

Liberty University

School of Music

Cultural Influence on Recruiting Middle School Children to the Jordanian Nai Choir

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by

Diana Samir George Talhami

Lynchburg, VA

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Abstract

Social practices influenced the recruitment of middle school children to the Nai choir despite the rich Jordanian culture. This research addressed beliefs, cultural dynamics, social values, and strategies to identify a critical gap in the literature regarding the recruitment of middle school students to the Nai choir. To understand students' enrollment challenges, the researcher examined community perspectives related to the Jordanian culture, socioeconomic status, communication between students and community, beliefs, and values. Furthermore, exploring the age perspectives of middle school students was essential. The culture of these students also influenced their decision and motivation to join the choir. This study required a qualitative method approach: the researcher interviewed current and past choir members, parents, school and choir directors, conductors, and students to relate the cultural elements to the recruitment decisions. The literature review dedicates various sections and research studies to clarify the significance of cultural influences in recruiting children for music and choir programs. The researcher investigated the influence of socioeconomic status, psychosocial development, and interpretation of Islamic religious heritage on middle school students as motivation strategies for recruiting students to join the Jordanian Nai choir. The research questions explored the role of traditions, beliefs, community expectations, and culture in encouraging middle school children to enroll in the Jordanian Nai choir; exploring these dynamics assisted in obtaining better plans and strategies to recruit children to the choir.

Keywords: Music, education, choir, recruitment.

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Contents

List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	viii
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Research Questions	15
Hypotheses	15
Chapter Two: Literature Review	20
Introduction.....	20
Theoretical Framework.....	20
History of Music	22
Psycho-social Development.....	24
Interpretation of Muslim Religious Heritage.....	37
Summary	51
Chapter Three: Methods.....	53
Introduction.....	53
Design	53
Participants and Setting.....	56
Data Collection Method.....	60
Procedures.....	64
Data Analysis	65
Summary	67
Chapter Four: Results	68
Socioeconomic Accessibility and Affordability	72

Family and Community Support.....	73
Challenges in Time Management and School Commitments.....	75
Emphasis on Recruitment and Talent Development.....	76
Global Collaboration and Cultural Exchange.....	77
Perceptions of Gender and Masculinity.....	78
Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness.....	80
Nurturing Talent and Individual Growth.....	81
Balancing School and Choir Commitments.....	82
Embracing Global Collaboration and Cultural Exchange.....	83
Challenging Gender Stereotypes and Redefining Masculinity.....	85
Cultivating Empathy and Understanding.....	86
Psychosocial Development and Confidence Building.....	87
Cultural and Religious Influences.....	88
Influence on Social Dynamics and Peer Relationships.....	90
Educational and Academic Benefits.....	91
Cultural Enrichment and Appreciation.....	93
Chapter Five: Conclusion/Discussion	97
Nai Choir Conductor’s Individual Experiences and Observations.....	101
Conclusion	104
Implications for Practice and Theory.....	104
Recommendations for Future Research.....	107
Summary.....	108
Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter	109

Appendix B: Child Assent to Participate in a Research Study in English	110
Appendix C: Child Assent to Participate in a Research Study in Arabic	111
Appendix D: Consent letter in English	112
Appendix E: Consent letter in Arabic	113
Appendix F: Parental Consent Letter in English	114
Appendix G: Parental Consent Letter in Arabic.....	115
Appendix H: CITI Program Certificate	116
Bibliography	117

List of Tables

Table 1. Themes and Supporting Codes	69
--	----

List of Figures

Figure 1. Word Cloud of the Themes and Supporting Codes	70
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Chapter One: Introduction

Music is a language through which cultures express their identities, beliefs, and values. The Jordanian nation is rich in history, art, and cultural diversity. The spirit of the community resonates to convey traditional and heritage stories. Singing in Jordan is part of its culture: people gather at weddings, country, and community celebrations to play music, dance, and sing. Depending on the occasion and old traditions, special music has different styles and conveys people's feelings, happiness, and sadness.¹ Jordan's choirs represent historical significance; they also express cultural identity and preserve the musical inherited legacy.² Cultural influences are the beliefs families inherited, such as forbidding music through the interpretation of Islamic religion.³ Some schools, educators, parents, and students in the Jordanian community believe that art is not an essential subject and has no added value to their children.⁴ There is uncertainty in accepting music according to religion; therefore, families refuse to encourage their children to sing, however, other families are open-minded and want to teach their children all kinds of art.

Middle school education is a significant element in youth development. It shapes the students academically, socially, and emotionally and provides them with future educational and personal growth.⁵ Financial issues are another essential aspect of enrolling in choir and music

¹ Darin Kahel, "'Music is Feeling': Tarab: a Phenomenon of Arab Musical Culture," (2021), 1.

² T. A. Bakri, "Jordanian musiqa sha'abie: an expression of ethnical authenticity in the stream of global pop music," *Journal of Education and Practice* 11, no. 23 (2020): 51.

³ Redhwan Q. G. Rashed, "The Ideological Trends in Ali Ahmad Bakathir's Sallamat Al-Qass," *Domes (Milwaukee, Wis.)* 31, no. 1 (2022): 57.

⁴ Joanna Jesionkowska, Fridolin Wild, and Yann Deval, "Active learning augmented reality for STEAM education, A case study," *Education Sciences* 10, no. 8 (2020): 198, 1.

⁵ David B. Strahan, and Beth Poteat, "Middle level students' perceptions of their social and emotional learning: an exploratory study," In *Dialogues in Middle Level Education Research Volume 1*, 203-226, Routledge, 2022, 223.

programs, and they can often be a detriment. Families' socioeconomic status can discourage them from allowing their children to be in a choir.⁶

This chapter will address the beliefs, values, traditions, heritage, and barriers in the Jordanian culture towards teaching music and attracting students to the choir. It explores the psycho-social development of middle-school-aged students, the influence of the community, schools, and socioeconomic status on recruiting children to the Nai choir. It furthermore highlights the problem of recruiting children to the choir and the purpose, hypothesis, significance, and research questions. This chapter includes the definition of terms and explains the qualitative realistic ethnographic research through the influence of social habits on making decisions and the involvement of students in music education and choir programs.

Background

Social attitudes affect families' encouragement to teach their children music or participate in choirs as a result of beliefs, values, and interpretations of religious heritage. Even though music and singing are parts of Jordanian history, traditions, and heritage, barriers to music education and choir participation for all students are present. Advocating for choir programs and spreading music education awareness in Jordan is recommended. Finding strategies and understanding the population is part of this study, which assists in recruiting children to choirs and arts in general. In the Jordanian community, open-minded families allow their children to learn music and participate in choirs and singing activities, however, in the same culture, extremism exists, and some parents discourage their children from participating in music

⁶ Jacob D. Holster, "The influence of socioeconomic status, parents, peers, psychological needs, and task values on middle school student motivation for school music ensemble participation," *Psychology of Music* 51, no. 2 (2023): 447.

activities, especially singing.⁷ The community celebrates in two ways: women and men separately or in mixed groups. Women's empowerment and rights are questioned in some rural areas, while in others, especially in the capital Amman, this phenomenon is much less prominent.⁸ Radicalism influences singing and music education, which, by default, influences children's recruitment to choirs.⁹

School administrators influence the acceptance or refusal of music education at their schools. They either refuse it due to academic, financial, or religious perspectives.¹⁰ Access to music education is also related to numerous factors. Many parents encourage their children to cease participation in a choir to access more time to work on their challenging school assignments or prioritize sports and training, which coincide with choir rehearsals. Parents need to be aware of the benefits of music education for their children. Forbidding music is challenging in the interpretation of Muslim religious heritage in Jordan. School directors in rural Jordanian areas refuse to teach music as they still believe it is forbidden.¹¹ Mixing gender in singing and education is another issue. The traditional choral music worldwide is Christian. Participating in Christmas concerts elicited a few parents to refuse their children's contribution to the choir because of specific songs with Christian concept lyrics contrary to their religion. Investigating

⁷ Thoriq Aziz Jayana, and Nurul Zainab, "Wasathiyah Islamic Approach in Anti-Radicalism Education," *In Proceeding International Conference on Islam, Law, And Society*, vol. 2, no. 1. 2023, 1.

⁸ Fadi Alsarhan, Sa'ad Ali, David Weir, and Marc Valax, "Impact of gender on use of waste among human resources management practitioners," *Thunderbird International Business Review* 63, no. 2 (2021): 131.

⁹ Hina Haq, Saad Shaheed, and Achim Stephan, "Radicalization through the lens of situated affectivity," *Frontiers in psychology* 11 (2020): 205.

¹⁰ Udin Supriadi, Usup Romli, Mohammad Rindu Fajar Islamy, Muhamad Parhan, and Nurti Budiyaniti. "The Role of Islamic Education Teachers in Preventing Radicalism at Madrasa Aliyah," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 1 (2021): 74.

¹¹ Anwar Bin Omer Bin Musa Husawy, "Singing the Qur'an and Reciting with Melodies Between the Legitimate and Forbidden," *Journal of Al-Farahidi's Arts* 13, no. 46| First Part (2021), 293.

perceptions adds more insight, making this research crucial. The process's dedication, determination, and passion yield valuable, influential findings.

Teaching music is common in most private schools in Jordan. Government schools need staff to provide music education. Some of these schools cannot afford to hire extra teachers for arts and music; they care only about employing adequate teachers to provide academic lessons.¹² They believe some school boards and directors refuse to teach arts and music. Their decisions influence all the students and the community. It is crucial to employ directors to encourage successful music education programs at schools to enhance choir student recruitment.¹³

Psycho-social development in middle school typically comprises a dramatic physical change in a youth's life, especially for boys when their voices change. they experience embarrassment over their voice not reaching all the levels in singing as it used to be. This development will affect their personality and their way of cooperating with others.¹⁴ Psychologically, this age requires educators to be well-rounded in their stages and seek help from professionals when needed. Middle school students' recruitment to the choir is challenging. Their interest in extracurricular activities changes with time. Having plenty of school homework and demands due to the engagement of students of this age in international programs is problematic, however, having some students join the choir, especially boys, during middle school is an opportunity. It improves their academic achievements, vocal development, social

¹² Emma García, and Elaine Weiss, "Challenging Working Environments ("School Climates"), Especially in High-Poverty Schools, Play a Role in the Teacher Shortage, The Fourth Report in" The Perfect Storm in the Teacher Labor Market" Series," *Economic Policy Institute* (2019), 1.

¹³ Katelyn E. Ohler, "Building the Choral Program: A Study of Recruitment and Retention Strategies to Build an Effective Feeder Program in School Districts," Order No. 30487978, North Greenville University, 2023, 1.

¹⁴ Erikka CeMonne Edwards, "Perceptions of Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grade African American Boys, their Parents, and Public-School Teachers regarding Male Participation in Elementary School Choirs," ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2022, 103.

engagements, cultural preservation, leadership, and the development of new music appreciators and future musicians.¹⁵ It is essential to find ways to encourage and convince them and their parents by explaining music's influence on their academic achievements.¹⁶ This is achieved by iterating successful, real cases, reading scientific subjects related to the neural effects of music, and underscoring musicians' success stories.

Touring choirs represent their country and heritage to other communities worldwide, and choristers are good cultural ambassadors for their homelands. Educators and conductors must access folk and cultural music in their repertoire. Singing traditional music forms demonstrates the importance of the choir in fostering cultural continuity. Sustaining cultural identity through singing in a choir encourages recruitment to the Nai choir. Nai choir was established in 2009 by Diana Talhami. The choir started its journey with children aged between eight and seventeen. In 2012, it developed a new group of adult members and performed numerous concerts on many occasions, such as Christmas, Spring concerts, and local events. The choir performed various music genres, including cultural Arabic, classical, religious, and contemporary, and it carried a cultural mission toward its community. It emphasizes raising decent and respectful citizens who can convey cultural values through music and are keen on protecting those values. Integrating musical lifestyle and the Arabic culture is a vital aspect of the program, aimed at creating a well-rounded and culturally exposed community. The program also aims to instill discipline and responsibility in students while enhancing their musical and artistic values.

Including songs from other cultures introduces the students to countries they have never visited and highlights the importance of cultural music worldwide and the pivotal role of choirs

¹⁵ Sabina Vidulin, "Music teaching in regular class and extracurricular music activities in Croatia: State and perspectives," *Hungarian Educational Research Journal* 10, no. 2 (2020): 152.

¹⁶ Patrick K. Freer, *Getting started with middle school chorus*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2023, 20.

in preserving their musical heritage. Jordanian sacred and secular choirs require continuous evaluation. Changing the repertoire, performing, and practicing attracts more participants to sing. Reflecting on the performances and reforming the choir program every year encourages the students to join. The Nai choir changes its plan every semester depending on the age group, the number of students with psychological, physical, and special needs, and the number of new and old participants. The proficiency of the songs in the repertoire that the children need to perform and the degree of difficulty of the songs change depending on the new members, old members, their age, and experience. Including pop music, choreography, and movement is crucial in the repertoire.¹⁷ This enhances joy and attracts students to join the choir. The children, their educators, conductors, and administrators are all one team. The students are enthusiastic to attend the rehearsals when they feel responsible and engaged.

Nai choir opened the registration of all the accepted children after their audition. Students pay a small amount that funds the printing material and assist with additional expenses. The choir offers scholarships or tuition waivers to families who cannot afford registration fees to ensure that financial constraints do not hinder students from pursuing their musical education. Even with this aid, some students quit the choir or never register. When asked why, they explained they could not afford transportation, and some lived far away. Funding choir projects in Jordan is not a priority.¹⁸ Financial inadequacy forces the administration to eliminate music

¹⁷ Jaime Babbitt, "Three Reasons Why Choir Enrollment is Down, (and what we can do about it)," *Choral Director* 16, no. 1 (2019): 5.

¹⁸ Hani Alkhatib, "Diversification of Jordanian Music Culture in the Early 21st Century and Important Changes in the New Musical Groups," PhD diss., Dissertation, Oldenburg, Universität Oldenburg, 2019, VI.

programs that influence access to music learning for all students equally. Only wealthy students in affluent schools learn music.¹⁹

Extracurricular music programs education in Jordan are expensive. Only some of the students can afford private lessons, however, some schools serving affluent communities can offer music programs and private lessons. Students often need to pay for their enrollment. The lack of funds and compounding socioeconomic status concerns generally influence middle school students to join the Jordanian Nai choir. The low income discourages families from registering their children in music programs. Stakeholders prefer to fund other projects: music is not one of their essential interests. No matter how much the choir tried to assist in enrolling students who could not afford to pay, believing that they would have the determination and ability to work hard and commit out of enjoyment, this plan did not work with all those students.²⁰ Other financial problems occurred, including transportation fees and disruption of parents' working time due to their commitment to their children and accompanying them to their practices, influencing their income.

Advertising and shaping the announcement of accepting new students to the choir in an attractive way to others influences the recruitment of students. Including video clips and enthusiastic words on the poster encourages youth and middle school students to sing.²¹ Word-of-mouth advertising was the most significant in the previous years. Involving the parents in the activities encourages their children to join and increases the recruitment of participants in the

¹⁹ Sarmishta Subramanian, "Every Child Left Behind: How Education Cuts Fuel Inequality," *Maclean's Online*, (2019), 2.

²⁰ Robert Joseph Grogan I., II, "A High Achieving Middle School Band at a High Poverty School in Georgia: A Case Study," Order No. 29408751, Auburn University, 2022, 33.

²¹ Jennifer C. Hutton, "Choral Educators' Experiences Creating Connection during Group Singing," Order No. 30423566, Temple University, 2023,11.

choir. The Nai choir conductor asked for help from the parents to participate with their children in choir rehearsals, but only one or two were interested. They were not fully committed but partially involved when asked for help. Children are encouraged when they observe the involvement of adults, parents, and older peers. Adults' involvement improves the children's social and musical skills.²²

This research explores the influence of the interpretation of religious heritage, socioeconomic status, and psycho-social contributions on recruiting middle school children to the Jordanian Nai choir. The findings elicit implications for music education, cultural preservation, socioeconomic status, community partnership, ways of encouragement, and traditional musical practices. Developing relationships in Jordanian society is crucial because citizens will exchange musical knowledge, be educated about the importance of music in their children's lives, and be aware of the neurological and psychological effects that enhance students' academic improvement. The Jordanian culture lacks music education from an early age, which other cultures do. Interpretation of Muslim religious heritage shapes the daily lives of individuals and influences their awareness of music education and participation in choirs.

The Historical context and Jordan's rich musical history emphasizes the importance of recognizing the past events and traditions that have shaped the current cultural landscape. Excavating history helps understand the persistent cultural beliefs and values affecting recruitment efforts. Assembling music from many civilizations and the long history in Jordan contributes to the richness of this art. The cultural experiences of Muslim and Christian Arabs living together influenced their social beliefs, values, and attitudes. Christianity influenced

²² Irene Cortesão, and Isabel Menezes, "Effects on Children of Participation in Children's Community Choirs," *Revista Brasileira De Estudos Da Presença* 13, no. 1 (2023): 22.

Islamic music as an element of dialogue.²³ The need for a small group of people to reply to the priest at church urged the presence of people singing the worship mass and learning music together.²⁴ Islamic civilization started after Christianity and added different styles of music.²⁵ The mutual existence between Muslims and Christians developed new beliefs, traditions, and aspects of the community. Choirs were present in the Arab peninsula, and recruiting people to sing was influenced by the culture.²⁶ Knowing the region's history, diversity, and cultural heritage, the presence of music teaching at schools and performing in groups was noticeable.²⁷

Middle school students' developmental stage is considered a critical transition phase in their educational development and journey. Introducing students to many cultures influences their mindsets during this period. Educators need to know their students and their expectations to influence recruitment efforts. Knowing the needs of the choir members assists in giving them the attention required to enjoy and improve their performance; this will help in planning a strategy to include more children. Being up to the expectations of each chorister will result in obtaining more children to join the choir. This emphasizes the effectiveness of word of mouth in recruiting children. Choirs transmit the heritage of their ancestors by reviving folk songs in their repertoire from one generation to another to achieve cultural sustainability. This reinforces the investigation of how cultural beliefs, values, and psycho-social development influence choir

²³ Renee Hanna Hattar, "Music and interfaith dialogue: Christian influences in Arabic Islamic music," *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research* 23, no. 11 (2015): 2676.

²⁴ Ian D. Bula, "Then Sings the Church a New Song," (2022), iii.

²⁵ Dwight Reynolds, *The musical heritage of Al-Andalus*, Routledge, 2020, 43.

²⁶ Johnny Farraj, and Sami Abu Shumays, *Inside Arabic Music: Arabic maqam performance and theory in the 20th century*, Oxford University Press, 2019, 6.

