to do a solo at Performance Seminar. That is ultimately preparing us for the biggest stage, so I think that is one thing that's really highlighting our music anxiety within our music department.

Researcher: All right. Question eleven. Do performance opportunities and expectations at your HBCU relate to music performance anxiety?

PC: Like I said back earlier, we had these really big performances where, whether we're performing for the Grammys, whether we're on the street, marching down the street for a parade, or ten-to-twelve-minute halftime shows at a football game. I think it really elevates our anxiety because we do so well. And I think the band does so well with this as well. You know, leading up, we could be messing up the field show or something, and then we come in on Saturday night, and after that, the halftime show is great. And I think it's because people are just confident in what they do. We are exposed to larger audiences, crowds, and people. One thing the staff always says is that people are always watching us, no matter what. Whether you know it or not, people are always watching us. So, I think that helps alleviate our music anxiety.

Researcher: All right. Number twelve. Are there cultural events or practices specific to your HBCU that have affected your comfort level with music performance?

PC: Yeah, but I think, in a good way, it has. And then sometimes it can get a little bit rough in there to where, me myself, I am playing in the Wind Ensemble, and I had this solo coming up. And so. One thing that we're trying to do is get those reps in class right now. I don't really think there's a negative impact of what's going on in the music department. I think it's helping us move in the right direction. And the system we have set up is working. Some things could probably change, but it's working.

Researcher: Okay. Question number thirteen. What suggestions or improvements would you propose to better address music performance anxiety within the cultural context of your HBCU?

PC: I would say as far as the music department for this question, I would say. We tend to... Well, as some of the performers among my peers, we tend to, you know, think we can wait until the until the last minute for a seminar sometimes, and I just don't think that it can happen. I think what we can do is put more hours in, especially in practice. I think the practice hours could be a little bit more reasonable. They're a little bit off and a little bit tough for us to get into the practice room sometimes because the most of us have classes and then they're on irregular hours sometimes. And then I would say we could get more people in the Recital Hall. I think the whole purpose of a seminar is to get that feeling of actually being on stage. And I think if we open up maybe campus-wide for some people to come see seminars and come see people perform, that would be great.

Researcher: Alright, last question. How do you think the music department and the HBCU as a whole can incorporate cultural elements to help students with music performance anxiety?

PC: I would say with this question, bringing in more people who have experienced music anxiety. I think it would help out a lot, as they could bring someone in who's had those

experiences, as well as people who have performed on even bigger stages for this matter. I think we're getting there. But I believe that if we focused a little bit more on the music performance side, then that could stretch out to maybe more opportunities. And that anxiety can really go away for most performers.

Researcher: Okay. Well, that concludes this interview. Your interview is going to be a tremendous help in this research. So, thank you for that. And did you have any questions before I let you go?

PC: I don't have any questions.

Researcher: Alright. Have a good night. Okay.

PC: You too.

Researcher: Bye.

Call ends.

Participant D (PD)

Call begins.

Researcher: Hello. I spoke with you earlier this week. My name is Kevin, and I was wondering if you're. If you have time for an interview.

PD: Yes, sir.

Researcher: Okay. Are you ready now or did you need any other time?

PD: Yeah, we can. We can definitely do it right now.

Researcher: Okay, perfect. First, I'm going to read a statement. And then I'll go on to the questions after this, okay?

PD: Yes, sir.

Researcher: Alright. So, thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Kevin Durham, and I'm conducting research as a graduate student at Liberty University to explore the influence of culture and Historically Black Colleges and Universities on music performance anxiety. Before we begin, I want to go over a few important details: this interview will be recorded, and a transcript will be created for analysis. Rest assured, all of your personal identifying information will be kept confidential, and the recordings and transcripts will be used solely for the purpose of this research. While I will not be offering compensation for your time, your participation will help to fill a significant gap in the literature. The knowledge gained from this study may lead to better understanding and support for minority music students dealing with MPA. This interview will last no more than an hour and accompanies the ten-minute survey you filled out earlier.

If you have any questions or concerns at any point, please feel free to ask, and you can end the interview at any time. Again, thank you for your participation. Your experiences and perspectives will be instrumental in furthering this area of study. Are you ready for question one?

PD: Yes, sir.

Researcher: Alright. Listen carefully. Describe any personal experiences with music performance anxiety?