²⁷ Amy Cox-Petersen, *Educational partnerships: Connecting schools, families, and the community*, Sage Publications, 2010, 86.

recruitment. The conclusion stresses the importance of core concepts in shaping enrollment and recruiting students in choirs. It removes the barriers for other researchers, educators, choir conductors, and schools to reconsider choir recruitment strategies and sheds light on the relationship between music education, choir singing, and culture. The sustainability of children's choirs secures the enrollment of middle school students; including folk music and old regional songs in the repertoire with classical music and songs from other cultures helps the children to be more involved in the choir and enthusiastic about attending practices and staying in the choir. Rahbani brothers' compositions are famous songs in the region.²⁸ They write country songs that serve as the national anthem. They speak about the love of the homeland and how people in the past used to meet, sing, dance, and even love each other. Their music expresses social unity, cultural dynamics, real moral stories, appreciation, and simplicity. These unique values attract the listeners and children to learn them and join the choir, which includes them in the repertoire. Serving the nation's rich musical heritage is achieved through cultural dynamics.²⁹

Statement of the Problem

Recruiting middle school children into the Jordanian Nai choir is a challenge influenced by socioeconomic status concerns, psycho-social development, and interpretation of Muslim religious heritage.^{30, 31, 32} Jordanian society's cultural beliefs include the historical theory of determining if learning music and singing is forbidden or if teaching is more important than

²⁸ Nour El Rayes, "Hearing Cosmopolitan Nationalism in the Work of Fairuz and the Rahbani Brothers," *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 54, no. 1 (2022): 49.

²⁹ Mehran Kamrava, "Nation-Building in Central Asia: Institutions, Politics, and Culture," *The Muslim World* 110, no. 1 (2020): 6.

³⁰ Subramanian, *Every Child Left Behind*, 2.

³¹ Cortesão, *Effects on Children*, 22.

³² Rashed, "The Ideological Trends, 57.

other subjects, such as sports and sciences. Social dynamics address realistic ethnography to detect the influence on recruiting middle-school-aged students to the Nai choir. Despite the historical diversity, cultural influences may facilitate or hinder the students' decision-making and enrollment in the choir and music education programs. The pivotal stage served by middle schools and their administration affects children's choices in their transition age, where they explore their passions and interests.³³ Socioeconomic status is another factor that shapes the plans to involve middle school students in choir programs. The problem is that the literature has not fully addressed studying in-depth and investigating the influence of interpretation of Muslim religious heritage, socioeconomic status, and psycho-social development in middle-age school students. This research unlocks the challenges and barriers to the recruitment problem of this age group and assists in better future planning.

Statement of the Purpose

This research investigates the interconnectedness between socioeconomic status concerns, psycho-social development, and interpretation of Muslim religious heritage in middle school-age students and their influence on recruiting middle school children into the Jordanian Nai choir. Recruitment challenges are identified and investigated with Christian and Muslim mothers, leaders, business key persons, heads of schools, and parents whose children left or stayed for a long time in the choir. Understanding cultural values, beliefs, children's encouragement, and social barriers highlights the connection between cultural heritage and choir education. The findings of this research enhance choir, music education, and cultural awareness and provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of recruiting middle school students into the Jordanian Nai choir.

³³ Sarah J. Bartolome, "We Sing to Touch Hearts": Choral Musical Culture in Pretoria East, South Africa," *Research Studies in Music Education* 40, no. 2 (2018): 265.

This qualitative, realistic ethnographic research aims to address the gap in the literature that encapsulates the influence of socioeconomic status concerns, psycho-social development, and interpretation of Muslim religious heritage in recruiting middle-school students to the Jordanian Nai choir. The population is the Jordanian culture, and the Nai choir is the investigated sample. The study variables are recruiting middle-aged school students to the choir, socioeconomic status concerns, psycho-social development, and interpretation of Muslim religious heritage. They are defined as follows: the socioeconomic status concerns are the low-income families' reflection on their decision-making, influencing outcomes;³⁴ psycho-social development is human development influenced by psychological and social factors throughout a lifetime. Individuals face new decisions as they grow;³⁵ and the interpretation of Muslim religious heritage is that Islamic heritage scholars interpreted music and singing as forbidden,³⁶ and Muslim feminist thought towards gender equality.³⁷

Significance of the Study

Exploring the socioeconomic status concerns, psycho-social development, and interpretation of religious heritage influence on music and choral singing shapes the decision to recruit middle school children to join the Jordanian Nai choir. This study aims to unlock the barriers to recruiting middle school-aged students to the Nai choir process. Findings are crucial

³⁴ Jennifer Sheehy-Skeffington, "The effects of low socioeconomic status on decision-making processes," *Current opinion in psychology* 33 (2020): 183.

³⁵ Jacobus G. Maree, "The Psychosocial Development Theory of Erik Erikson: Critical Overview," *Early Child Development and Care* 191, no. 7-8 (2021): 1110.

³⁶ Pooyan Tamimi Arab, "Islamic heritage versus orthodoxy: Figural painting, musical instruments and wine bowls at the Dutch National Museum of World Cultures," *Journal of Material Culture* 26, no. 2 (2021): 189.

³⁷ Roshan Iqbal, "Nurturing Gender Justice: Qur'anic Interpretation and Muslim Feminist Thought," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 39, no. 2 (Fall, 2023): 59.
<https://go.openathens.net/redirection/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/nurturing-gender-justice-qur'anic-interpretation/docview/2870101214/se-2>.

to the Jordan and Middle East choirs. Educators, teachers, parents, schools, policymakers, cultural institutions, music conservatories, conductors, researchers, and stakeholders benefit from the conclusion gleaned through the research questions. Understanding cultural influences on recruitment is the core of understanding the bond between culture and music education in Jordan. The theoretical significance is the behavioral changes and ecological transitions that may change over time; the cognitive theory that supports the research is Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory on human development, which includes four systems influencing individuals and how they develop concerning the environment.³⁸

The four systems are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. The microsystem is the child's experience with the immediate environment, such as mother, father, and family. The mesosystem is the interaction between various microsystems that the child is unaware of, such as the connection between home and school, family, and peers. The exosystem is the environmental influences that affect the individual indirectly, such as the parent's workplace, community, or extended family. The macrosystem gathers all the previous domains and stresses the constancy between the systems. It includes social norms, political systems, economic situations, and cultural values influencing individuals.³⁹ The chronosystem is another dimension that Urie Bronfenbrenner added, and it refers to the changes that every individual faces throughout their lifespan, significantly affecting the development process.⁴⁰ It includes changes in the family, life experiences, social norms, and cultural developments. For example,

³⁸ Gonca Feyza Soyer, "Urie Bronfenbrenner: The Ecology of Human Development Book Review," *Journal of Culture and Values in Education* 2, no. 2 (2019): 79.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁴⁰ Donna Rooney, and Kirsty Young, "Whack-a-Mole?: Ecologies of Young Adults with Intellectual Disabilities as they Transition from School to Open Employment," *Australian Journal of Adult Learning* 63, no. 1 (04, 2023): 14. <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/whack-mole-ecologies-young-adults-with/docview/2822497960/se-2>.

changes in the economy, technology, personal moving to a new place or job, marriage, and parenthood can shape the development of individuals.

Research has been conducted on human development in Islam, confirming that each stage in life requires a different treatment to stay under Islamic religious guidance without the effect of globalization.⁴¹ This research is significant in developing Bronfenbrenner's theory. It adds to the overall body of knowledge and underpins this research conducted in an Islamic Jordanian culture.

The empirical significance is the collected qualitative data from the perspectives of interviews with different people. Individuals such as students, conductors, parents, heads of schools, Jordanian Christians, Muslims, and employees are addressing the problem. This will add more knowledge to the overall recruitment process of middle school-aged students to choir programs and offer future students and researchers crucial conclusions to build on in more research.

Accomplishing the practical significance is the main focus on recruiting more children to cocurricular and extracurricular choirs. This research can benefit from the experience of other ensembles, such as The Children's Choir of Gema Trumpets, an example of fostering children's attitudes and behaviors and encouraging them of all ages to stay attracted to singing in the choir.⁴²

⁴¹ Riki Perdana, "Perkembangan Kognitif Dalam Islam Dan Model Bioekologi Urie Bronfenbrenner Untuk Hidup Di Era Revolusi 4.0," *Humanika : Kajian Ilmiah Mata Kuliah Umum* 19, no. 2 (2020): 82.

⁴² Meyny S. C. Kaunang, and Lucylle Takalumang, "Manado Children's Choice Echo Trumpet (Review Aspects of Establishment and Development)," *JPPi (Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Indonesia)* (Online) 7, no. 3 (2022): 488.

Research Questions

Recruiting children to sing in choirs, especially in middle school, is challenging.⁴³ The researcher investigates the reasons influencing the enrolment of students in the Nai choir, and this study answers the following questions:

RQ1: How do various Jordanians' interpretations of religious heritage, student psycho-social development, and socioeconomic status affect middle school children's recruitment to the Jordanian Nai choir?

RQ2: How does one leverage or ameliorate the interpretation of religious heritage, student psycho-social development, and socioeconomic status concerns in recruiting middle school children to the Jordanian Nai choir?

Hypotheses

H1: Interpretation of religious heritage, student psycho-social development, and socioeconomic status concerns influence middle school children's recruitment to the Jordanian Nai choir. Children from cultures that are aware of music education decide to join the choir. Conversely, students from families discouraged by music education show low interest in joining the choir. This will shape the recruitment strategies for middle school students to join the choir.

H2: One can leverage or ameliorate the interpretation of religious heritage, student psycho-social development, and socioeconomic status concerns in recruiting middle school children to the Jordanian Nai choir by investigating and understanding the impact on the children's decision to join the choir. Middle school age influences the recruitment process and students' motivation. Effective recruitment strategies may reinforce or counteract the decision to enroll in the choir.

⁴³ Bryan Cody Rante, "Male Recruitment Strategies for Middle School Chorus," (2023), ii.

Core Concepts

The core concepts explore socioeconomic status concerns, psycho-social development, and interpretation of religious heritage influences on recruiting middle school children to the Nai choir. Unlocking cultural effects requires understanding history, family-inherited social beliefs, and values.⁴⁴ The research findings assist in planning recruitment strategies to bridge the gap between cultural heritage and music education. They highlight the crucial concept of socioeconomic status and its effect on deterring families from allowing their children to participate in joining choirs. Engaging parents, educators, and community members in the recruitment efforts is another essential subject explored in the research. The involvement of adults influences children's decisions to join the choir; research, investigations, and interviews prove this point. The findings emphasize the middle school development phase and the effect of the psychological changes and underscore the role of educators in the recruitment process. Middle school is a transitional phase between childhood and adolescence. Boys' voices change, and students' emotional statuses alternate often, influencing their choices to join or sustain choir practices. Advocating for music education and spreading awareness about its benefits affect recruiting students in choirs. Recognizing the difficulties associated with the enrollment of the students to the Nai choir requires understanding social dynamics and performing realistic ethnography research.

Cultural influences acknowledge the impact of cultural values, beliefs, and traditions. Interpreting Muslim religious heritage encompasses the broader context of how families and communities identify the role of music in a child's life. Understanding cultural norms and their influence in discouraging or encouraging middle school students' participation in choir activities

⁴⁴ Magalie Nicolas, "Intergenerational Transmission of Resilience Across Three Generations of African American Women," PhD diss., Barry University, 2022, iv.

is crucial. In the Jordanian culture, music and singing were used on various occasions, such as happiness in welcoming visitors home and marriage. The “Dabka”⁴⁵ is a unique dance for celebrations accompanied by singing in unison. Performers widely presented other homeland songs that described the beauty of Jordanian cities and love songs that depicted women.

Nevertheless, music education remained less fortunate in terms of applying it in schools and using Jordanian and regional folk music to attract children to this art. This impacts the recruitment of children to the choir and music education in general. It is crucial to advocate for music programs and practice cultural Jordanian music in the choir repertoire to enhance the development of this art.

Definition of Terms

Community Expectations. The combined traditions, standards, anticipation of behavior, and participation within a community or cultural group.⁴⁶

Cultural Beliefs. Shared principals, faiths, and ideas by a cultural group; these beliefs shape the behaviors of individuals and influence decision-making.⁴⁷

Cultural Dynamics. Interactive cultural elements include social norms, traditions, and changing beliefs. These dynamics influence individuals’ cultural navigation.⁴⁸

Cultural Heritage. The traditions, customs, and practices represent the legacy of a culture’s history and identity through generations in the community.

⁴⁵ Tsonka Al Bakri, and Mohammad Mallah, "Al Joufiyyih Dabka as Part of Jordanian Folk Music: A Narrative and Analytical Study," 2015, 1.

⁴⁶ Susannah Wettone, "What Did You Expect? Exploring the Roles of Clients’ and Referrers’ Expectations in the Success of the Music Therapy Process," In *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*, vol. 21, no. 2. 2021,1.

⁴⁷ Arno Van der Hoeven, and Erik Hitters, "The social and cultural values of live music: Sustaining urban live music ecologies," *Cities* 90 (2019): 263.

⁴⁸ JinHyo Joseph Yun, Xiaofei Zhao, KwangHo Jung, and Tan Yigitcanlar, "The culture for open innovation dynamics," *Sustainability* 12, no. 12 (2020): 5076, 1.

Cultural Values. Fundamental standards guide the culture for evaluating actions, behaviors, and decisions.⁴⁹

Jordanian Nai Choir. Children and youth choir group based in Jordan that sings various genres and promotes cultural heritage through music.

Middle School Children. The students between elementary and high school whose age range is around eleven to fourteen, and they face significant developmental changes.⁵⁰

Recruitment. Attracting individuals to a particular group, organization, or activity; the efforts made to engage middle school children in the Nai choir.⁵¹

Summary

The qualitative realistic ethnography research examines the complicated interaction of cultural values, beliefs, socioeconomic status, and the role of schools, administrations, parents, and the community in recruiting middle school children into the Jordanian Nai choir. Traditional music, songs, and melodies have been inherited and circulated in Jordan through generations. Despite the rich musical legacy and the diversity of civilizations in the region, cultural influences shape the decisions of middle school students to join the choir. Interviewing past and present Nai choir directors, parents, students, educators, school administrators, and stakeholders in Amman, Jordan, assists in discovering the involved barriers and challenges modeled by cultural beliefs, values, community expectations, socioeconomic considerations, and middle-age impacts. This research's qualitative methodology allows individuals to respond to interviews, explain the impact of cultural dynamics on the middle school recruitment process, and reveal strategies that

⁴⁹ Hoeven, and Hitters, The social and cultural values, 263.

⁵⁰ Yeliz Yücel, and Kerem Rızvanoğlu, "Battling gender stereotypes: A user study of a code-learning game," "Code Combat," with middle school children," *Computers in Human Behavior* 99 (2019): 352.

⁵¹ Rante, Male Recruitment, ii.

address the cultural gap in choir and music education. The findings enrich music education in the region, foster cultural awareness, and provide valuable insights into the recruitment opportunities for middle school students to join the Jordanian Nai choir. This study is significant for educators, parents, schools, principals, cultural institutions, music conservatories, conductors, researchers, and stakeholders interested in the cultural interaction with music education in Jordan.

Highlighting the relationship between cultural beliefs, values, and the recruitment of middle school students ensures the sustainability of the rich musical heritage. It attracts and recruits more interested students to join regional choir programs.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

Families, educators, school administrators, and the surrounding community of Jordanian culture modify the method of encouraging students to join the choir based on the cultural beliefs, socioeconomic status, and psychosocial status, contributing to the recruitment process. Choir educators must understand students' psychological changes, middle school-age features, developmental characteristics, peer interests, personal identity, and willingness to join choir extracurricular activities. Students who cannot afford choir expenses or transportation are discouraged from joining the choir. Families' socioeconomic status is pivotal in whether the students can participate in choir activities. This barrier deters talented children from pursuing their musical interests and equal access to music education and choir participation for all students. Social dynamics and the attitudes of school administrators, educators, and peers can either facilitate or hinder students' decision to join the choir. The literature review dedicates various sections and research to clarify how cultural influences are crucial in recruiting children to music and choir programs. The researcher highlights Bronfenbrenner's theoretical statement to demonstrate its significance to the study. These are significant to the research and support the idea that socioeconomic status, psychological well-being, and interpretation of Islamic religious heritage influence the joining of middle-school-aged people to the Nai choir.

Theoretical Framework

Ecological systems influence individuals of all age groups. Middle school students form their decisions depending on their upbringing and environment from birth until they reach middle school. The effect of students' surroundings will enhance or deter their recruitment in choirs and learning music. In his book *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*, psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner provided ecological systems theory and

explained the dynamic interactions between individuals and their changing environment over time.¹ The researcher based this study on social interactions related to the region's history and the life span of individuals from birth.

The culture influences the equity of studying music and singing in choirs. The ecological systems start from the microsystem when the individual interacts with family and their beliefs in music education, then the mesosystem, when the peers, school, and outside the home environment start to influence the children, reaching the exosystem where the workplace of the parents and community is influencing the students to learn music. This is the middle school age when individuals make their own decisions. The macrosystem shows that cultural values, laws, customs, and social norms influence individuals indirectly in their decision to music education and join choirs.

Chronosystem influences such as past events, life transitions, the role of time, and the state of the choir and music education significantly affect a person's experiences and perceptions. The chronosystem refers to the influence of time, the historical context in which individuals live, and how it affects their development. Life transitions such as marriage, parenthood, retirement, and career changes can also significantly impact an individual's perception of time and their experiences. Furthermore, music education and choir participation can give individuals a sense of community and belonging and an opportunity to develop skills that can positively impact their lives. Bronfenbrenner's theory highlights the influence of cultural, psychosocial, and socioeconomic situations on individuals throughout their lifetime,² which his book included, underpins the research, and clarifies the modifications in the

¹ Urie Bronfenbrenner, *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*, Harvard university press, 1979, 21.

² Ibid., 78.

development process with the changes in life experiences. The study “Ecologies of young adults with intellectual disabilities as they transition from school to open employment” adapted Bronfenbrenner’s theory to observe young adults’ transition from school to open employment and traced the ecological maps, which resulted in the possibility of increasing the number of young adults with intellectual disabilities in open jobs.³ The influence of each stage in life on the recruitment of middle-aged students to the Nai choir is another example worth investigating to increase the recruitment of students in the choir.

Related Literature History of Music

Music has a role in the dynamic changes in the history of Western and Eastern perspectives, forming the identity of individuals through self-expression, singing, and dance. The relationship between politics and music in the Levant area connects or disconnects people of various backgrounds. Courage and empathy are examples of the effect of music on bringing individuals together.⁴ Hattar argued about music experiences shared and exchanged in a Christian-Muslim society in the Arabian Peninsula, including Jordan. Christianity influenced religious Islamic music from linguistic, historical, social, and cultural perspectives. The author analyzed the lyrics of an Islamic religious chant, and the results show that Christian lyrics and values, such as love, compassion, fraternity, and forgiveness, were embedded in it. The lyrics create harmony and an expression of beauty.⁵

³ Rooney, “Whack-a-Mole?: Ecologies of Young, 14.”

⁴ Kathryn Marsh, "Music as dialogic space in the promotion of peace, empathy and social inclusion," *International journal of community music* 12, no. 3 (2019): 301.

⁵ Hattar, "Music and interfaith dialogue," 2676.

Galakhova dedicated a chapter in her book to talk about music education in Jordan from the viewpoint of a woman who has taught in the area for over thirty years. Technology has become more common in Jordan, changing how people listen to all genres of music. Immigration has also brought new cultures and attitudes to Jordan, changing its social structure: Jordan faces a clash between modern European ideas and old Arabic Islamic traditions. Galakhova explains how she balances various roles in her teaching, serving as a female role model, mentor, and counselor in Jordan's multicultural society.⁶ She claimed: "For many traditional Muslim families, especially those living in villages remote from the capital center, making and listening to music falls into a banned or (haram) category."⁷ Galakhova noticed two Muslim families with English-born mothers who wore Hijab, which means they wore the veil on their heads. Their sons did not join the choir sessions due to their families' traditions, but the girls only joined for Ramadan songs (the Islamic fasting month) and avoided Christmas songs, following their fathers' wishes. This was unique because most choir students were Christians and were okay with participating in both Ramadan and Christmas events at school.⁸

Stafford explored how Jordanians navigate Arab and Western musical identities.⁹ The researcher visualizes trends in musicians' backgrounds and pedagogical styles, avoiding a strict Arab-Western binary. The findings show that most musicians incorporate elements from both traditions, with no one strictly adhering to either extreme. While conclusions are drawn cautiously due to the small sample size, trends suggest that amateur musicians lean more toward

⁶ Anna E. Galakhova, "Teaching Western Music in Jordan: An Anglicized-Russian Female Music Educator Perspective," In *Listening Across Borders*, Routledge, 2021, 139.

⁷ Ibid., 142.

⁸ Ibid., 143.

⁹ Hope Savaria Safford, "Preferences and Pedagogies of Musicians in Amman, Jordan," (2016), 61.

Arab traditions. At the same time, professionals vary depending on their educational background and musical positions. Safford found that Amman, Jordan musicians have specific preferences and pedagogies. She discovered this through her research, which revealed that these musicians have particular ways of learning and teaching music. In her study, Safford surveyed musicians in the area and analyzed their responses to gain insight into their musical practices. Her research underscores Amman's unique musical culture and musicians' strategies for developing their skills and knowledge.¹⁰

Psycho-social Development

The psycho-social development section is structured to provide various information on how previous research and studies show the influence of recruiting children to choirs and music education. This fortifies the current research and the call to investigate the situation in Jordan and the Nai choir. Choral music is essential as a career and in people's lives. Brinston's book about choral methods and materials creates successful choir programs that concentrate on recruiting and retaining students from grades five to twelve. Brinston asserted, "A successful choir is the most important and effective aspect of recruitment and retention for a choral program." Designing an effective curriculum and repertoire to fulfill the needs of the students, performing rehearsals and concerts, assembling musicianship, exploring scores, and managing classrooms motivate the students and enhance their recruitment process.¹¹

Discussing and creating ideas to sustain choir programs and reserve its members through advocating for music education; these policies of preventing cutting music programs are clear in

¹⁰ Safford, "Preferences and Pedagogies," 2016, 61.

¹¹ Barbara A. Brinson, and Steven M. Demorest, *Choral Music Methods and Materials: Developing Successful Choral Programs (Grades 5 to 12)*, 2nd ed. Boston, MA: Schirmer/Cengage Learning, 2016, 22.

Benham's book. He stated, "A cut is any decision made that will negatively impact the ability of any student to participate in making music." This book highlights music education reformation in schools, music coalitions, and professions through advocacy to move circumstances from survival to vision.¹²

Community learning in various cultures through story-making, storytelling, dynamic pedagogies, and teaching learning activities explains how axioms and ecologies are shared. Guajardo's book explores community learning exchange and provided practical examples that can solve the recruitment issue and assist in finding ways to apply it in different cultures.¹³ Guajardo says, "The Community Learning Exchange moves the mind and the spirit. It is cognitive, affective, and dynamic. It is a healing process."¹⁴ Involving schools, families, and the community in music education projects enhances the growth of students and delivers music for all equally. Cox-Petersen highlights that it is necessary to know the history of partnership and cultural diversity to meet the needs of the students and the sustainability of partnerships. Cox-Petersen states, "Every family, regardless of income level, language, culture, or home, offers tremendous resources from which teachers can draw. These resources include cultural heritage and other kinds of knowledge and experiences." Culture is the core subject of successful collaboration processes in music education.¹⁵

¹² John L. Benham, *Music Advocacy: Moving from Survival to Vision*, Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2016, 83.

¹³ Miguel A. Guajardo, Francisco Guajardo, Christopher Janson, and Matthew Militello, *Reframing community partnerships in education: Uniting the power of place and wisdom of people*, Routledge, 2015, 145.

¹⁴ Ibid., 145.

¹⁵ Cox-Petersen, "Educational partnerships," 86.

Dabbak examined the culture in a Mennonite school proposing music programs and found that the students' motivation is related to their mutual belonging and unity.¹⁶ They collected their music from four parties: church, school, the director's choice, and choir ensemble. They all indicated relatedness, proficiency, and learning collaborations. Including heritage songs in the repertoire enhances belonging and individual and group identity. It increases the number of students recruited for the choir and the retention of the participants.¹⁷

Realizing the age group of the students before designing the repertoire is crucial. Turman schemed that the choristers practicing songs of their level were excited and had artistic and mental motivation.¹⁸ When the songs meet the students' level, they can master them and enjoy their melody. Pushing the students to a problematic repertoire harder than their age level enhances their hindrance and causes them to leave the choir.¹⁹ Debrot constructed a student-centered learning environment for the middle school choir and incorporated technology, popular music, and dance conducted with the students. The curriculum, which people assumed to be easier than the occasional one, enabled the participants to socialize and make new friends.²⁰ Social-emotional learning and teacher-student relationships influence the environment of middle school choral classrooms. The middle school-aged students' viewpoint in the choral classroom is

¹⁶ William Dabbak, "A community of singing: motivation, identity, and communitas in a Mennonite School choir programme," *Music Education Research* 20, no. 2 (2018): 242.

¹⁷ Ibid., 242.

¹⁸ Katrina Turman, "Children's Choral Repertoire with Highlighted Pedagogical Elements," *The Choral Journal* 61, no. 11 (2021): 57.

¹⁹ Ibid., 57.

²⁰ Ruth A. Debrot, "Incorporating popular music and dance: A student-centered approach to middle school chorus," *Journal of Popular Music Education* 1, no. 3 (2017): 297.

unknown. Educators care about having a positive classroom environment, therefore, it is crucial to understand social-emotional learning and student-teacher connection.²¹

In several cases, recruiting students to choirs requires teachers to explain to the families and parents the influence of learning music on improving their children's academic achievement. Kinney's article explores the educational attainment of diverse music program participants.²² The individuals learning choir and instruments improved reading and math.²³ Children participating in community choirs develop social, musical, and personal skills better than others. Cortesão observed and investigated choir participants in musical projects and collected the data afterward. The results showed a positive influence on social skills and musical taste. Cortesão mentions, "These projects favor the personal and social development and the musical, artistic competencies of the participating children, as well as promoting a new outlook on music for them and a taste for enjoying and participating in musical practices."²⁴ Advertising and advocating for music programs is crucial. Hutton claims, "Students were ready and eager to give their voices to make something expressive, beautiful, and meaningful together."²⁵ The researcher explains the benefits of group singing, including well-being, psychological health, friendship, synchrony, and appreciation.²⁶

²¹ Maria S. Poulou, "Students' Emotional and Behavioral Difficulties: The Role of Teachers' Social and Emotional Learning and Teacher-Student Relationships," *The International Journal of Emotional Education* 9, no. 2 (2017): 72.

²² Kinney "Selected Nonmusic Predictors," 23.

²³ Ibid., 23.

²⁴ Cortesão, "Effects on Children," 22.

²⁵ Hutton, "Choral Educators' Experiences," 11.

²⁶ Ibid., 11.

Music education improves mental health, according to Li's study.²⁷ Musical emotions are related to the age, gender, musical background, and social cognition of the music-learning students. Psychological problems need to be solved. The researcher found a relationship between rhythm and musical emotion affecting mental processing. The teacher's attitude and psychological construction influence students' engagement in music programs.²⁸ Advocating for music education and programs is imperative. Lehman, the professor emeritus of music and former president of the National Association of Music Education, has insights that span over six decades of American education, bringing the past and present to shape the future of music education. He examines various experiences, events, reports, legislation, and proposals to enhance music education. His research captures the attention of music educators, fostering more remarkable dedication to improving student learning experiences, enhancing teacher quality and educational systems, fundamentally reforming the philosophy of music education and music programs, and ensuring its accessibility to all. Music inclusion significantly improves the quality of life and uplifts the human spirit.²⁹

A sense of identity is another crucial part of music education, especially choir programs. Intercultural understanding through singing with diverse student backgrounds encourages youth and children to enjoy participating in choirs. Bartolome explores the choral philosophy of five community choirs in South Africa, including children and youth, by examining their roles, values, and benefits of joining the choir. Interviewing participants, directors, staff, and parents showed they have multiple roles, including recruiting, marketing, promoting South African

²⁷ Paul R. Lehman, "A Music Educator's First-Hand Account of the Struggle to Reform American Education (1953-2018)," *Contributions to Music Education* 44 (2019): 185.

²⁸ Ibid., 185.

²⁹ Ibid., 197.

ethnicity, and fostering their identity. Participants explained the advantages of collaborating with varied cultural and ethnic backgrounds, such as intercultural acceptance, trust, and sense of identity. Bartolome states, “Choral music participation remains a valued component of the human experience in several different contexts.”³⁰ Teaching choirs of many genres from different cultures keeps the participants engaged in practices and motivates others to join the choir. Smith assures that reevaluating music programs and teaching music by introducing a variety of genres, including traditional and popular music, which is the universal language through bands, choirs, and orchestras, increases the student’s engagement in making music.³¹ *Signs of Identity* provides an interdisciplinary exploration of collective identity, drawing from social psychology, anthropology, sociology, and the humanities. It centers around semiotics, focusing on how identity functions as a sign and its relationship to individuals with that identity.

It is essential to emphasize the significance of emotional connections to collective identity. When people feel a strong emotional attachment to their community or group, they are more likely to be engaged and committed to its success. This emotional connection can foster a sense of belonging and purpose and motivate individuals to work together towards shared goals. In the present researcher’s society, where divisions and polarization are prevalent, nurturing emotional connections to our communities and shared identities can help promote unity and understanding. Ehala’s book argues that a sense of belonging drives solidarity and discrimination.³² It offers numerous real-world examples demonstrating how collective emotions impact group dynamics, collective action, and inter-group relations. By tracking

³⁰ Bartolome, “We Sing to Touch Hearts,” 267.

³¹ Robert W. Smith, “Seeing Beyond our 2020 Vision,” *School Band and Orchestra* 24, no. 4 (2021): 26.

³² Martin Ehala, *Signs of identity: The anatomy of belonging*, Routledge, 2017, 2.

contemporary issues such as authenticity, multiculturalism, intersectionality, and social justice, the book prompts discussions on the complex and contentious nature of identity in today's society.³³

Another book containing Palestinian resistance poets primarily focuses on Palestinian contexts. It discusses events such as the establishment of Israel in 1984, which significantly affected Palestinian music and culture, including its impact on Jordan as a neighboring country. The book provides insights into the cultural narrative of resistance songs, offering relevance beyond Palestine to regions like Jordan. It delivers valuable insights into the role of music in resistance movements, with interferences from the Jordanian environment.³⁴ The number of Palestinians in Jordan registered by the UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) is 2.2 million. Added to the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) figures, the total estimated is 3,876,000 out of a population of 9.5 million. These numbers only include registered refugees, and the actual count is significantly higher. Jordan has the highest number of Palestinians than any other country.³⁵

Including songs with choreography motivates children to participate in the choir and enhances the recruitment of others.³⁶ Babbitt suggest that the repertoire should include music beyond classical pieces.³⁷ Choristers will enjoy choreographed pieces, which include building teams and encouraging other students to join the choir and be introduced to this kind of

³³ Ehala, *Signs of identity*, 2017, 2.

³⁴ Stig-Magnus Thorsén, "My Voice Is My Weapon: Music, Nationalism, and the Poetics of Palestinian Resistance," (2015): 126.

³⁵ R. Hoffman, "Jordan and the Refugee Crisis: Impact on the Host Nation," (2024), 17.

³⁶ Babbitt, "Three Reasons Why Choir Enrollment is Down," 5.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

teamwork and responsibility. Babbitt affirms, “Rekindle your passion for music and its power to transform lives. And keep improving: vocally, instrumentally, and spiritually.”³⁸ Engaging students in Dalcroze Eurhythmics ear training, creative expressions, rhythm, and the pulse improves concentration and music-making fun. Oney indicates, “Through the use of Dalcroze exercises, voice pedagogues may build into their students a stronger command of rhythm and pulse, tonal memory and pitch-related skills and breadth of expression.”³⁹ It is clear that after examining the influence of movement on the development of musicianship, students enjoy their choir practice more.⁴⁰

Learning the methods and pedagogies from other international choirs enhances sustained success. The Nagaland Chamber Choir performed in 45 countries and flew with 323 other choirs.⁴¹ Kappal claims that when the choir participants arrived from one of the world choir games, winning the gold medals, politicians, public society figures, and media staff were at the airport to welcome them.⁴² Diligence, teamwork, and getting to know other cultures attract more students to sing in the choir. Kappal confirmed, “If everyone puts their hands together, then with prayer and hard work, we can succeed.”⁴³ Touring strengthens the bond between choir members and improves the sustainability of the choir.⁴⁴

³⁸ Ibid.,” 5.

³⁹ Tricia N Oney, "Dalcroze Eurhythmics: An Application to Voice Pedagogy," *Journal of Singing* 74, no. 1 (Sep, 2017): 37.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 41.

⁴¹ Bhanuj Kappal, "The Nagaland Chamber Choir | Hallelujah! The Nagaland Chamber Choir Has Become the First Indian Choir to Win Two Gold Medals at the World Choir Games," *India Today*, Aug 14, 2023, 2

⁴² Kappal, "The Nagaland Chamber Choir," 2023, 22

⁴³ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 2.

Recruiting male students to the choir and retaining old participants is challenging. It is required to encourage middle school boys to be involved in choir practices. Edwards compares the participation of boys in public African-American school choirs with that of girls.⁴⁵ Males show lower involvement, especially in third through fifth grades. They change their motivation to be with the choir because of their physical growth and changing voice. Parents do not encourage their boys to stay in the choir when they become less interested in the curriculum. The author mentions that educators and parents must convince and encourage the students to remain in the choir and achieve future personal goals. As one author notes, "Teachers might examine their music lessons to determine which factors promote student engagement and encourage male participation in choir."⁴⁶ In another study, Elpus observes how many boys and girls joined high school music groups in the United States of America between 1982 and 2009.⁴⁷ The data collected is from the National Centre for Education Statistics. The results showed that girls were likelier to join choir, band, and orchestra than boys. Choir had the most girls, with about 70% in each group studied. This suggests that the USA schools encourage girls to join music groups more than boys, raising questions about why there are fewer male music teachers and efforts to get more boys to sing in choirs.⁴⁸

The involvement of the school director in recruiting middle school students to the choir is effective. In a middle school community choir in South Carolina, Ohler interviews choral directors collects data from participants and ensures the importance of the principal in the choir

⁴⁵ Edwards, "Perceptions of Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grade," 103.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 103.

⁴⁷ Kenneth Elpus, "National estimates of male and female enrolment in American high school choirs, bands and orchestras," *Music Education Research* 17, no. 1 (2015): 88.

⁴⁸ Elpus, "National estimates," 2015, 88.

recruitment process. The active participation of the school director significantly boosts the recruitment of middle school students to the choir. In South Carolina, Ohler's study emphasizes the critical role that school leadership plays in attracting students to choral programs. The data collected highlights the principal's pivotal influence in making the choir recruitment process more successful.⁴⁹

Concert Performances offer children opportunities to improve their musical and behavioral capabilities, show what they have achieved, and enjoy their musical accomplishments. Boonshaft says, “We don’t just teach music; we teach excellence in everything through music. Our purpose is to help young people find happiness in their lives.”⁵⁰ The book by Boonshaft reassures the importance of inspiring choristers. Concert performances allow the students to taste success. It will enable them to explore their capabilities and accomplishments and show their hard work. Once the students reach the stage where they perform in front of the audience, the director should manifest that they achieved this through their hard work, which brings them success and happiness. The director, therefore, should invest in teaching students how to perform and act on stage. Concert performance, development of vocal technique, and training the choir preparation is a long process based on hard teamwork, confirmed by Bourne, who said, “I believe one of the primary goals of establishing and maintaining a successful children’s chorus is to sing quality music in quality performances. Quality performances will occur if the students are well-rehearsed, sufficiently groomed, and adequately prepared for their

⁴⁹ Ohler, “Building the Choral Program,” 1.

⁵⁰ Peter Loel Boonshaft, *Teaching music with passion: conducting, rehearsing, and inspiring*, Meredith Music Pubns, 2002, 172.

time in the spotlight.”⁵¹ Teamwork is an important factor in improving the quality of performance.⁵²

The psychosocial and psychological dimensions of music teachers are one of the main pillars of the music education system. Taft’s study covered 1,576 participants who responded to items related to six hypothesized role stressors: specialization and teaching loads, holding multiple jobs, years taught, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intent to leave the current job. The findings of this study showed strong relationships between role stress and adverse occupational outcomes. Analyzing the stressful factors music teachers encounter is a crucial psychological aspect related to self-awareness, negatively affecting music education if not resolved.⁵³ McConkey implies that music students face stress from several sources, such as general life stress, schedule, performance, expectations, and classwork.⁵⁴ Accepting pressure coping strategies such as stress mindfulness, pushing through, self-care, and seeking support through emotional competence is a crucial step to support students throughout their music education journey.⁵⁵

The quality level of the choir depends on the conductor’s management and musicianship competencies. The power of singing in a choir transforms individuals into better citizens. Dispo’s research shows that capability-building programs and training of directors are crucial to

⁵¹ Patricia Bourne, *Inside the Elementary School Chorus: Instructional Techniques for the Non-select Children's Chorus*, Heritage Music Press, 2009, 138.

⁵² Ibid., 138.

⁵³ Seth A. Taft, "Music teacher role stress: A structural equation model," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 71, no. 3 (2023): 264.

⁵⁴ Michelle S. McConkey, and Christa R. Kuebel, "Emotional competence within the stress coping strategies of music education students," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 70, no. 3 (2022): 321.

⁵⁵ McConkey, "Emotional competence within the stress," 2022, 321.

developing new skills and techniques associated with the choir's progress.⁵⁶ The sustainability of a high-quality choir needs it.⁵⁷ The continuity of students participating with choirs shows that the reasons are related to personal growth, choral literature, and interaction with choir directors.