PD: Personally, as a music performer, the only time I ever have it is when I use my own original music whenever I perform. I'm cool with like playing any other cover or anything, I'm cool with performing by myself. I really never get anxiety when it comes to stuff like that. But whenever it comes to my original work, because I create music, I'm a producer as well, so, whenever it comes to my original work, I'm more nervous on that end because, you know, it's a lot about, like, do the people in the crowd like this music? Do they like my music? You know what I'm

saying, what I'm creating for them to listen to. It's stuff like that. That's the only time I really get anxiety, though.

Researcher: Interesting. Okay. How would you define music performance anxiety and what symptoms do you associate with it?

PD: Well, I would say, how would I describe it? It's more like nerves, it's like, oh my gosh, nervous, you know. But that's at least how I feel nervous. I just get nervous, and how I get over it is more like I just go and perform, you know. I don't get nervous and then be like, "I don't want to perform." I just go out and do it.

Researcher: And what are some symptoms you associate with it?

PD: Um, probably like shaking, you know, like a hand shaking, like, uh, something hurting maybe, you know, stuff like that. You have to use the bathroom. Yeah, stuff like that.

Researcher: Okay. Great. Question number three. How would you describe the culture at your HBCU, especially within the music department?

PD: Um, the culture at my HBCU is very rich, especially because we're inside a major city. It just ties around music; you know, Nashville is the music city. So, the culture at the HBCU itself is just more rich. And also, because there's more people that's from everywhere else in the world except Nashville. There's more, uh, like people from Atlanta. I'm personally from New Orleans, and, um, yeah, so the culture is more rich. Right. Yeah, so the culture is very rich because it's like a melting pot, like, I'm just...people at the same age as me, you know, uh, bringing their own life experiences, life culture, stuff like that, to a college. So, I say it is very rich, but the music department. I say it's probably one of the richest music departments in the HBCU league. I guess I could say, because we have so much experience and so much different culture in the department, as in, going from my head, um, music department chairman. He got his degree from the University of Michigan, which everybody knows is like one of the most prestigious music schools, you know. And then we got like a lot of people that's from, like, out of the country. Like my music theory teacher. Yeah, there's a lot of diversity in the music department, but I would say one thing about the music department, as in culture. It does lack in modern culture. If you know what I'm saying, like, you know, everybody knows the classical thing is like opera singers. And like, you know, we focus on the history of school; you know what I'm saying. But we also, as a department, don't recognize the modern music that we that's going on right now.

Researcher: I get that. Can you give any examples or have a culture at your HBCU that might be different from other non-HBCUs?

PD: Oh, um, for example, I would say, like next Wednesday, we were hosting a Black History Month concert for the Wind Ensemble. And, like, I know they probably have some PWI's that do that as well. But for it to be the Wind Ensemble that's full of straight black people and minorities. Every one of them is the top player at the HBCU that we're attending, you know what I'm saying, and then we're also putting on a program that's filled with only black composers. And I would say, I feel like the HBCU culture makes you want it more. It really

opens your eyes. You're like, do you really want to do music? You know, and if you really don't want to do music, you know that you most definitely will. But I kind of like that though, because for people who change, I don't really like doing music things. It shows that it leaves room for people who actually want to get into the music department and go deeper into their knowledge of music. It shows them that, okay, yeah, it gives confidence, you know, like, I feel like that is part of the HBCU experience. You will definitely get it; it will be kept real with you and is not going to be sugar coated. And I like that because, you know, there's no sugar coating in the real world. Either you're there or you're not. If somebody wants you or somebody doesn't, you know, and I like that.

Researcher: Thank you. Question number six: Are there cultural practices or traditions within the music department that either alleviate or aggravate your feelings of anxiety before a performance?

PD: No, not really. I really just enjoy it. I don't really have any positive or negative feelings about any of the traditions we have. I would say there's a lot of stuff that goes into things like funding and stuff that I have concerns about when it comes to stuff like that. Like, sometimes the band or the music department don't have the money to do something, and the university itself will not give or help out. That's probably one of the biggest things.

Researcher: Number seven, what resources or support are available at your HBCU for students experiencing music performance anxiety? How have you interacted with these resources, if at all?

PD: I would say one of our resources is our advisors. Our advisors are in the business. I'm a commercial music major. My advisor isn't one of the most, I would say, well-known, but he is a businessman. He will go out and look for opportunities, jobs, and things of that nature for you. I think that's a great resource. I know another professor who is well known on the music education side. He is very helpful for people who have taken their music education seriously. He will help him get a job and go teach. He is very helpful. I feel like they're our resources more than anything.