Directors claim that most students value the sense of community integration in the choir through making new friendships and interacting with their director. It is crucial to understand the factors influencing the children to sustain their participation in choir programs: knowing why they quit assists in the process of how to support them.⁵⁸ In another study based on the students' and teachers' basic psychological needs, Kainuma examines their psychological need for support. The researchers suggested that teachers should include providing students with increased challenges, offering more personalized feedback, and creating opportunities for democratic decision-making and student leadership.⁵⁹ Kasawneh surveyed teachers in Amman-Jordan about using music to motivate children with special needs. The researcher purposefully chose twenty-five teachers to participate in a questionnaire that aimed to understand their views on the impact of music on art education. The teachers strongly agreed that music positively impacts art education, including planning, training, creativity, and cognition.

⁵⁶ Gilbert Allan Dispo, "Determining and Enhancing the Competencies of the School-Based Choir Conductor through a Capability Building Program," *The Singing Network* 1 (2017).

⁵⁷ Ibid., (2017).

⁵⁸ Redman, David J. and Jennifer A. Bugos. "Motivational Factors in Adult, Auditioned Community Choirs: The Power of Aesthetic Experiences." *Psychology of Music* 47, no. 5 (2019): 694-705.

⁵⁹ Ryo Kainuma, Masato Nagamine, Li Tang, Shuhei Miwa, Akira Asayama, and Miki Toyama, "Relationship between Learning Behavior and Basic Psychological Need Support Behavior from Teachers in Junior High School Students: Focus on Regulatory Focus," *Pásonariti Kenkyú* 31, no. 1 (2022): 15.

Female teachers believed more in music's motivational role than male teachers, while years of experience did not significantly influence their views.⁶⁰ Another study observes how Jordanian elementary students practice social skills through Carl Orff's music education method. Researchers surveyed 350 male and female music teachers and found low social interaction skills among students.⁶¹ They recommended promoting music education in schools, providing necessary resources, and organizing training courses for teachers to improve music education strategies.⁶² Sharqawi's study aims to determine how much moral values are taught in music classes in Jordanian schools for first to third grades. Music and songs play a significant role in teaching these values and influencing how students behave toward each other and others. The research examines how social changes due to globalization and digital advancements impact behavior and communication. The music education curriculum has been updated in the past two decades to match these changes and new terms.⁶³ In another study, Al-Sharqawi highlighted the importance of training music teachers to effectively fulfill their role in education, including selecting and organizing educational materials and using modern teaching tools. It emphasized the need for teachers to be equipped with updated knowledge and techniques to keep pace with educational advancements. The research outlined the qualifications required for selecting music teachers and emphasized the significance of their preparation and training for different academic

⁶⁰ Mohamad Ahmad Saleem Khasawneh, "The Role Of Music In Enhancing Motivation For Education Among Children With Special Needs From The Point Of View Of Teachers," *Journal of Namibian Studies: History Politics Culture* 38 (2023): 970.

⁶¹ Tariq William Odeh, and Mohammad Saleem Al Zboon, "The Extent of Practicing Social Interaction Skills by Jordanian Elementary School Students in accordance with Carl Orff's Approach to Music Education," *Modern Applied Science* 12, no. 3 (2018): 95.

⁶² Ibid., 95.

⁶³ Subhi Ibrahim Sharqawi, and Mohammad Yousef Hammad, "The Level of Inclusion of Moral Values in the Music Education Curriculum for the First Three Grades in Jordanian Schools," *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry* 12, no. 7 (2021), 10092.

stages. The author recommended enhancing teachers' performance and aligning it with modern educational tools and practices.⁶⁴

Interpretation of Muslim Religious Heritage

In an Islamic country, the culture's majority follows the religion's heritage beliefs and interpretations. Some of them believe that music and singing are forbidden. This is why music education is not provided for all the students equally. In Islamic ethics, Rashed examines Ali Bakathir's clarification of his love for the singer Sallamat.⁶⁵ Their love for each other refined his poetry and transformed him into a better human and active person who feared God. He believes singing is a part of worship, criticizing the Islamic claim that singing is forbidden. Rashed says, "In Sallamat Al-Qass, Bakathir introduces a new vision of looking at love. He refers to the possibility of reconciling religion and art, the idea that precedes his reality on the one hand and reinterprets religious concepts to the degree that goes beyond the concepts of his time on the other hand."⁶⁶ Music in Islam is confused regarding its permissibility. Abul Hassan states, "There are no direct mentions about the status of music in the Quran (the Islamic holy book) but only a few verses later interpreted by Muslim scholars."⁶⁷ The interpretation of a verse in the Luqmaan chapter (Luqman 31:6) in the Quran speaks about individuals who purchase idle talks, which are music and singing, misleads people from the pathway of God.

⁶⁴ Subhi Al-Sharqawi, and Ibrahim Mohammad Harafsheh, "The Importance of Preparing and Training a Music Education Teacher to Teach Music Education Curricula in the Ministry of Education in Jordan," *Journal of Positive School Psychology* (2022): 4323.

⁶⁵ Rashed, "The Ideological Trends," 70.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 70.

⁶⁷ Abul Hassan, Ali Ab Ul Hassan, and Rabia Noor, "Permissibility Of Music In Islam: A Confused State Of Halal And Haram Among Pakistani Youth," *Journal of Positive School Psychology* 6, no. 10 (2022): 3895.

al-Israa 17:64, another verse, mentions the disobedience of voice. Alongside, in al-Najm 53:59-61, Muslim scholars interpreted the part of amusement in it as singing associated with the waste of time.⁶⁸ The researcher investigated the youth's understanding of music in their lives from a religious point of view and found that many participants claim that music is forbidden. Music in the Islamic religion has always been a question of legitimate (Halal), legitimate to controversial (Halal, mubah, makruh), or Illegitimate (Haram).⁶⁹ The researchers visualized music into three classifications: the Permissible, which in Arabic means Halal; the Forbidden, which means Haram; and the in-between, which means (Halal, mubah, makruh. This last category is explained as having some scholars who permit and is considered accepted, but it is better to be avoided in other words, blameworthy but still allowed. The chanting of the Quran and religious chants, the call to prayer, chanted poetry, occupational music, traditional family celebration music, and military music are permitted. Folk music, public performances, vocal, instrumental, pop, music from other non-Islamic cultures, and modern and contemporary music are considered blameworthy but still allowed.

Some scholars believe that forbidden music is the one connected to public dancing, gender mixing, gambling, anti-Islamic, profanity, and illegal sex.⁷⁰ Hattar explores the contradiction of Islamic interpretations in admitting and prohibiting music through clarifying verses from the Quran. Islam describes music as dangerous; its emotional and psychological effects can lead listeners to sensual pleasure. According to some people, music can lead individuals away from God, mainly if the singer is a woman perceived as a seductress. They

⁶⁸ Abul Hassan, "Permissibility Of Music In Islam," 2022, 3896.

⁶⁹ Mark Levine, and Jonas Otterbeck, "Music in Muslim Contexts: Deep Histories and Broad Futures," In *Handbook of Contemporary Islam and Muslim Lives*, Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021, 786.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 787.

believe that it can result in unmanageable interference from the devil. The author plotted the following verse from the Quran: "There are some men who buy diverting talk to lead astray from the way of God." (Luqman 31: 5) and said, "The interpretation of this verse is related to music because clerks claim that the "diverting talk" refers to singing. But the prohibition of music in Islamic times was imposed by clerks based on Hadith, which describes the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, not so much with a base on the Quran."⁷¹ The word Hadith means the saying of Prophet Mohammad about life and traditions. The interpretation of Islamic heritage depends on how scholars, clerks, and Islamic groups justify it and either have negative or positive ideas about music.⁷²

Ter Laan argues that, regarding the music and sensational sound form and negotiating religious experiences in Morocco, "Within Islam, this has led to heated debates about music's permissibility and numerous practical recommendations on whether and how people should perform music."⁷³ Interpretations of Islam-inspired music condemn dance, melodic instruments, and Sufism, which means traditional music is considered the open, tolerant, and moderate view of Islam.⁷⁴ Islam interpreted another Islamic genre of songs performed using only the voice and sometimes with percussion called Anashid, which is the kind of music considered radical in the view of Islam.⁷⁵ This kind of singing promotes Islam and revolves around God, the Prophet

⁷¹ Hattar, "Music and interfaith dialogue," 2677.

⁷² Ibid., 2677.

⁷³ Nina Ter Laan, "Musical Negotiations of a 'Moderate' Versus a 'Radical' Islam in Morocco: Dissonance and the Sonic among Vocal Performers of Islam-Inspired Music," *Religion* (London. 1971) 51, no. 2 (2021): 217.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 219.

⁷⁵ Laan, "Musical Negotiations of a 'Moderate'," 2021, 226.

Mohammed, and Islamic ethics; it differs from the Sufi style in lyrics, dress, and performance.⁷⁶

The difference in music between moderate and radical Islam from a Moroccan point of view is not mutually exclusive. They both express Islamic ethics but are different genres and interpretations according to Islamic religious opinions.

Religious practices and beliefs serve as mediating agents that shape interactions between different spiritual traditions. Mayer stated, “Conceptualizing religion as mediation is useful to unpack religious plurality.”⁷⁷ Altabaa’s research delves into the spiritual dimensions of Jubran’s creative output in English and Arabic. Jubran is an influential Lebanese-American thinker, artist, and writer. Despite being born into a catholic family, his works reflect a synthesis of Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, with consistency with Islamic views.⁷⁸ Altabaa provides an overview of theistic spirituality and then examines the spiritual themes shown by Jubran, the spiritualist path, and spiritual ethics, drawing parallels from Islamic and Christian theology. The researcher reveals Jubran’s adoption of religion as a universal solution to inquiries about life’s meaning, aiming to elevate humanity toward spiritual and moral perfection. Jubran customs a prophetic voice to guide the soul from its celestial origins through a journey of purification, knowledge, and love, ultimately aiming for a spiritual union with God. It highlights that the spiritual essence is a unifying force across Jubran’s Arabic and English works, contributing to their enduring literacy and widespread approval across diverse cultures. Jubran situates himself within a traditional spiritual framework, acknowledging the mysterious essence and spiritual core shared

⁷⁶ Ibid., 227.

⁷⁷ Birgit Meyer, "Religion as mediation," *Entangled Religions* 11, no. 3 (2020), 1.

⁷⁸ Sardare Aslani, and Zahra Amirian, "Religions Viewpoints of Khalil Jubran (Khalil Gibran): a critical review," *al-Adab Journal* 129 (2019): 123.

by all religions. Furthermore, his moral principles are rooted in his spiritual perspective and conception of a fair and compassionate God.⁷⁹

Discussions about music within Islamic heritage in contemporary times continue to evolve. Some individuals and communities adhere to more conservative interpretations that discourage or prohibit music. In contrast, others embrace a more inclusive approach that recognizes the diversity of musical expression within the Islamic tradition. Overall, interpretations of Islamic heritage regarding music reflect the complex interplay between religious teachings, cultural practices, and individual beliefs. Alkhatib investigates contemporary musical practices in Jordan through four case studies of local music groups, analyzing the impact of globalization on previously uncommon genres.⁸⁰ He utilized various sources, including interviews, documents, and music recordings. He explored the emergence of new music groups in Jordan, influenced by historical, geographical, and regional changes, focusing on their deviation from traditional practices and their responses to globalization. This influenced groups' songwriting, lyrics, production, and marketing, employing theoretical frameworks from the sociology of culture and critical discourse analysis. These groups, such as Aziz Maraka (Razz), ElMorabba3, Yacoub Abu Ghosh (zaman Al-Zaatar), and Ayloul, demonstrate the influence of Western musical genres, rock, pop, jazz, rap, and electronic music, reflecting social and political themes independently of mainstream structures. Through crowdfunding and social media, they maintain independence from political and media institutions, contributing to the diversification of Jordan's music scene under the influence of globalization.⁸¹ In Aziz's song "*Ma Bagol Asef*,"

⁷⁹ Homam Altabaa, "Spirituality in Modern Literature: Kahlil Gibran and the Spiritual Ques," *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)* 22, no. 2 (2017): 215.

⁸⁰ Alkhatib, "Diversification of Jordanian Music," vi.

⁸¹ Alkhatib, "Diversification of Jordanian Music," vi.

in his lyrics, he deals with women equally with men; this is different from the Islamic and Arabic perspectives.⁸²

The Levant region, including Jordan, was under Islamic rule from 638 to 1917, the end of the Ottoman Empire. The influence of this period on societies of the Arabic region is until now. It plays a crucial role in Jordanian music.⁸³ Radical Islamic movements such as Wahhabism had fundamental thoughts and actions that allowed murdering people if they did not follow their traditions.⁸⁴ In today's Middle East, refraining from music during Ramadan, the Islamic holy fasting month, signifies increased religiosity, particularly in Amman, Jordan. Tobin observed and interviewed people from the Islamic bank, underscoring the widespread adherence to music practice during the holy month within the Islamic framework of music known as haram, which means forbidden.⁸⁵

The researcher argues that debates over music's compatibility with Islamic values reveal a clash between cultural and Islamic identities. During Ramadan, following Islamic rules about music becomes more important than cultural differences, causing little disagreement. Outside Ramadan, however, conflicts between these values often arise in families, communities, and workplaces, showing how tricky it can be to enforce religious rules on diverse beliefs and practices.⁸⁶ Tobin said: "The debates regarding whether or not music is forbidden, or haram, date

⁸² Ibid., 106.

⁸³ Ibid., 78.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 157.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 157.

⁸⁶ Sarah A. Tobin, "Ramadan Blues: Debates in Popular Islam during Ramadan in Amman, Jordan," *Digest of Middle East Studies* 22, no. 2 (2013): 292.

back to discussions that derive from the sayings and traditions of the Prophet Mohammad.”⁸⁷ In an article, Yuldashev delves into the philosophy of music as discussed by critical Islamic thinkers from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries A.D.⁸⁸ It explores a wide array of topics, such as the physics and aesthetics of sound, the essence of music, its significance in the grand scheme of existence and human life, its connections with astronomy, astrology, and meteorology, and its influence on human emotions, traits, and conduct. Additionally, it examines whether adherents of Islam should engage in listening to music and, if so, what types are permissible. This article meticulously outlines the Islamic perspectives on music, clarifies their core arguments, and critically analyzes their viewpoints.⁸⁹

Adhan means the call to prayer. It is performed in mosques to gather people and start prayers together. In Jordan, the Adhan is part of the Islamic and Arabic traditions: it is a theological idea decorated by music and has two versions performed in all the cities of Jordan.⁹⁰ The Adhan has a simple musical style. Its sound and mood familiarize the locality, society, and home taste.⁹¹ It is not uncommon for contemporary music to be evaluated based on what is deemed acceptable within Islam. This can often lead to debates about whether music should adhere to cultural or Islamic norms. Generally, these two viewpoints tend to align, but during Ramadan, there may be more instances of conflict between the two. According to Islamic law,

⁸⁷ Ibid., 297.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 297.

⁸⁹ Fakhridin A. Yuldashev, "Philosophy of Music in Muslim Medieval Culture," *Journal of Arts and Humanities* 7, no. 3 (2024): 1.

⁹⁰ Tsonka Al Bakri, and Nedat Nuserat, "Al Adhan: documenting historical background, practice rules, and musicological features of the muslim call for prayer in Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," *Musicologica Brunensia* 54, no. 1 (2019): 182.

⁹¹ Ibid., 183.

people usually do not refer to the Adhan call to prayer as music despite its musical sound when sung. A religious scholar might consider music sung by an Arab or Persian singer forbidden. Still, they will not object if someone sings the Adhan, which is common in the Islamic world, even though it sounds musical. According to Islamic law, sound interpretation depends on its content and purpose.⁹²

In Islam, people often experience the Quran through beautiful chanting without the accompaniment of instruments, much like the Western Gregorian Chant. Unlike Christianity, Islam has remained faithful to this tradition, perceiving the human voice as the purest form of musical expression for reciting the Quran. Most Islamic scholars not only accept but also encourage this form of chanting. While European styles have influenced some modern singers, this has not significantly altered the tradition. The art of Quranic chanting remains strong, shaping various forms of music across the Islamic world, with many famous singers starting their careers as Quranic chanters.⁹³

The relationship between music and Islamic Law is complex. In the Islamic context, music encompasses a wide range, from Quran recitation to various forms of classical and popular music. Authorities hold differing opinions on the matter, but it is an oversimplification to perceive music as forbidden in Islam. Recent cultural changes have prompted reevaluation by religious figures, yet many overlook the flood of Western music lacking religious or spiritual value. Preserving Islamic culture, including its music, is crucial amid these challenges, requiring a reconsideration of Islamic Law's stance on music in today's world.⁹⁴

⁹² Rana Shieh, "Music and Islamic Law," *Transcendent Philosophy: An International Journal for Comparative Philosophy and Mysticism* 17 (2016): 48.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁹⁴ Shieh, "Music and Islamic Law," 2016, 68.

The Quranic recitations adhere to certain rules that permit specific actions. Notations in the Quranic text, like dots and dashes, indicate what reciters can do regarding pronunciation, intonation, and pauses. Risser claims that Quran reciters can choose their style and may improvise during recitation. They can adjust pitch, volume, and speed, add vocal decorations, and create dramatic progressions. Improvisation should enhance the delivery of the text rather than overshadowing it, making each recitation unique. Improvisation enhances the understanding and reception of the Quranic text, emphasizing its importance over artistic expression.⁹⁵ Once artists share their work, they must understand that others may handle it in ways they do not expect or approve of. It is generally allowed by law as long as the new use does not involve fraud, copyright violations, or harm to the original artist or society.⁹⁶

Socio-economic Status Concerns

Education generally requires financial adequacy. In the music field, cutting music programs due to economic insufficiency impacts students' music knowledge and deters providing equal education for all. The influence of all music extracurricular programs is limited only to well-off students who can afford to learn music and enroll in choirs. In contrast, other students are left unable to participate. In Canada, the public schools cut jazz, choir, and orchestral strings programs due to financial problems, as Subramanian mentions. He states "Cuts to public education don't just hurt the vulnerable. They also hurt a large swath in the middle."⁹⁷ The author highlights that having enough funds is crucial to saving music programs.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Rita Elizabeth Risser, "Qur'anic Recitation and The Aesthetics of Piety," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 76, no. 3 (2018): 310.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 315.

⁹⁷ Subramanian, "Every Child Left Behind," 2.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

Low funds influence choir programs negatively, but in Georgia, at a high-poverty middle school, the band succeeded because of the determination theory of individuals. Proficiency, independence, and relatedness showed a positive relationship in their success. Grogan claims the band's success is due to the classroom atmosphere, participants' efforts, determined band directors, school and district support, and community acceptance. The author writes, "This construct represents intrinsic motivation. It is where an individual does something out of enjoyment for the task."⁹⁹ Socioeconomic status factors impact the achievement of music students in state-level performing groups. Bailey examined the percentage of students' participation in Texas All-State ensembles from 2005-2015. He found that economically disadvantaged schools participate less in state choir and band program competitions and performances than medium and high socioeconomic-status schools. In addition, schools with the lowest socioeconomic status participated more in bands than in choirs.¹⁰⁰ Students' families could not afford to pay for private music lessons. Participants may be unavailable after school rehearsals due to having an extra job to support their families or be at home to care for other elderly family members.¹⁰¹ Other factors influencing choir students include the lack of transportation and family support to participate in music and art education programs.¹⁰² Promoting socioeconomic diversity in choral ensembles occurs through socially inclusive music organizations. Shaw wrote that distributing rewards to all choral ensemble students and not only

⁹⁹ Grogan, "A High Achieving Middle School Band," 33.

¹⁰⁰ Mark A. Bailey, "Examination of the Relationships Between Socioeconomic Status and Music Student Achievement in State-Level Performing Groups," *Texas Music Education Research* 2018, 3. Accessed April 16, 2024. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1205408.pdf>.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 34.

hard workers will empower those with low socioeconomic status. Students can also rotate and share parts with other choirs in large ensembles and be well-recognized by others. Educators who serve students from underserved communities must have equal opportunities as their peers in different areas. Choral art opportunities must be given to all the students equally, not only to well-resourced communities.¹⁰³

Socioeconomic status is a common way to understand people's social, cultural, and financial backgrounds in research. Long's study examines how people measure socioeconomic status over time and the components they use. Researchers gathered a lot of literature on socioeconomic status and analyzed it to see which constituents were most popular. They found that different components became more or less important over the decades. Recently, there has been more focus on cultural and economic aspects. Subjective views of social class have become more common, but measures based on assets are still rare. Alongside this, parental education, occupation, and income have remained influential.¹⁰⁴ In another article, Clark confirms that sustaining elementary school music education in low-income rural areas depends on the parent's and educators' attitudes. The leadership of principals overcomes financial barriers. Sustaining music programs is achieved by the impact of academic performance on the student's daily activities and their motivation. Educators' leadership skills shape the support for music in the school program in low-income rural areas.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Julia T. Shaw, "Toward Socially Inclusive Music Organizations: Promoting Socioeconomic Diversity in Choral Ensembles," *The Choral Journal* 58, no. 4 (2017): 22.

¹⁰⁴ Kody Long, and Rachel Renbarger, "Persistence of Poverty: How Measures of Socioeconomic Status have Changed Over Time," *Educational Researcher* 52, no. 3 (2023): 144.

¹⁰⁵ Ivone Fraiha Clark, "Supporting music education in elementary schools in a low-income rural area," *Education Research International* 2022 (2022): 1.

Socioeconomic status, parents, peers, and psychological needs influence middle school students' motivation to participate in music ensembles at school. Holster highlights that peers and socioeconomic status are essential in the student's decision to select music programs. Music learning is valued when parents and teachers support students' autonomy, competence, and relatedness.¹⁰⁶ El Sistema music programs focus on social development through ensemble instruction to enhance students' agency and belonging. It increases community connection and teachers' own experiences in practical implementation.¹⁰⁷ Music learning opportunities could potentially improve outcomes for disadvantaged students. Researchers involved two schools catering to students facing general poverty, refugees, and immigrants to explore the potential benefits of instrumental music learning programs for economically and socially disadvantaged primary school students. They proceeded with the El Sistema-inspired music programs. Findings showed enhanced non-verbal reasoning, verbal and mathematical skills, and psychological well-being. These results suggest promising outcomes for low socioeconomic status and socially disadvantaged children participating in El Sistema-inspired extracurricular music programs, given the widespread adoption of such programs globally.¹⁰⁸

Student behavior can impact both teachers and students negatively. Effective behavior management methods can improve performance but need consistent implementation. Beaham's study explores how educators find and view resources on behavior management. The researcher surveyed 238 educators in West Virginia on their use and opinions of various resources. People

¹⁰⁶ Holster, "The influence of socioeconomic status," 447.

¹⁰⁷ Sean Corcoran, "Teaching creative music in El Sistema and after-school music contexts," *International Journal of Music Education* 39, no. 3 (2021): 313.

¹⁰⁸ Margaret S. Osborne, Gary E. McPherson, Robert Faulkner, Jane W. Davidson, and Margaret S. Barrett, "Exploring the academic and psychosocial impact of El Sistema-inspired music programs within two low socioeconomic schools," *Music Education Research* 18, no. 2 (2016): 156.

avored colleagues because they offered accessible, understandable, and trusted information. Beaham gathered additional insights from interviews with ten participants. Overall, educators rely on colleagues for accessible and trustworthy information on behavior management strategies.¹⁰⁹

Elpus's study describes the characteristics of high school music ensemble students in the U.S. using data from 2013. He found that 24% of high school graduates took at least one year of a band, choir, or orchestra course during high school. Most music students were female, and the majority were White. Students from higher socioeconomic status backgrounds were likelier to be involved in music. Additionally, many music students participated in arts activities outside of school, and the majority attended cultural events with their parents during ninth grade.¹¹⁰

Policymakers, administrators, and educators face a challenge in ensuring that all children, regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and linguistic background, have access to music education.¹¹¹

Bannerman examines how rural choral programs in secondary schools interact with their communities.¹¹² He found that factors like the beliefs of the choir teacher and the perceived benefits of choir participation influence access to the program. The researcher conducted interviews and observations with students, parents, and school staff for this study. Results showed that alignment with school and community values, like a well-rounded education and

¹⁰⁹ Lydia A. Beahm, Xueye Yan, and Bryan G. Cook, "Where do Teachers Go for Behavior Management Strategies?" *Education & Treatment of Children* 44, no. 3 (2021): 201.

¹¹⁰ Kenneth Elpus, and Carlos R. Abril, "Who enrolls in high school music? A National Profile of US Students, 2009–2013," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 67, no. 3 (2019): 323.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 326.

¹¹² Julie Bannerman, "Singing in school culture: Exploring access to participation in a rural choral program," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 222 (2019): 44.

college preparation, facilitated participation, but social meanings related to singing and conflicts with other courses, especially career and technical education (CTE) and Advanced Placement (AP) classes, hindered access. Limited resources and the emphasis on career exploration in economically depressed areas also posed challenges to music education for all students.¹¹³

Bozcurt's study examines how instructional leadership, school culture, academic self-efficacy, and socioeconomic status influence educational achievement.¹¹⁴ Using stratified sampling, it involved 194 teachers and 948 students from 30 schools in Çankırı province. In 2017-2018, teachers completed scales on organizational culture, instructional leadership, and collective teacher efficacy, while students responded to the Academic Self-Efficacy Scale. Students' average scores measured academic achievement in six courses. Results showed socioeconomic status, academic self-efficacy, and collective teacher efficacy significantly affected students' academic achievement. Additionally, teachers' perceptions of instructional leadership correlated with organizational culture perceptions, which influenced teachers' collective efficacy perceptions.¹¹⁵

Kenneth examines eighth-grade students in the USA in 2016 to see how they did in music classes and collected data from the National Assessment of Education Progress.¹¹⁶ The findings were that 64% of eighth graders took a music class, but fewer Black, Latinx, and lower-income students joined ensemble classes. In general music classes, however, these students were more

¹¹³ Ibid., 44.

¹¹⁴ Bozkurt, Süheyla, Ömür Çoban, Murat Özdemir, and Nedim Özdemir. "How Leadership, School Culture, Collective Efficacy, Academic Self-Efficacy, and Socioeconomic Status Affect Student Achievement." *Eğitim Ve Bilim* 46, no. 207 (2021), 465.

¹¹⁵ Süheyla, "How Leadership, School Culture," 2021, 465.

¹¹⁶ Kenneth Elpus, "Middle school music uptake and achievement: Evidence from the 2016 Arts National Assessment of Educational Progress," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 70, no. 3 (2022): 248.

represented. Students in ensemble classes scored better in music tests than those not taking music, but students in general music classes scored about the same as those not.¹¹⁷

Antmann wanted to see if there were differences in how well middle school students did in reading and math tests depending on whether they were in instrument music classes.¹¹⁸ He examined whether this differed for students from families with high or low incomes. Antmann found that for students from families with higher socioeconomic status, being in instrumental music classes did not make a big difference in their test scores. For students from families with low socioeconomic status, being in instrumental music classes made a slight difference in their math scores but not in their reading scores. He also noticed that students from higher-income families were likelier to join instrumental music classes in sixth grade and were less likely to quit before seventh grade.¹¹⁹

Summary

This review delves into the literature concerning the socioeconomic status, psychosocial impacts, and interpretation of the Islamic heritage variables influencing music education and choir participation. The researcher investigates theories, growth, and psychological characteristics of middle school-aged students, socioeconomic factors, and understanding of the history, culture, and atmosphere that may enhance or deter middle school students from joining music and choir programs. This study investigates how cultural influences, including socioeconomic status, psychosocial status, and interpretation of Islamic heritage, influence the recruitment of middle school-aged students to the Jordanian Nai choir.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 248.

¹¹⁸ Michael Antmann, "Socioeconomic status, instrumental music participation, and middle school student achievement," (2015), iii.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., iii.

Chapter Three: Methods

Introduction

A qualitative, realistic, ethnographic method allows for an in-depth exploration of the sophisticated cultural dynamics, social values, and beliefs surrounding the recruitment of middle school children to the Nai choir. This method was chosen to align with the complexities of the research questions and the need to understand the nuanced experiences and perspectives of various elements such as historical influences, psychosocial status, socioeconomic status, and interpretation of Islamic religious heritage. These variables influenced middle school students to participate in the Nai choir.¹ Recruitment of middle-aged school students to the choir explores the factors and strategies affecting the enrollment of middle school children in the Jordanian Nai choir, including cultural, social, and personal motivations. The socioeconomic status concerns examined the effect of income, education level, and access to resources on the recruitment process and participation in the choir programs. Psycho-social development delved into the psychological and social aspects of middle school students' growth, exploring how these factors intersected with their decision-making processes and motivation to join the choir. Interpretation of Muslim religious heritage assisted in understanding religious values and traditions influencing students' attitudes toward participating in choir activities within the context of their cultural and religious upbringing.

Design

This research's specific research design type is qualitative, realistic, ethnographic research. The rationale for selecting this design lay in its capacity to immerse the researcher within the natural settings and cultural environment of the Jordanian community, allowing for an

¹ Soyer, "Urie Bronfenbrenner,"79.

in-depth exploration and understanding of the social practices, beliefs, and values that influenced the recruitment of middle school students to the Nai choir. Realistic ethnographic research enabled the researcher to engage with participants in their everyday contexts, gaining insights into the lived experiences and perspectives of various stakeholders involved in the recruitment process. By adopting this approach, the study aims to uncover the complicated cultural dynamics and social phenomena shaping enrollment decisions, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the recruitment practices within the Jordanian context and informing the development of effective strategies for enhancing choir participation among middle school students.

Bartolom's ethnographic study delves into the perceived values and benefits of involvement in a thriving community-based girls' choral ensemble, focusing on choristers' expressed values and observed behaviors.² Over a year of fieldwork, detailed documentation and analysis of choir activities, alongside interviews with choristers, faculty, parents, and staff, highlighted music and personal, social, and external benefits, contributing to a deeper comprehension of contemporary music participation's significance in individuals' lives.³ Another study by Hedden employed a mixed-methods approach to explore factors influencing literature selection and resources utilized by children's choir conductors, interviewing successful directors and analyzing results. Qualitative findings revealed themes guiding literature selection, informing survey questions sent to conductors, with a 51.0% return rate. Consistency between qualitative and quantitative results highlighted essential considerations such as voice, melody,

² Bartolome, Sarah J. "'It's like a whole bunch of me!'" The perceived values and benefits of the Seattle Girls' Choir experience," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 60, no. 4 (2013): 395.

³ Ibid., 395.

and text, alongside conductor preference and repertoire fitting, with conductors relying on diverse resources, including personal collections, choir observations, and online platforms, suggesting implications for literature selection practices influenced by choir participation and observation.⁴

Pendergast's research examines sociopsychological factors influencing participation in school choral programs, focusing on motivation frameworks like Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT).⁵ Through SDT, it highlights classroom features fostering intrinsic motivation, while EVT informed program design and recruitment strategies. The complex nature of choral participation was acknowledged, with variations in enrollment rates and program characteristics attributed to diverse motivational factors and school environments, offering insights into classroom applications of these theories.⁶

The research-supported design limitations were generalizability, subjectivity, and bias. The findings and conclusions drawn from a specific context or sample may only universally apply to some school choral programs due to variations in program structures, student populations, and cultural contexts. This could limit the external validity of the study's findings and the ability to generalize the results to other settings. The researcher's perspective may have influenced the interpretation of sociopsychological factors associated with choral music participation, leading to potential data collection, analysis, and interpretation biases. This subjectivity could have limited the reliability and objectivity of the research's findings.

⁴ Debra G., Hedden, and Ashley D. Allen, "Conductors' literature selection practices for community children's choirs in North America," *International Journal of Music Education* 37, no. 1 (2019): 3.

⁵ Seth Pendergast, "Research-to-Resource: Two Motivation Frameworks for Encouraging School Choral Participation," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 41, no. 2 (2023): 5.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

Participants and Setting

The study's population includes middle-aged Nai choir students enrolled in the program, their families of different socioeconomic statuses, former participants of the program, and religious Muslim mothers. The characteristics and demographics reported includes social influences, interpretation of the Islamic heritage religion, psychosocial factors, and socioeconomic status. The sampling procedure for this study involved purposive sampling, targeting middle-aged Nai choir students, their families of varying socioeconomic status, previous participants, and religious Muslim mothers. Goal-directed sampling allowed the selection of participants with characteristics related to the cultural influences under investigation.⁷ The sample size was determined based on theoretical fullness, ensuring enough participants to capture diverse experiences and perspectives related to the research variables. Theoretical saturation occurred when no new insights or themes emerged from the data, indicating an adequate sample size.⁸

Participants were identified through collaboration with the Nai choir administration, teachers, and community leaders and potentially through self-identification during recruitment efforts, ensuring representation from middle-aged students, families of varying socioeconomic status, previous participants, and religious Muslim mothers. The researcher selected the participants in consultation with key stakeholders such as the Nai choir administration, teachers, and community leaders, ensuring the presence of individuals who met the criteria outlined for the research. The interviewer introduced this experience to potential participants through

⁷ Choong-Ki Lee, Muhammad Shakil Ahmad, James F. Petrick, Yae-Na Park, Eunkyong Park, and Choong-Won Kang, "The roles of cultural worldview and authenticity in tourists' decision-making process in a heritage tourism destination using a model of goal-directed behavior," *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management* 18 (2020): 1.

⁸ Kelvin Mwita, "Factors influencing data saturation in qualitative studies," *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science* (2147-4478) 11, no. 4 (2022): 414.

informational sessions, where the researcher explained participation's purpose, procedures, and possible benefits. The researcher's efforts gained involvement through clear communication, building trust, and addressing any concerns or questions participants raised. Obtaining informed approval from all participants was crucial before participating in the research.

This research examined various subgroups within the population of middle-aged Nai choir students and their families. These subgroups included students and families of different socioeconomic statuses, previous participants, and religious Muslim mothers. These groups were formed based on the characteristics and demographics relevant to the research topic, with participants self-identifying and identified through collaboration with the Nai choir administration, teachers, and community leaders. This allowed the researcher to explore diverse perspectives and experiences related to cultural influences on recruiting children to the Nai choir.

The setting for this research was the Nai choir program located within the broader community of Jordan. The physical space of the Nai choir included rehearsal rooms, performance venues, and an administrative office within the National Music Conservatory or community center where the choir operated. Rehearsal rooms had musical instruments, seating arrangements, and audio-visual equipment to facilitate choir rehearsals when needed. Performance venues varied and could include school auditoriums, concert halls, or outdoor stages used for public performances. The broader community of Jordan provided the cultural context within which the Nai choir program operated, encompassing diverse social, economic, and religious influences that shaped the experiences and perspectives of middle-aged students and their families participating in the choir. Jordan's rich cultural heritage, including its traditions, beliefs, and values, significantly influenced recruitment practices and the interpretation of the Islamic religious heritage within the Nai choir context. Overall, the setting

reflected a dynamic interplay between physical spaces and cultural dynamics, providing a rich background for exploring the cultural influences on recruiting children to the Nai choir.

The researcher was motivated to conduct this study with a deep interest in understanding the cultural influences on recruiting children to the Nai choir, driven by a desire to contribute to the improvement of music education practices to promote cultural inclusivity within choral programs and attract more middle-aged students to join the Nai choir. Her interpretive framework for this ethnographic research was grounded in the understanding that reality is socially constructed and contextual, emphasizing capturing participants' lived experiences and perspectives within their natural settings. She aimed to uncover the underlying meanings and cultural dynamics that shaped individuals' behaviors and interactions, viewing culture as an integral part of social life. This interpretive framework guided the exploration of social phenomena through in-depth observation, participant engagement, and the interpretation of cultural context, highlighting the importance of contextually embedded understanding and reflexivity in the research process.⁹

In the context of ethnographic research, the researcher's interpretive framework emphasized understanding cultural influences and social phenomena as constructed within specific contexts. This approach explored the nuanced interactions between cultural dynamics and recruitment practices within the Nai choir, providing insights into how these factors shaped participants' experiences and behaviors. Ontologically, the researcher adhered to the perspective that reality is socially constructed and context-dependent.¹⁰ This aligned with ethnographic

⁹ Hamid Pousti, Cathy Urquhart, and Henry Linger, "Researching the virtual: A framework for reflexivity in qualitative social media research," *Information Systems Journal* 31, no. 3 (2021): 356.

¹⁰ Dominik Bartmanski, "Social construction and cultural meaning: Reconstructing qualitative sociology," *American Journal of Cultural Sociology* 6 (2018): 563.

research, focusing on understanding participants' subjective experiences and interpretations within their cultural environment. Epistemologically, knowledge was co-constructed through interactions and interpretations, emphasizing the importance of reflexivity and subjectivity in the research process.¹¹ This perspective guided the researcher's approach to information collection and analysis in ethnographic research, where my engagement and interpretation played a central role in understanding participants' lived experiences. Axiologically, she recognizes the value of participant perspectives and aims for reflexivity throughout the research process, acknowledging my biases and perspectives as a researcher.¹² This awareness updated her approach to information collection and analysis, ensuring that participants' voices were foregrounded and interpreted sensitively to cultural nuances. As the "human instrument" of data collection in ethnographic research, the researcher engaged with participants through participant observation, interviews, and informal conversations to gather rich, contextually embedded facts.¹³ She approached information collection with reflexivity, recognizing my influence on the research process and striving for authenticity and transparency in my participant interactions.

The researcher's relationship with participants was one of respect, empathy, and openness to their perspectives and experiences, fostering trust and rapport through ongoing engagement. At the research site, her role was that of an observer and participant, immersing myself in the cultural context of the Nai choir environment to understand the details of recruitment practices and cultural influences. Acknowledging my biases and assumptions, she

¹¹ Helle Merete Nordentoft, and Birgitte Ravn Olesen, "A critical reflexive perspective on othering in collaborative knowledge production," *Qualitative Research Journal* 18, no. 1 (2018): 55.