Researcher: Do you think there are cultural elements within the HBCU that promote understanding and support for music performance anxiety?

PD: I don't think so at all. I think that comes with being in a band setting. There are people in the band who are there to help you. That's why I like the band so much because it gives you so much. It's a family. If person A is dealing with music performance anxiety, person B also feels this way. But person B also wants to help person A, and they ultimately help each other. You know what I mean. I think that's a great resource.

Researcher: All right. Yeah. Yes. Question number nine. How do your peers and faculty within the HBCU respond to or recognize the music performance anxiety?

PD: Um, peers and faculty, they'll probably respond pretty well. They'll try to, you know, help you out or try to understand the situation. And, you know, at least that's at my HBCU. They try

to help you out. Um, it's all about building trust and family. So, people definitely try to help you out through things like that. Yeah.

Researcher: Can you share any specific interactions or experiences that highlight the influence of culture on understanding and addressing music performance anxiety at your HBCU?

PD: I personally don't have any experience. And I don't know a lot of people that do because, you know, everybody is like, you know, has their own little clique. So, if somebody does, you know they have somebody to talk to. But I personally haven't been through any type of music performance anxiety.

Researcher: I got you. Alright. How do performance opportunities and expectations at your HBCU relate to music performance anxiety?

PD: So, I would say not; I wouldn't say the music department causes music performance anxiety, but the university... Well, yeah, I would say yes, the department does cause performance anxiety. Um, just because of the lack of. Um, I would say preparation, but the lack of giving—you know, I'm saying not a lot of people at TSU go through, like, a great four years. You know, and I would say that because there's always something, like financial aid, problems with the bursar's office, or not being able to get an instrument because, you know, something is just always going on. As far as I know, we have an issue with getting instruments because students keep breaking them. And the people that's breaking them, they're not, you know, paying up the money that is needed to fix them. And then we can't get money from the University because the University saying something else and it's just like a lot of stuff going on, you know, so I would say they caused it. They're causing anxiety.

Researcher: Indirectly.

PD : Yeah, indirectly. Oh, yes. Yes.

Researcher: Okay. Number twelve. Are there cultural events or practices specific to your HBCU that have affected your comfort level with music performances?

PD: Oh, no, not at all. Everything that's happened at the HBCU normally happens at every other school. None, honestly.

Researcher: Okay. Number thirteen. What suggestions or improvements would you propose to better address music performance anxiety within the cultural context of your HBCU?

PD: I would say to improve it, it would be. For them to work harder towards getting work. Yeah, we promise more or less, like, I could say, for personal benefit. And it's not the music department for this is more of the University's fault. Like, I'm on two scholarships. I have a band scholarship, which awards \$6,000 a semester, and I have a university scholarship for academics. We're already paying \$7,500 a semester. Adding those two up, they're supposed to give me a \$4,000 refund. Right now, I am a sophomore in my spring semester, and I've not gotten a refund check, not once. It's not necessarily the music department's fault, but the music department

could definitely help with things like that. So, I would say the music department for them to improve, or the tips I would give them is to actually show that you want to help and once you care and fight for the students in your department. Because at the end of the day, we're paying for education. So, we can't get the necessary tools required and stuff to go through, a great education experience while we're at the establishment. Then why are we here? You know what I'm saying? I feel like I feel about it. And then the music performance anxiety comes in to play with that because you never know what can happen at your HBCU. Like, one day your performance is on Friday, and on Thursday your instrument breaks. Not because of you, but probably because you left it in the locker that you're assigned to or something and, you know, somebody broke in and stole it or, like, you know, anything can happen, right, but you not knowing what like the possibility of like being able to... It's an indirect issue.

Researcher: Okay. Last question. How do you think the music department and the HBCU as a whole can incorporate cultural elements to help students with music performance anxiety?

PD: Okay. I feel like our culture is very competitive, which I know a lot of people have, which definitely affects their music anxiety. But it's always, are you going to rise to the challenge? Are you going to crumble to it? And so, I'm saying it depends on the type of person you are, the way that you perform, and the way that you're interested in your instrument, or anything like that. For example, right now I am a sophomore. I am the trumpet section leader. I play second trumpet in the Wind Ensemble, and I play second trumpet in the Jazz Ensemble. I'm always challenged with adversity by the music every single day. Every time I go into class, it's always something different, something new, something challenging. So that's just the culture that they built up because the program is such a rich one. And so, it has a standard to uphold, right? So that's the culture, and I was ready to accept that culture. So that's why I went into the culture. And now I'm sitting here like, yes, it's definitely stressful to have a lot of stuff on your plate. At the same time, the culture makes you better. It lifts you up so you can meet your own expectations. If you can get what I mean, you know what I'm saying. So, I wouldn't say the culture itself would have to change, but it does affect music anxiety.