¹² Giovanni P Dazzo, "Can research heal? Toward restorative validity: Axiological commitments and methodological obligations as contact zones," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 22 (2023): 1.

¹³ Evelyn Almeida, Andrea Rosero, Wilson Chiluiza, and Diana Castillo, "Reflections on qualitative research in education," *Revista Cognosis. ISSN 2588-0578* 6, no. EE-I- (2021): 101.

strove for reflexivity and self-awareness throughout the research process, seeking to alleviate their impact on information collection and analysis while remaining open to alternative interpretations and perspectives.

Data Collection Method

This realistic qualitative ethnographic research implemented two data collection methods: participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Participant observation allowed the researcher to immerse in the natural setting of the Nai choir environment, observing recruitment practices, social interactions, and cultural dynamics firsthand. This method provided rich, contextual data that captured the nuances of participants' experiences and behaviors within their cultural settings.¹⁴ Semi-structured interviews allowed the exploration of participants' perspectives, beliefs, and experiences related to recruitment practices and cultural influences on joining the Nai choir. The flexibility of this method enabled the researcher to probe for deeper insights and uncover participants' subjective interpretations of their recruitment experiences.¹⁵

Collecting the data and information required drafting various questions. The questions drafted for the interviews were primarily open-ended to allow participants to express their thoughts, experiences, and perspectives freely. Open-ended questions enabled participants to provide detailed responses and insights into their recruitment experiences and the cultural and social influences affecting their decision-making process. Closed-ended questions were used carefully to clarify or gather specific factual information. Follow-up questions were utilized to probe for deeper insights, clarify responses, and explore emerging themes or areas of interest.

¹⁴ Guillaume Dumont, "Immersion in organizational ethnography: Four methodological requirements to immerse oneself in the field," *Organizational Research Methods* 26, no. 3 (2023): 441.

¹⁵ Xin Feng, "Analysis of teachers' cognition and influence on music education and aesthetic learning under the double reduction policy in Zaozhuang City," *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice* 30, no. 3 (2024), 182.

These follow-up questions were responsive to the participant's answers, allowing for a flexible and dynamic interview process that encouraged participants to elaborate on their answers.

While a set of pre-formulated questions structured the interviews, the discussion was allowed to lead the direction to ensure that all relevant topics were explored thoroughly. This approach maintained the balance between structure and flexibility, allowing for a focused exploration of key research areas and the emergence of new insights from participant-driven discussions.

The questions were of various kinds. One question was as follows: Can you describe your experience with the recruitment process for the Nai choir program? This question aimed to gather participants' firsthand accounts of their recruitment experiences, including the factors influencing their decision to join the choir. Understanding participants' experiences provided insights into the cultural and social influences on recruitment. Another question was as follows: How do you perceive the role of socioeconomic status in shaping recruitment decisions for the Nai choir program? This question sought to explore participants' perceptions of the influence of socioeconomic status on choir recruitment. By eliciting participants' perspectives, the researcher could understand how socioeconomic factors might impact access to and participation in the choir program.

Another essential question was as follows: In what ways do you think the interpretation of Islamic religious heritage affects middle-aged students' willingness to enroll in the Nai choir? This question aimed to uncover participants' views on how interpretations of Islamic religious heritage might influence recruitment to the Nai choir. Exploring participants' perspectives shed light on the cultural and religious factors shaping recruitment decisions. The researcher asked: How has your psychosocial status influenced your involvement in the Nai choir program? This

question sought to understand the role of psychosocial factors, such as personal interests, social relationships, and emotional well-being, in participants' decisions to participate in the choir. The researcher could identify the psychosocial dynamics influencing recruitment by exploring these factors. The following question was asked for more clarity: Can you describe any cultural practices or traditions within your community that affect recruitment to the Nai choir? This question aimed to uncover participants' insights into cultural practices and traditions that might influence recruitment to the Nai choir program. Understanding these cultural influences provided valuable context for interpreting recruitment patterns and decisions.

The template design for written and researcher-centric data collection protocols included sections for journaling, observations, and field notes. Each section was labeled and organized for systematic data collection and analysis (Appendix A). This enabled gathering rich, contextual data about participants' behaviors, interactions, and cultural practices within their natural settings. By systematically recording observations, field notes, and personal reflections through journaling, researchers could capture the complexities of social phenomena and cultural influences on recruitment practices in the context of the Nai choir program. This structured approach facilitated organized data collection and analysis, allowing researchers to document and interpret their observations effectively.

As an example of previous studies implementing the mentioned protocol, Bannerman examined the influence of school culture on a rural choral program's accessibility.¹⁶ Data collection involved observation, interviews, and document analysis, engaging participants like the choir teacher, students, parents, and school staff. Results showed that alignment between the choir teacher's practices and community values facilitated participation. At the same time,

¹⁶ Bannerman, "Singing in school culture," 44

barriers included social stereotypes and conflicts with other courses like career, technical education, and Advanced Placement. Despite challenges, efforts to accommodate student needs and uphold the value of music in education were evident, although there were tensions with limited resources and competing educational priorities.¹⁷ Another study explored the rebuilding of secondary school choir programs from an organizational perspective, involving two music teachers who revived middle school choir programs within the last decade. Data from teacher and student interviews, observations, and documents were analyzed using instrumental case study methods. Results revealed teachers' adoption of open-access philosophies and the portrayal of choirs as socially enriching, emotionally supportive, and musically challenging. Student motivations for choir participation were primarily affective and normative, while school culture, policies, administrator relations, and program age influenced rebuilding efforts. The study offered teacher profiles, practical implications, and suggestions for future research.¹⁸

Given the complexity of the data and the need to capture nuances in participants' responses, verbatim transcription was most appropriate for this ethnographic research. Verbatim transcription ensured that every spoken word, including hesitations, interruptions, and non-verbal cues, was accurately captured to preserve the richness of the data.¹⁹ Transcription was processed manually, and the data was securely maintained and stored on password-protected devices.

To achieve saturation, the researcher followed several strategies outlined by Guest et al., including Conducting iterative data collection and analysis and continuously comparing new data

¹⁷ Bannerman, "Singing in school culture," 44

¹⁸ Justin J. West, and Jason P. Bowers, "(Re) building the secondary school choir program: An organizational perspective," *International Journal of Research in Choral Singing* 10 (2022): 19.

¹⁹ I., D. Knowles Chitac, and S. Dhaliwal, "The Quest for Deeper Understanding in Interpretative Research: Hidden Meaning in Plain Sight," In *British Academy of Management (BAM) Conference 2020*, British Academy of Management, 2020, 2.

with existing findings to identify patterns and themes until no new insights emerged. Purposive sampling sought participants from different socioeconomic backgrounds, religious interpretations, and psychosocial statuses. Engaging in member checking, where initial findings were shared with participants to validate the accuracy and completeness of the data, ensured that the research captured the breadth and depth of participants' experiences and perspectives.²⁰

Procedures

IRB approval was achieved by submitting a comprehensive research proposal detailing the study's objectives, methodology, participant recruitment procedures, and ethical considerations. (Appendix B) served as the source for the IRB approval documentation. The researcher requested participants through direct communication with choir directors and community leaders. Consent information outlining the purpose of the study, confidentiality, and participants' rights was mentioned verbally before data collection. The investigator discussed the agreement with the parents of middle-aged student participants, providing clear explanations of their involvement and the option to decline participation.

The data collection methods did not require training. Instead, the researcher verbally explained research protocols and ethical guidelines and interacted with participants. The detailed execution steps for the data collection stage were as follows:

- 1: Obtained IRB approval by submitting the research proposal and all required documentation.
- 2: Sought participants and explained detailed information about the study.
- 3: Scheduled interviews and observations with participants, ensuring convenient timing and appropriate settings.

²⁰ Greg Guest, Emily Namey, and Mario Chen, "A simple method to assess and report thematic saturation in qualitative research," *PloS one* 15, no. 5 (2020): 1.

- 4: Conducted interviews and observations, documenting observations and field notes.
- 5: Transcribed audio recordings of interviews and observations using verbatim transcription methods.
- 6: Collected data manually, ensuring clarity of information.
- 7: Arranged questions logically, providing clear instructions for participants.
- 8: Secured a confidential file to store all the information for reference and documentation.

Data Analysis

Analyzing the data collected from interviews and observations in this research utilized two primary techniques: coding and thematic analysis. Coding involved systematically categorizing and labeling data segments to identify patterns and themes, while thematic analysis involved identifying and analyzing recurring themes or patterns within the data.²¹ These approaches are widely recognized in qualitative research for their ability to uncover rich insights from textual data. The proposed approach to first-round coding involved open coding and examining data segments. This approach allowed for the emergence of themes from the data itself and facilitated a comprehensive understanding of participants' perspectives.²² A qualitative codebook documented the initial codes, definitions, and examples, providing a reference guide for subsequent coding and analysis.²³

²¹ Leanne Freeman, and Cath Sullivan. "Thematic analysis," *Doing qualitative research in psychology: A practical guide* (2019): 161.

²² Nicole M. Deterding, and Mary C. Waters, "Flexible coding of in-depth interviews: A twenty-first-century approach," *Sociological methods & research* 50, no. 2 (2021): 735.

²³ Victoria Reyes, Elizabeth Bogumil, and Levin Elias Welch, "The living codebook: Documenting the process of qualitative data analysis," *Sociological Methods & Research* 53, no. 1 (2024): 89.

Organizing codes into categories and subcodes involved grouping related codes based on shared characteristics or relationships.²⁴ This process helped structure and manage the data, allowing for a more profound analysis and identification of the main themes.²⁵ Subsequent rounds of coding involved selective coding, focusing on refining and validating the initial categories and themes identified.²⁶ This method allowed for a more focused analysis of the data's most significant themes or patterns, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

Data synthesis and thematic analysis involved several critical stages. Initialization consisted of reviewing the coded data to identify preliminary themes or patterns. Construction consisted of constructing themes and patterns by grouping related codes and exploring their relationships. Reification involved further refining and developing the identified themes through iterative analysis and comparison with the original data. Final themes were consolidated and presented in the finalization process, supported by relevant quotes and examples from the data.²⁷

Several strategies were employed to address trustworthiness. These include the following: credibility by utilizing well-established qualitative research methods, establishing rapport with participants, utilizing triangulation, ensuring participant honesty through debriefing sessions, and seeking peer analysis and member checking. Transferability involves providing

²⁴ Udo Kuckartz, Stefan Rädiker, Udo Kuckartz, and Stefan Rädiker, "Building a coding frame," *Analyzing Qualitative Data with MAXQDA: Text, Audio, and Video* (2019): 93.

²⁵ Michelle E. Kiger, and Lara Varpio, "Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131," *Medical teacher* 42, no. 8 (2020): 846.

²⁶ Babchuk, Wayne A. "Fundamentals of qualitative analysis in family medicine." *Family medicine and community health* 7, no. 2 (2019), 1.

²⁷ Sam Lau, Sruti Srinivasa Srinivasa Ragavan, Ken Milne, Titus Barik, and Advait Sarkar, "Tweakit: Supporting end-user programmers who transmogrify code," In *Proceedings of the 2021 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 2021, 1.

detailed descriptions of the research context and participants to allow readers to assess the transferability of findings to similar contexts. Dependability was maintained by clear documentation of research procedures and decisions to ensure the consistency and reliability of the findings. Confirmability was achieved by employing reflexivity to acknowledge and mitigate the influence of the researcher's biases on data collection and analysis. Ethical considerations ensured informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for participants' autonomy throughout the research process, requiring adherence to ethical guidelines and principles.²⁸

Summary

Methods introduced the qualitative realistic ethnographic method chosen for its ability to explore cultural dynamics, social values, and beliefs surrounding middle school children's recruitment to the Nai choir. The design type selected was qualitative, realistic ethnographic research, allowing for in-depth exploration within natural settings. Two primary data collection methods proposed were participant observation and semi-structured interviews. The researcher manually utilized verbatim transcription to capture spoken words, ensuring accurate data richness. Iterative data was collected, analyzed, and purposely sampled to achieve saturation. The data collection plan involved flexibly drafting open-ended interview questions to allow for direction in the discussion. The study population included middle-aged Nai choir students, their families, and religious Muslim mothers. Procedures included obtaining IRB approval and obtaining consent from participants. Data analysis involved coding, thematic analysis, and ensuring trustworthiness.

²⁸ Mohamed Ezzat Khamis Amin, Lotte Stig Nørgaard, Afonso M. Cavaco, Matthew J. Witry, Lisa Hillman, Alina Cernasev, and Shane P. Desselle, "Establishing trustworthiness and authenticity in qualitative pharmacy research," *Research in social and administrative pharmacy* 16, no. 10 (2020): 1472.

Chapter Four: Results

This chapter's highlights include the multifaceted influences that shape the recruitment of middle school children to the Nai choir. The analysis is grounded in thematic exploration, drawing on participant experiences and perspectives. The investigation centers on how socioeconomic status, psychosocial development, and interpretations of Islamic heritage influence the decision to join and remain in the Nai choir. Table 1 below clarifies the themes and their related supporting codes, and Figure 1 below demonstrates the word cloud of the themes and codes.

Table 1. Themes and Supporting Codes

Themes	Supporting Codes
Socioeconomic Accessibility and Affordability	Convenience, Accessibility, Affordable Fees, Transportation
Family and Community Support	Family Support, Community Attitudes, Parental Influence
Challenges in Time Management and School Commitments	Time Management, Schooling, Balancing Commitments, Organizational Support.
Emphasis on Recruitment and Talent Development	Recruitment, Development Focus, Talent Cultivation, Inclusivity
Global Collaboration and Cultural Exchange	International Collaboration, Cultural Exchange
Perceptions of Gender and Masculinity	Gender Perceptions, Masculinity, Choir Participation
Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness	Organizational Support, Efficient Processes, Supportive Environments
Nurturing Talent and Individual Growth	Talent Development, Skill Enhancement, Personal Fulfillment
Balancing School and Choir Commitments	Academic Pressure, Time Constraints, Support Systems.
Embracing Global Collaboration and Cultural Exchange.	International Connections, Cultural Diversity, Collaborative Learning.
Challenging Gender Stereotypes and Redefining Masculinity	Gender Diversity, Masculinity Redefined, Gender Equity.
Cultivating Empathy and Understanding	Empathy Development, Cultural Understanding, Appreciation of Diversity.
Psychosocial Development and Confidence Building	Confidence Building, Social Skills Development, Emotional Well-being.
Cultural and Religious Influences	Cultural Attitudes Towards Music, Religious Beliefs, Attitudes, Cultural Norms Expectations.
Influence on Social Dynamics and Peer Relationships.	Social Dynamics, Peer Relationships.
Educational and Academic Development	Cognitive Development, Academic Achievement, Learning Enhancement, Holistic Development.
Cultural Enrichment and Appreciation	Cultural Diversity, Musical Traditions, Cross-Cultural Exchange, Appreciation of Diversity.



Figure 1. Word Cloud of the Themes and Supporting Codes

Source: “Qualitative Visualization,” *UNC University Libraries*, accessed August 4, 2024, <https://library.unc.edu/data/storytelling-visualization/data-visualization/qualitative-visualization/>.

One of the most prominent themes is socioeconomic accessibility and affordability. Many participants highlighted the choir’s affordability, noting that most families’ fees are reasonable and within reach. This economic feasibility is crucial in enabling children from diverse backgrounds to participate, emphasizing the importance of cost in extracurricular engagement.

Psychosocial development and confidence building emerged as another critical theme. The choir provides a nurturing environment where children can overcome stage fright, build self-

confidence, and enhance their social skills. Participants frequently mentioned how Nai choir participation helped them become more comfortable with public speaking and expressing their opinions, underscoring the choir's role in fostering personal growth during pivotal developmental middle-school-age years.

The theme of cultural and religious influences also surfaced prominently. The interpretation of Islamic heritage significantly affects attitudes toward music and choir participation. Some families view musical activities as incompatible with their religious beliefs, which can deter participation. Conversely, families with more open interpretations see the choir as a valuable cultural and educational opportunity. The influence of family and community support cannot be understated. The choir serves as a social center where children and parents can form meaningful connections. Family members' support and the communal atmosphere of the choir rehearsals and events play vital roles in sustaining children's engagement and enthusiasm.

Challenges in time management and school commitments are notable barriers to consistent participation. Balancing academic responsibilities with choir commitments can be challenging, particularly for students involved in demanding educational programs. However, the choir's scheduling, typically held outside regular school hours, helps mitigate these conflicts, making it more manageable for families.

Another significant theme is the emphasis on recruitment and talent development. The choir's inclusive approach, focusing on nurturing talent rather than merely showcasing existing skills, attracts many participants. This developmental focus appeals to middle school-aged students and parents, as it promises personal growth and artistic improvement.

Global collaboration and cultural exchange enrich the choir experience, making it more attractive to potential recruits. International partnerships and opportunities for cultural exchange

broaden the choir's appeal, providing unique experiences that enhance its attractiveness to a younger, globally-minded generation. The theme of perceptions of gender and masculinity also influences choir participation. Some middle school boys perceive choir activities as feminine, which can discourage their involvement. Addressing these gender norms is crucial for creating a more inclusive environment that encourages participation from all children. The influence on social dynamics and peer relationships is profound. The choir fosters a sense of belonging and community, helping middle school students develop friendships and social networks that extend beyond the choir itself. This social aspect is a significant draw for many participants.

This chapter explores how socioeconomic status, psychosocial development, and interpretations of Islamic heritage interconnect with other themes to influence middle school children's recruitment to the Nai choir. Examining these factors clarifies the complexities of fostering a vibrant and inclusive choir community.

Socioeconomic Accessibility and Affordability

The affordability and accessibility of choir participation, including fees, transportation, and location, play crucial roles in recruitment and engagement. Socioeconomic factors significantly influence middle school children's ability to participate in choir activities. Ensuring that fees are affordable and that transportation is accessible are critical elements in making choir participation feasible for a wide range of families. These considerations are essential for families from lower socioeconomic backgrounds facing financial constraints. Participant 1 stated: "It's affordable and even transportation to anyone." Participant 2 said, "The fees are affordable compared to other activities." Affordability and accessibility ensure that all children, regardless of socioeconomic status, can participate in choir activities. This is critical not only for inclusivity but also for maximizing the choir's talent group.

For many families, extracurricular activities like choir are often among the first to be cut from the budget when finances are tight. By keeping fees low and offering convenient transportation options, the Nai choir can ensure that financial barriers do not prevent talented children from joining. The influence of socioeconomic status on children's participation in extracurricular activities is well-documented. Children from higher socioeconomic backgrounds often have greater access to resources, including music lessons, instruments, and transportation.

In contrast, children from lower-income families may have different opportunities. By addressing these disparities, the Nai choir can help level the playing field, giving all children the chance to benefit from the social, emotional, and educational advantages of choir participation. Additionally, the location of rehearsals and performances is crucial. Holding practices in centrally located, easily accessible venues can significantly affect participation rates. Parents are more likely to encourage their children to join the choir if it is convenient for them to attend rehearsals without considerable travel time or expense. Financial support mechanisms, such as scholarships or sliding scale fees, can be invaluable in ensuring accessibility. The choir could also explore partnerships with local businesses or community organizations to sponsor children's participation, further reducing financial barriers.