Researcher: Okay. Thank you for your time and thank you for helping me complete my research.

PD: Okay. No problem.

Researcher: Thank you. And you have a good night.

PD: Yes, sir. You have a good night as well.

Call ends.

Participant E (PE)

Call begins.

Researcher: Can you hear me?

PE: Yes, sir.

Researcher: Okay. Before I begin, I just have a brief statement to read, and then we're going to go into fourteen questions about music performance anxiety.

PE: I'm ready

Researcher: All right. Yep. Hello, and thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Kevin Durham, and I'm conducting research as a graduate student at Liberty University to explore the influence of culture and Historically Black Colleges and Universities on music performance anxiety. Before we begin, I want to go over a few important details: This interview will be recorded, and a transcript will be created for analysis. Rest assured, all of your personal identifying information will be kept confidential, and the recordings and transcripts will be used solely for the purpose of this research. While I will not be offering compensation for your time, your participation will help to fill a significant gap in the literature. The knowledge gained from this study may lead to better understanding and support for minority music students dealing with MPA. This interview will last no more than an hour and accompanies the ten-minute survey you filled out earlier.

If you have any questions or concerns at any point, please feel free to ask, and you can end the interview at any time. Again, thank you for your participation. Your experiences and perspectives will be instrumental in furthering this area of study. Are you ready to get started?

PE: Yes, sir.

Researcher: All right. Question number one. Describe any personal experiences with music performance anxiety.

PE: The only one I'd be able to maybe think of this like maybe a time when maybe I didn't know a piece as well as I felt like I should have or some type of factor like that where it made me a lot more nervous and kind of gave me a little bit of anxiety when it came to being on a stage and playing.

Researcher: Understood. Number two. How would you define music performance anxiety and what symptoms do you associate with it?

PE: I would define it as when you get nervous, maybe before or during the performance. I would think that there are symptoms, like maybe you get overwhelmed. Some people maybe get really

hot or maybe get really sweaty and stuff like that. Maybe the regular things with anxiety just get tight. Maybe they can't breathe as well and stuff like that.

Researcher: Okay. Excellent. Number three. How would you describe the culture at your HBCU, especially within the music department?

PE: Very strong and rich; very broad culture. And very old culture too.

Researcher: Good. So, can you give an example of how the culture at your HBCU might be different from other non-HBCUs?

PE: Yeah, like, I would say, the membership in our band. I feel like it means a lot more at HBCUs than it does at non-HBCUs. I would think that a lot of the way it's run is very different. We have to operate in a different way. In the end, yeah, I think that's what I could think about right now.

Researcher: Okay. That's good. All right. Question number five. In what ways, if any, do you feel the culture at your HBCU influences or impacts your experiences with music performance anxiety?

PE: I think that one way is like the expectation that the culture will bring to it. Like, say, you know, as an HBCU marching band. Being in front of an HBCU crowd, especially since TSU doesn't really go against a lot of HBCUs in football, but like this last homecoming against Norfolk. We were actually against another HBCU, and that culture is a lot more, you know, widespread and more, you know, direct with us. The expectation that is set upon being, you know, face-to-face with another HBCU could bring a lot of anxiety too, especially for, you know, a band that doesn't really go against a lot of HBCUs. So, maybe the expectation isn't as high for the band. Of course, expectations are always high, but the mental expectations are for the personal self. It's not as high for some people. If we're going against like a school that's maybe not well known or like a PWI maybe, but going against an HBCU can bring, like, a lot of anxiety because of that expectation of performance that they're supposed to have.

Researcher: All right. Number six. Are there cultural practices or traditions within the music department that either alleviate or aggravate your feelings of anxiety before a performance?

PE: Um, I don't think I'm able to think of one. Sorry.

Researcher: Number seven. What resources or support are available at your HBCU for students experiencing music performance anxiety have you interacted with these resources?

PE: Um, I don't really know. I mean, I would think that maybe you can go to, like, the school counselors, but I don't know how much they would exactly understand about it. I haven't really gone and spoken to anyone about it.