Family and Community Support

Family and community support, including parental encouragement, social networks, and community attitudes, significantly influence participation and engagement in the choir. The support of family and the broader community is crucial for encouraging middle school children to participate in choir activities. Positive reinforcement from parents and peers can motivate children to join and remain engaged in the choir. Participant 3 mentioned, "It helped her to make more friends, mainly because some of the choir members were already in her school." Participant

4 said, “We were all friends with each other. I’ve never encountered any problem with that.”

Participant 5 claimed, “Parental encouragement and involvement can significantly boost a child’s confidence and willingness to engage in new activities.” Family and community support are critical factors in children’s participation in extracurricular activities like choir.

Parental encouragement and involvement can significantly boost a child’s confidence and willingness to engage in new activities. When parents show interest and support for their children’s participation in the choir, it validates the child’s efforts and makes them feel valued. Community support also plays a significant role. Positive attitudes towards the choir within the community can create a favorable environment for participation. When children see their friends and peers participating in the choir, they are more likely to want to join as well. Social networks and community connections can facilitate recruitment by creating a sense of belonging and shared purpose. Parental influence is decisive in middle school-aged children, who rely heavily on their parents for guidance and support. Parents who understand the benefits of choir participation, such as enhanced social skills, improved self-confidence, and academic advantages, are more likely to encourage their children to join.

Community attitudes towards the choir can also influence participation. A community that values music and arts education is more likely to support and promote choir activities. Outreach and engagement can foster positive community attitudes, such as community performances, open rehearsals, and informational sessions about the choir’s benefits. Moreover, involving parents and community members in the choir’s activities can enhance support and engagement. Volunteer opportunities, parent committees, and community events can create a sense of ownership and investment in the choir’s success.

Challenges in Time Management and School Commitments

Balancing choir participation with school commitments presents time management challenges and may require adequate coordination support. Middle school students often need help with balancing academic responsibilities and extracurricular activities. Effective time management is essential to ensure children can participate in the choir without compromising their schoolwork. Participant 6 said, “It was hard to manage my time between school and the choir, which I love doing so much.”. Participant 7 claimed, “It doesn’t affect the parents’ working hours.” Participant 8 mentioned, “Effective time management is crucial for ensuring children balance their academic responsibilities with extracurricular activities like choir participation.” Participant 9 confirmed, “Choir participation requires effective time management and coordination between school and extracurricular activities.” Balancing school commitments with extracurricular activities is a common challenge for middle school students.

The academic demands of school, including homework, projects, and exams, can make it difficult for children to find time for additional activities like choir rehearsals and performances. Time management is a critical skill that children need to develop to balance these commitments successfully. Participation in the choir can help children learn to manage their time effectively, prioritize tasks, and plan their schedules, however, it is also essential for the choir to be mindful of the student's academic responsibilities and to provide flexible scheduling options whenever possible. School commitments can also affect attendance and participation in choir activities. Students may need help to attend rehearsals regularly during peak academic periods, such as exam seasons or project deadlines. Providing support and understanding during these times can help students feel safe and relaxed.

Children may sometimes need additional support to manage their time effectively. This could include time management workshops, mentoring programs, or study support sessions. The choir can support students' overall academic success and well-being by helping students develop strong time management skills. Effective communication between the choir, parents, and schools is essential. Keeping parents informed about rehearsal schedules, performance dates, and any changes can help them support their children's participation. Collaboration with schools to ensure that choir activities are separate from important academic events can also be beneficial.

Emphasis on Recruitment and Talent Development

Choirs prioritize recruitment and talent development, focusing on inclusivity, talent cultivation, and providing opportunities for personal growth. Successful recruitment strategies and a focus on talent development are essential for the choir's sustainability and growth. Emphasizing inclusivity and providing opportunities for personal growth can attract diverse participants. Participant 9 said, "You always focused on development, not only wanting people who were so good initially." Participant 10 claimed, "Choirs prioritize recruitment and talent development." Participant 11 mentioned, "Inclusivity and talent cultivation are essential for attracting diverse participants to the choir." Effective recruitment strategies are essential for attracting new members to the choir and ensuring its long-term sustainability.

Recruitment efforts should focus on reaching diverse participants, emphasizing the choir's inclusivity and commitment to talent development. Inclusivity is a crucial aspect of successful recruitment. The choir can attract a broad range of participants by creating an inclusive environment that welcomes children of all backgrounds and abilities. The choir's practices, policies, and outreach efforts should reflect this inclusivity. Talent development is also a crucial focus for the choir. By prioritizing the development of each child's musical abilities, the

choir can help participants grow and achieve their full potential. This focus on talent development can be a significant draw for parents and children looking for opportunities to develop their skills and achieve personal growth. Providing opportunities for personal growth is another critical aspect of recruitment and retention. Choir participation can offer a range of benefits, including improved self-confidence, social skills, and academic performance. Highlighting these benefits in recruitment materials and outreach efforts can help attract new members.

Additionally, the choir can enhance its recruitment efforts by building strong relationships with schools and community organizations. Collaborating with schools to identify potential participants and promote the choir can effectively reach a larger audience. Community events, such as performances and open rehearsals, can also help raise awareness and attract new members.

Global Collaboration and Cultural Exchange

Expanding interest in global collaboration and cultural exchange within choirs reflects a broader desire to connect with diverse perspectives and traditions. Global collaboration and cultural exchange offer opportunities for middle school students to connect with peers from different backgrounds, enhancing their cultural awareness and broadening their perspectives. Participant 12 said, “It would be nice to do more like a demonstrative collaboration.” Participant 13 mentioned, “We have already traveled to Italy and have partnerships with people from outside.” Participant 14 claimed, “Global collaboration and cultural exchange provide unique and enriching experiences for participants, exposing them to different musical traditions and fostering a greater appreciation for diversity.”

Global collaboration and cultural exchange are increasingly important aspects of choir participation. These opportunities allow children to connect with peers from different cultural backgrounds, enhancing their cultural awareness and broadening their perspectives. International collaborations, such as exchange programs and joint performances with choirs from other countries, can provide unique and enriching experiences for participants. These collaborations can expose children to different musical traditions, styles, and practices, fostering a greater appreciation for diversity and global interconnectedness. Cultural exchange programs can also help children develop essential social and communication skills. Interacting with peers from different cultural backgrounds requires children to be open-minded, adaptable, and empathetic. These interactions can help children build cross-cultural solid relationships and develop a more inclusive and global mindset.

Furthermore, global collaborations can enhance the choir's reputation and attract new participants. Highlighting the choir's international partnerships and cultural exchange opportunities in recruitment materials can be a significant draw for parents and children looking for unique and enriching experiences. The choir can also benefit from the knowledge and expertise of international partners. Collaborating with choirs from different countries can provide valuable insights into new teaching methods, repertoire, and performance practices. These collaborations can help the choir continually improve and innovate, offering the best possible experience for its participants.

Perceptions of Gender and Masculinity

Perceptions of gender and masculinity influence attitudes towards choir participation, with some viewing it as feminine and others challenging gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes and perceptions of masculinity can affect children's willingness to participate in choir activities.

Challenging these stereotypes is essential to creating an inclusive environment where all children feel welcome. Participant 15 mentioned, “He believed that choir is too feminine.” Participant 16 said, “Perceptions of gender and masculinity influence attitudes towards choir participation.” Participant 17 claimed, “Creating a gender-inclusive environment involves addressing any biases or discriminatory practices within the choir.” Perceptions of gender and masculinity can significantly influence children’s participation in choir activities.

In some communities, singing and choir participation may be perceived as feminine activities, making boys reluctant or embarrassed about joining. Challenging these gender stereotypes is essential to creating an inclusive environment where all children feel welcome and valued. The choir can be crucial in redefining these perceptions by promoting positive representations of boys and men in choir activities. Showcasing male role models, such as successful male choir directors or renowned male singers, can help challenge the notion that choir participation is exclusively for girls. Encouraging boys to join the choir and highlighting the benefits of participation can also help shift perceptions. Boys who participate in the choir can develop valuable skills, such as teamwork, discipline, and confidence, that are beneficial in all areas of life. The choir can help boys feel more comfortable and confident participating by emphasizing these benefits and providing a supportive environment.

Furthermore, creating a gender-inclusive environment involves addressing any biases or discriminatory practices within the choir and ensuring that all children, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to participate and excel, which is crucial. This includes providing equal access to solo performances, leadership roles, and other opportunities for growth and development.

Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness

Organizational factors, such as efficiency, effectiveness, and supportive environments within choirs, contribute to positive participant experiences and engagement. The efficiency and effectiveness of the choir's organization play a significant role in ensuring positive experiences for participants. A well-organized choir with efficient processes and a supportive environment can enhance engagement and satisfaction. Participant 18 said, "It was straightforward and organized." Participant 19 claimed, "Our teachers always focused on development." Participant 20 mentioned, "Efficient and effective organizational practices can ensure that the choir runs smoothly, providing a structured and supportive environment for children to develop their talents." The organizational aspects of the choir are crucial for creating a positive and engaging experience for participants.

Efficient and effective organizational practices can ensure that the choir runs smoothly, providing a structured and supportive environment for children to develop their talents. A well-organized choir can provide clear communication, structured schedules, and efficient processes for managing rehearsals, performances, and other activities. This helps participants and their families plan and prepare effectively, reducing stress and confusion.

Supportive environments within the choir are also essential for fostering positive participant experiences. A supportive environment is where children feel valued, respected, and encouraged to grow and develop. This includes providing opportunities for feedback and recognition and creating a culture of collaboration and teamwork. Effective leadership is crucial for creating and maintaining a supportive environment within the choir. Choir directors and other leaders should be approachable, communicative, and responsive to the needs of participants.

They should also lead by example, modeling positive behaviors and attitudes for others to emulate.

Furthermore, the choir should prioritize continuous improvement and innovation. This includes seeking feedback from participants and stakeholders, evaluating the effectiveness of current practices, and implementing changes as needed. By continually striving to improve, the choir can ensure that it remains relevant and responsive to the needs of its participants. The organizational aspects of the choir, including efficiency, effectiveness, and supportive environments, play a critical role in shaping participant experiences and engagement. By prioritizing these factors, the choir can create a positive and rewarding experience for all participants, fostering their musical and personal growth and development.

Nurturing Talent and Individual Growth

The choir serves as a platform for nurturing talent and fostering individual growth among middle school-aged students, providing opportunities for skill development, self-expression, and personal fulfillment. The choir environment offers a unique space for middle school-aged students to explore and develop their talents while experiencing personal growth. Through dedicated practice, performance opportunities, and mentorship, participants can enhance their skills, increase their confidence, and find fulfillment in their musical journey. Participant 21 said, “It was a place for inclusivity and safe environments for everyone. It was like a second home.” Participant 22 mentioned, “Our teachers always focused on development.” Participant 23 claimed, “It’s a form of self-expression. And especially if you love it, it’s a way of conveying your emotions and feelings.” The choir is a nurturing environment where talent is recognized, cultivated, and celebrated. It encourages participants to explore their musical abilities, whether

singing, playing instruments, or composing, and provides opportunities to develop and refine their skills.

The choir offers a platform for self-expression, allowing participants to convey their emotions and feelings through music. This enhances their artistic expression and promotes emotional well-being and personal fulfillment. The supportive and inclusive nature of the choir fosters a sense of belonging and camaraderie among participants. Regardless of their background or level of experience, the choir welcomes and encourages all members to contribute to the collective musical experience. Through regular rehearsals, performances, and collaborative projects, participants can challenge themselves, set goals, and experience the joy of achievement. This builds their confidence and self-esteem and instills essential life skills such as discipline, perseverance, and teamwork. The choir catalyzes personal and artistic growth, providing middle school-aged students with a nurturing and supportive environment to explore their talents, express themselves creatively, and develop valuable life skills.

Balancing School and Choir Commitments

Middle school-aged students often experience challenges balancing their academic responsibilities with their choir commitments, requiring effective time management and support to navigate both domains successfully. The demands of schoolwork and extracurricular activities can place significant pressure on middle school-aged students, making it challenging to balance their academic responsibilities with their choir commitments. Effective time management and support systems are crucial to help students navigate these competing priorities and maintain a healthy balance between school and choir involvement. Participant 24 mentioned, “It was hard to manage my time between school and the choir.” Participant 25 said. “Schooling, some people like it; this happened to me. Managing my time between school and the choir was hard, which I

love doing so much.” Participant 26 claimed, “Balancing choir participation with school commitments presents challenges in time management and may require support for effective coordination.” Middle school-aged students often juggle multiple responsibilities, including homework, exams, extracurricular activities, and family obligations. The demands of academic coursework can be particularly intense, leaving students with limited time and energy to dedicate to choir rehearsals and performances.

Participation in choir activities may involve additional time commitments, such as rehearsals, concerts, and travel, further complicating the scheduling process. As a result, students may struggle to find a balance between their academic and musical pursuits, leading to feelings of stress, fatigue, and overwhelm. Effective time management strategies are essential for middle school students to navigate these competing demands successfully. These strategies may involve creating a structured schedule, prioritizing tasks, and allocating dedicated time for studying, practicing, and relaxation.

Additionally, students may benefit from support systems provided by parents, teachers, and choir directors to help them manage their time effectively and stay organized. This could include setting realistic goals, providing academic guidance, and offering emotional support during challenging periods. Balancing school and choir commitments requires careful planning, effective time management, and support from both academic and musical communities. By fostering a collaborative and supportive environment, middle school-aged students can thrive academically and artistically while pursuing their passions and interests.

Embracing Global Collaboration and Cultural Exchange

Choir participation offers global collaboration and cultural exchange opportunities, fostering connections with diverse perspectives, traditions, and communities worldwide. In an

increasingly interconnected world, choir participation provides a platform for middle school-aged students to engage in global collaboration and cultural exchange. Through choir activities such as performances, workshops, and exchanges, students can connect with peers from different backgrounds, cultures, and countries, enriching their musical experiences and broadening their worldview. Participant 27 said, “It would be nice to do more like a demonstrative collaboration.” Participant 28 claimed, “We have already traveled to Italy and have partnerships with people from outside.” Participant 29 mentioned, “There is a growing interest in global collaboration and cultural exchange within choirs, reflecting a broader desire to connect with diverse perspectives and traditions.” Choir participation transcends geographical boundaries, allowing students to interact with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and musical traditions. Collaborative projects and cultural exchanges enable students to learn from one another, share their unique experiences, and appreciate the richness of global diversity.

International collaborations provide students valuable opportunities to showcase their talents worldwide, participate in cross-cultural dialogue, and build lasting friendships with peers worldwide. These experiences enhance students’ musical skills and foster empathy, tolerance, and intercultural understanding. Choir activities often incorporate elements of cultural exchange, such as learning traditional songs from different countries, exploring diverse musical styles, and celebrating cultural festivals and holidays. These initiatives promote cultural awareness and appreciation, encouraging students to embrace diversity and respect cultural differences.

Middle school-aged students can better appreciate the world’s interconnectedness and gain valuable insights into their cultural identity by embracing global collaboration and cultural exchange. Through meaningful interactions with peers from diverse backgrounds, students can become global citizens equipped to navigate an increasingly multicultural and interconnected

society. Students enjoy touring and performing abroad. International collaborations increase their cultural knowledge and strengthen their belonging and identity.

Challenging Gender Stereotypes and Redefining Masculinity

Choir participation challenges traditional gender stereotypes and allows middle school students to redefine masculinity, promoting inclusivity and diversity in the performing arts. It offers a unique opportunity for middle school-aged students to challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes. By engaging in a collaborative and creative musical environment, students can explore and express themselves beyond societal expectations of gender roles. Participant 30 said, “He believed that choir is too feminine.” Participant 31 claimed, “Perceptions of gender and masculinity influence attitudes towards choir participation.” A perception exists in many societies that choir participation is more aligned with femininity, leading some individuals to hesitate to join or openly express interest in such activities.

Choir programs can be crucial in challenging these stereotypes, however, by creating an inclusive and welcoming space for students of all genders to participate and thrive. By providing opportunities for students to engage in vocal expression, collaborative teamwork, and creative performance, choir participation helps to break down traditional barriers associated with gender roles. Students learn to appreciate and celebrate the unique contributions of individuals, regardless of their gender identity, fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance within the choir community. Choir programs often emphasize the importance of teamwork, cooperation, and mutual respect without inherently connecting these values to any particular gender. By promoting these values, choirs empower students to embrace their individuality and express themselves authentically, regardless of societal expectations or norms. Through choir participation, middle school-aged students can redefine masculinity and challenge outdated

stereotypes, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable society. By embracing diversity and celebrating all individuals' unique talents and perspectives, choirs play a vital role in fostering a culture of acceptance, respect, and understanding.

Cultivating Empathy and Understanding

Choir participation cultivates empathy and understanding among middle school-aged students, fostering a sense of compassion and appreciation for diverse perspectives and experiences. It allows middle school-aged students to develop empathy and understanding towards others. Through collaborative music-making and interaction with peers from diverse backgrounds, students learn to appreciate and respect the unique experiences and perspectives of their fellow choir members. Participant 32 said, "Having people from different backgrounds will help the kids who are required to be more tolerant of others and accept different people." Participant 33 claimed, "It's a safe community, and we were all friends. I've never encountered any problem with that." Choirs often consist of students from various cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, providing meaningful cross-cultural exchange and interaction opportunities. As students collaborate on musical performances and engage in rehearsals and performances, they develop a deeper understanding of each other's cultures, traditions, and lived experiences.

Choir participation encourages students to listen attentively to each other's voices, both musically and personally. As students share their stories, struggles, and triumphs through song, they develop a sense of empathy and compassion toward their peers, fostering a supportive and inclusive choir community. By embracing diversity and celebrating the richness of different cultures and perspectives, choirs create an environment where students feel valued, respected, and understood. Through shared musical experiences, middle school-aged students learn to look

beyond superficial differences and recognize all individuals' inherent humanity and dignity. Choir participation is vital in cultivating empathy and understanding among middle school-aged students. By providing opportunities for cross-cultural exchange, collaboration, and personal expression, choirs inspire students to embrace diversity, foster meaningful connections, and become compassionate global citizens.

Psychosocial Development and Confidence Building

Participation in the choir contributes to the psychosocial development of middle school-aged students, fostering confidence, social skills, and emotional well-being. Engagement in choir activities offers middle school-aged students valuable opportunities for psychosocial development, influencing their confidence, social skills, and emotional well-being. Through choir participation, students can develop confidence by performing in front of audiences, expressing themselves creatively, and receiving positive feedback from peers and mentors. The supportive and nurturing environment of the choir fosters a sense of self-assurance and empowerment among students, enabling them to overcome performance anxiety and stage fright. Choir participation facilitates the development of essential social skills, such as teamwork, cooperation, and communication. Students collaborate with their peers to learn new songs, harmonize their voices, and coordinate performances, promoting a sense of camaraderie and mutual respect within the group. By working together towards a common goal, students develop critical interpersonal skills invaluable in academic and social contexts. Individuals' involvement in the choir can positively influence students' emotional well-being, providing them with a creative outlet for self-expression and stress relief.