Researcher: Okay. Excellent. Number eight. Do you think there are cultural elements within the HBCU that promote understanding and support for music performance anxiety?

PE: Um, no, not really. It's just not really talked about.

Researcher: Okay. I get it. Number nine. How do your peers and faculty within the HBCU respond to or recognize music performance anxiety?

PE: One that I can speak about would be, um, my director. Um, he, if we're like in the middle of a performance or in the middle of a song. He can probably look at our faces and see, especially knowing our rehearsals and stuff like that. Um, if he knows, maybe it's a difficult song, or who knows that he could see us, and maybe he knows how we are? Like, if we're about to start a piece, he'll look at us; he might look at us and be like, breathe, breathe, and stuff like that. So, like, I think stuff like that is, you know, a way that just that director has been able to, um, kind of help us with their performance anxiety, whether we recognize it as that or not. That's it.

Researcher: Number ten. Can you share any specific interactions or experiences that highlight the influence of culture on understanding and addressing music performance anxiety at your HBCU?

PE: No, I don't think so.

Researcher: Okay. Number eleven. How do performance opportunities and expectations at your HBCU relate to music performance anxiety?

PE: Um, I think maybe having a performance, you know, performance anxiety can have someone kind of reject opportunities and not, you know, get as many opportunities or go for them because of, you know, a sort of performance anxiety. Um, maybe if there's like an opportunity like, hey, come play for this gig or come play for this person, you might make, you know, there's this opportunity and this opportunity. They're like, I'm a little, you know, nervous about these things, especially if it's just them. So maybe that would play like a big part in, um, like, that's the effect that that could have.

Researcher: Okay. I understand. Number twelve, are there cultural events or practices specific to your HBCU that have affected your comfort level with music performances?

PE: I'm sure there are, but it's hard for me to think of any right now.

Researcher: Understood. Number thirteen, what suggestions or improvements would you propose to better address music performance anxiety within the cultural context of your HBCU?

PE: I think, like, um, like performance workshops kind of sort of, but not necessarily. I mean, like, a mental thing to prepare students to let them know how to get over certain things or how to prepare themselves mentally and emotionally. So, like, a performance and stuff like that. A lot of times we're just preparing ourselves skill-wise and with muscle memory and stuff like that. Just making sure that we have the material down and that we are able to perform it well, but actually, being in the right mental space to perform, I feel like that's not talked about as much as, you know, like if you're about to, if you have a piece that you're about to play, you're going to play

every piece. You're going to play that piece up and down, up and down to where you know it, know it, and well, you can memorize and stuff like that. But then they don't really talk about when we actually are about to go on to the stage. A lot of times I feel like, you know, that performance anxiety can make you forget a lot of that music that you just ran up and down. So, I think a workshop would help you prepare mentally before a performance and give you skills to help yourself. I feel like that would be a good thing.

Researcher: Understood. And number fourteen. How do you think the music department and the HBCU as a whole can incorporate cultural understanding or cultural elements to help students with music performance anxiety?

PE: I think like the same thing for the last question, like, but bring in that there are more cultural things with which we have a HBCU that are familiar. I feel like if people are able to connect things that are familiar with their performances, then they're able to, you know, get through it a lot easier.

Researcher: Alright. So those were our fourteen questions. Thank you so much.

PE: Yeah, no problem.

Researcher: Thank you so much for helping me out.

PE: No problem.

Researcher: Have a good day.

PE: You too.

Researcher: Thank you.

Call ends.

Appendix H: CITI Completion Certificate



Completion Date 12-Jan-2023
 Expiration Date 12-Jan-2026
 Record ID 53581895

This is to certify that:

Kevin Durham

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of
 certification through CME.

Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher

(Curriculum Group)

Social & Behavioral Researchers

(Course Learner Group)

1 - Basic Course

(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Liberty University

CITI
 Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w23b56647-7d82-4936-bd4e-88c087d5d8c8-53581895

Appendix I: Thesis Defense Decision Form

Doctor of Music Education

Thesis Defense Decision

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

Kevin DeShaun Durham

on the Thesis

The Symptoms of Music Performance Anxiety Unique
to College Music Majors Attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities

as submitted on April 12, 2024

X

Full approval to proceed with no proposal revisions.

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

Provisional approval pending cited revisions.

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

Redirection of thesis.

The student is being redirected to take MUSC 889 again, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the thesis.

Jerry L. Newman

Print Name of Advisor

Signature

Date

Stanley N. Harris, III

Print Name of Reader

Signature

Date

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