Singing and performing music can be therapeutic, allowing students to channel their emotions and alleviate feelings of anxiety, depression, or loneliness. The sense of belonging and

connection fostered by the choir creates a supportive community where students feel accepted, valued, and understood, enhancing their overall emotional resilience and mental health.

Participation in the choir contributes to the psychosocial development of middle school-aged students, promoting confidence, social skills, and emotional well-being. By providing a supportive and nurturing environment for students to express themselves creatively, collaborate with their peers, and build meaningful connections, the choir plays a vital role in fostering the holistic development of students beyond academic achievement. Participant 34 said, “It was perfect for her personality as a teenager, which made her feel so special, and she had friends.” Participant 35 claimed, “Participating in my choir is crucial because it is a form of self-expression.” Participant 36 mentioned, “It helped her gain more confidence when sharing her talent with people.” Participant 37 confirmed, “Choir participation has always been a confidence booster.” Participant 38 said, “It allows children to express themselves creatively and build self-confidence.” Participation in the choir contributes significantly to the psychosocial development of middle school-aged students by fostering confidence, social skills, and emotional well-being. Through collaborative music-making, creative expression, and supportive relationships, students develop essential life skills and coping mechanisms that enhance their overall well-being.

Cultural and Religious Influences

Cultural and religious factors significantly shape attitudes toward choir participation, with varying perceptions of music’s compatibility with religious beliefs and cultural norms. They profoundly influence individual’s attitudes toward choir participation, shaping their perceptions of music’s role in society and its compatibility with religious beliefs and cultural norms. Music holds cultural significance in many communities as a form of artistic expression, entertainment, and communal bonding. Diverse cultural backgrounds, however, may result in contrasting

attitudes towards choir participation, with some communities embracing music as an integral part of their cultural heritage while others view it with disbelief or disapproval due to religious or cultural prohibitions. Religious beliefs and practices also play a pivotal role in shaping attitudes towards choir participation, particularly in communities where music is perceived as permissible or prohibited according to religious teachings. While some religious traditions embrace music as a sacred form of worship and spiritual expression, others may restrict musical activities based on religious interpretations and cultural traditions. Consequently, individuals from religiously conservative backgrounds may face barriers to choir participation due to concerns about violating religious prohibitions or cultural norms.

Cultural norms and expectations regarding gender roles, modesty, and social interactions may influence an individual's decisions to participate in the choir, particularly among middle school-aged students navigating adolescence and exploring their identities. Societal expectations regarding appropriate behavior, dress codes, and social interactions may deter some students from engaging in choir activities, especially if they perceive choir participation as conflicting with cultural or religious values. Overall, cultural and religious influences significantly shape attitudes toward choir participation, with diverse perceptions of music's role in society and its compatibility with religious beliefs and cultural norms. By understanding and addressing these cultural and religious factors, choir leaders and educators can create inclusive and culturally sensitive environments that respect individual's diverse backgrounds and beliefs, fostering greater participation and engagement among middle school-aged students. Participant 39 said, "They do not believe in music. They think that all this is haram." Participant 40 mentioned, "Because we are Christian, and our school community is Christian, most of the school community and our friends are Christian." Participant 41 claimed, "In Arabic-oriented culture,

they feel that singing is difficult. It is very feminine and forbidden.” Participant 42 confirmed, “Some people might not be confident enough to participate due to different perspectives and points of view on music.” Cultural and religious influences significantly shape attitudes toward choir participation, reflecting diverse perceptions of musicians’ compatibility with religious beliefs and cultural norms. Understanding and addressing these influences are essential for creating inclusive and culturally sensitive environments that respect individuals’ diverse backgrounds and beliefs.

Influence on Social Dynamics and Peer Relationships

Choir participation affects social dynamics and peer relationships, facilitating friendships, peer acceptance, and social integration. It significantly influences middle school-aged students social dynamics and peer relationships, providing opportunities for social interaction, fostering friendships, and promoting a sense of belonging within the choir community. Students develop meaningful connections with their peers through shared experiences, collaborative activities, and group performances, contributing to their overall social development and well-being. One of the critical benefits of choir participation is the opportunity to form friendships and build relationships with fellow choir members. The shared passion for music and collective pursuit of artistic expression create a sense of camaraderie and solidarity among students, forming lasting bonds and meaningful connections. Choir rehearsals, performances, and social events serve as platforms for students to interact, collaborate, and support each other, strengthening their social ties and fostering a sense of belonging within the choir community.

Choir participation promotes peer acceptance and inclusivity, providing a supportive environment where students feel valued, respected, and accepted for who they are. Students are encouraged to contribute to the choir’s collective goals, fostering a culture of inclusivity and

mutual support regardless of their background, interests, or abilities. Through shared experiences and collaborative efforts, students learn to appreciate and celebrate each other's differences, promoting empathy, understanding, and acceptance within the choir community. Choir participation facilitates social integration and engagement, enabling students to interact with peers from diverse backgrounds and develop essential social skills. By working together towards common goals, students learn to communicate effectively, resolve conflicts, and collaborate with others, enhancing their interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence. Additionally, choir participation allows students to showcase their talents, receive feedback, and celebrate their achievements, boosting their confidence and self-esteem in social settings. Choir participation is vital in shaping middle school-aged students' social dynamics and peer relationships, fostering friendships, peer acceptance, and social integration within the choir community. Participant 46 said, “ It helped her to make more friends” Participant 47 mentioned, “Choir participation affects social dynamics and peer relationships.” These quotes emphasize the positive influence of choir participation on social dynamics and peer relationships, highlighting how participation in choirs fosters friendships, peer acceptance, and social integration among middle school-aged students.

Educational and Academic Benefits

Participation in the choir offers middle school-aged students various educational and academic benefits, including improved cognitive skills, academic achievement, and holistic development. Choir participation provides middle school-aged students various educational and academic benefits that contribute to their cognitive development, academic achievement, and overall learning experience. Through regular rehearsals, performances, and music-related activities, students engage in various cognitive tasks and exercises that enhance their learning abilities and academic skills. One key educational benefit of choir participation is its positive

influence on mental development. Learning and performing music requires students to use multiple cognitive skills simultaneously, such as memory, attention, listening, and problem-solving. Rehearsing complex musical pieces, memorizing lyrics, and mastering vocal techniques stimulate brain activity and promote cognitive growth, improving memory, concentration, and flexibility.

Choir participation has further enhanced academic achievement across various subject areas. Research suggests that students involved in music programs tend to perform better academically, scoring higher on standardized tests, demonstrating improved literacy and numeracy skills, and exhibiting greater overall academic engagement.¹ The discipline, focus, and perseverance required for successful participation in the choir translate into academic success as students develop valuable study habits, time management skills, and a strong work ethic. Choir participation fosters holistic development by nurturing students' creativity, self-expression, and emotional intelligence. Singing allows students to express themselves artistically, connect with their emotions, and develop empathy and compassion for others. By exploring different musical genres, interpreting lyrics, and expressing themselves through song, students develop a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them, contributing to their social, emotional, and personal growth. Participation in the choir offers middle school-aged students various educational and academic benefits, including improved cognitive skills, academic achievement, and holistic development. By engaging in music-related activities, students develop essential cognitive abilities, enhance their academic performance, and experience personal growth, enriching their overall learning experience and preparing them for success in school and beyond. Participant 48 said, "Learning and performing music requires students to use multiple cognitive

¹ Osborne, "Exploring the academic," 2016, 156.

skills simultaneously, such as memory, attention, listening, and problem-solving.” Participant 49 mentioned, “Students involved in music programs tend to perform better academically, scoring higher on standardized tests, demonstrating improved literacy and numeracy skills, and greater overall academic engagement.” Participant 50 confirmed, “By exploring different musical genres, interpreting lyrics, and expressing themselves through song, students develop a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them, contributing to their social, emotional, and personal growth.” Choir participation offers middle school-aged students a wide range of educational and academic benefits, including enhanced cognitive skills, improved academic achievement, and holistic development. Students develop essential skills and competencies that support their academic success and personal growth by engaging in music-related activities, enriching their educational experience, and preparing them for future challenges and opportunities.

Cultural Enrichment and Appreciation

Participation in the choir exposes middle school-aged students to diverse cultures, traditions, and musical styles, fostering cultural enrichment and appreciation. Choir participation offers middle school-aged students opportunities to engage with diverse cultural perspectives, traditions, and musical styles, contributing to their cultural enrichment and gratitude. As students learn and perform music from various cultures and traditions, they gain insight into the rich tapestry of human expression and creativity, broadening their understanding of the world and its people. One significant way choirs promote cultural enrichment is through their music repertoire. Choirs often feature a diverse selection of songs from different cultures, languages, and historical periods, allowing students to explore and appreciate the musical traditions of various

communities around the globe. By singing songs in other languages, students develop their vocal skills and deepen their appreciation for linguistic diversity and cultural heritage.

Choir participation facilitates cross-cultural exchange and collaboration, as students interact with peers from diverse backgrounds and share their cultural experiences through music. Collaborative projects, cultural exchanges, and joint performances with choirs from other communities or countries allow students to connect with people from different cultures, fostering mutual understanding, respect, and friendship. Moreover, choir rehearsals and performances often incorporate cultural education and awareness elements, with directors and educators providing context, historical background, and cultural insights into the music students learn. Through discussions, workshops, and educational materials, students gain a deeper understanding of the cultural significance and meaning behind the music they perform, enhancing their appreciation for cultural diversity and artistic expression. Participation in the choir exposes middle school-aged students to diverse cultures, traditions, and musical styles, fostering cultural enrichment and appreciation. By engaging with music from different cultural backgrounds, collaborating with peers from diverse communities, and learning about the cultural significance of the music they perform, students develop a broader perspective of the world and cultivate a deeper appreciation for the richness of human diversity. Participant 51 said, "Choirs often feature a diverse selection of songs from different cultures, languages, and historical periods, allowing students to explore and appreciate the musical traditions of various communities around the globe." Participant 52 claimed, "Collaborative projects, cultural exchanges, and joint performances with choirs from other communities or countries provide students with opportunities to connect with people from different cultures, fostering mutual understanding, respect, and friendship." Participant 53 mentioned, "Through discussions,

workshops, and educational materials, students gain a deeper understanding of the cultural significance and meaning behind the music they perform, enhancing their appreciation for cultural diversity and artistic expression." Choir participation is a gateway to cultural enrichment and appreciation for middle school-aged students. It exposes them to diverse musical traditions, fosters cross-cultural exchange, and deepens their understanding of the world's cultural diversity. By embracing music as a universal language that transcends borders and bridges cultural divides, students develop empathy, respect, and appreciation for the richness of human experience across cultures and communities.

Summary

Analyzing middle school-aged students' participation in the Nai choir reveals several vital themes influencing recruitment and engagement. Socioeconomic accessibility, including the affordability of fees and the accessibility of transportation, plays a crucial role in making choir participation feasible for a broader range of students. Psychosocial development is another significant factor, with choir participation contributing to increased confidence, enhanced social skills, and stronger peer relationships. Cultural and religious backgrounds also influence attitudes towards choir participation, with varying perceptions of music and its compatibility with religious beliefs affecting students' and families' willingness to engage.

Family and community support, including parental encouragement and positive community attitudes, significantly influence students' sustained involvement in the choir. Balancing choir activities with academic responsibilities presents challenges, highlighting the need for effective time management strategies and flexible scheduling. Choir programs emphasize recruitment and talent development, focusing on inclusivity and personal growth, which are crucial for creating a dynamic choir community.

Global collaboration and cultural exchange initiatives enrich students' experiences by exposing them to diverse cultures and musical traditions. Gender perceptions can deter or encourage participation in musical activities, depending on societal attitudes towards masculinity and femininity. Choir participation also positively affects social dynamics and peer relationships, facilitating friendships and social integration. Lastly, effective and efficient organizational practices within choirs enhance the participant experience, ensuring smooth operations and a supportive student environment. By addressing these factors, choir programs can create inclusive, supportive, and enriching environments that foster students' musical and personal growth.

Chapter Five: Conclusion/Discussion

Various factors, including socioeconomic status, psychosocial development, and the interpretation of Islamic religious heritage, influence middle school-aged students' participation in the Nai choir program. In this chapter, the researcher summarizes the key findings of the research, interprets the results, and discusses their implications within the broader context of existing literature. The research aimed to explore the cultural influences on recruiting middle school children to the Jordanian Nai Choir, providing insights into the psychosocial, socioeconomic status, and interpretation of religious heritage and educational dynamics that shape these recruitment processes. The thesis statement emphasizes the importance of understanding these influences to develop effective recruitment strategies.

Discussion

Socioeconomic status

The researcher found that affordability and transportation accessibility significantly influence students' ability to participate in the Nai choir. Financial barriers, such as fees and transport costs, were major deterrents for students from lower-income backgrounds. This finding aligns with prior research that indicates financial constraints limit access to extracurricular activities, including music programs. For example, educators' leadership abilities influence the level of support for music programs in low-income rural schools.¹ Elpus's study reveals that students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds were likelier to participate in music.² Addressing financial barriers is crucial for broader access to choir programs. Scholarships and

¹ Clark, "Supporting music education," 1.

² Elpus, "Who enrolls in high school music," 323.

free transportation can mitigate these barriers, enhancing participation among economically disadvantaged students.

The findings reveal that socioeconomic status significantly influences children's recruitment into the Nai choir. Families with limited financial resources face barriers that prevent their children from participating in music programs. This aligns with Bailey's research, which demonstrates that economically disadvantaged schools in Texas participate less in state choir programs than medium and high socioeconomic-status schools.³ Similarly, Grogan's study on a high-poverty middle school band highlights that despite financial constraints, the success of music programs depends on factors such as individual determination and community support.⁴

The literature indicates that socioeconomic status influences the availability of resources for music education and students' ability to engage in extracurricular activities due to additional responsibilities like jobs or caregiving.⁵ Shaw's work suggests promoting socioeconomic diversity in choral ensembles through inclusive practices, such as distributing rewards equally and recognizing all students' efforts, which could mitigate some of these challenges.⁶

This research's findings support the need for targeted interventions to ensure that children from low-income families have equal access to music education. Addressing socioeconomic disparities could involve community initiatives, funding programs, and policies prioritizing music education in underserved areas.

³ Bailey, "Examination of the Relationships, 2018, 3.

⁴ Grogan, "A High Achieving Middle School Band," 33.

⁵ Holster, "The influence of socioeconomic status," 447.

⁶ Shaw, "Toward Socially," 2017, 22.

Psychosocial Development

Choir participation boosts students' confidence, social skills, and emotional well-being. Students reported a sense of accomplishment and belonging through choir activities. These psychological benefits align with previous research highlighting the developmental advantages of music education. For example, McConkey suggests that music students encounter stress from various sources, including general life stress, schedules, performances, expectations, and classwork.⁷ Embracing coping strategies like stress mindfulness, perseverance, self-care, and seeking support through emotional competence is essential to supporting students throughout their music education journey.⁸ Choir programs provide a safe space for social cohesion and identity development.

Choir participation significantly enhances the psychosocial development of middle school-aged children. This is consistent with the literature, which emphasizes that music education fosters psychosocial development by providing opportunities for creative expression and social interaction.⁹ It helps students develop critical social skills such as teamwork and cooperation. The supportive environment of the choir enables students to overcome performance anxiety and build self-assurance, as noted in several studies highlighting the therapeutic benefits of music for the community's emotional well-being.¹⁰ Moreover, the sense of belonging and community within the choir can alleviate feelings of anxiety, depression, and loneliness, contributing to overall mental health.¹¹ The findings underscore the importance of incorporating

⁷ McConkey, "Emotional competence," 321.

⁸ Ibid., 321.

⁹ Bronfenbrenner, "*The ecology of human development*" 1979, 21.

¹⁰ Wettone, "What Did You Expect," 2021,1.

¹¹ Dabback, "A community of singing," 2018, 242.

music programs into school curricula to support students' holistic development.¹² Schools should recognize the value of choir participation in promoting academic achievement, essential life skills, and emotional resilience.

Cultural and Religious Influences

Interpretation of Islamic religious heritage affects attitudes towards choir participation, with varied interpretations influencing willingness to participate. Some families view music as permissible and essential to cultural expression, while others see it as conflicting with religious norms. Understanding and addressing cultural and religious contexts are vital for promoting inclusive music education programs. Previous research shows that the interpretation of Islamic heritage relies on how scholars, clerics, and Islamic groups justify it, resulting in either negative or positive views of music.¹³ Engaging with religious leaders and communities can foster a supportive environment for diverse religious perspectives.

The interpretation of religious heritage is crucial in influencing children's participation in the Nai choir. Diverse cultural and religious backgrounds result in varying attitudes toward music and choir participation. While some communities view music as an integral part of cultural heritage, others may have reservations due to religious prohibitions.¹⁴

This research's findings align with existing literature that highlights the influence of religious beliefs on music education. For instance, some religious traditions embrace music as a form of worship, while others restrict musical activities based on religious interpretations

¹² Osborne, "Exploring the academic," 2016, 156.

¹³ Hattar, "Music and interfaith dialogue," 2677.

¹⁴ Hattar, "Music and interfaith dialogue," 2677.

depending on the content and purpose of the music.¹⁵ These differing views can create barriers to choir participation, particularly for students from religiously conservative backgrounds.

Understanding and respecting these cultural and religious perspectives are essential for fostering an inclusive environment in music education. Educators and policymakers should consider these factors when designing choir programs to ensure they are accessible and respectful of all students' beliefs and traditions.

Nai Choir Conductor's Individual Experiences and Observations

The findings, associated with the themes and codes, apply to the researcher's experience and observations with the Jordanian Nai choir. The following stories prove the influence of the interpretation of religious heritage, psychosocial development, and socioeconomic status on the recruitment of middle school students to the Nai choir.

A Muslim student attended and enjoyed choir practices and appeared in many events with the choir until the Christmas concert arrived. The performance was in church. The mother contacted the choir conductor and said she did not want her daughter to sing on social media with a cross behind her head, hung on the church wall and everywhere, because of family problems related to singing and being in church. This student missed the concert and left the choir the next semester.

Another mother at another Christmas concert complained that she did not want her daughter, who had joined the choir for two years, to sing words related to Jesus Christ and the Son of God in one of the songs, asking the conductor to let her daughter leave when the choir performed this particular song. Her request was answered, but this student did not join the choir

¹⁵ Shieh, "Music and Islamic Law," 2016, 48.

the next semester. The conductor realized that the next time, she should be careful in choosing the repertoire and may make some changes and substitutions to the words if needed.

The Muslim students enjoy singing: they join the choir full-heartedly, make friends, travel, and change their personalities to be more responsible and elevate their self-esteem. Their parents and community in the background, however, still think there are better things for their children to do. When they have to sing at Christmas concerts, parents observe it, which is their chance to influence their children's participation.

All Nai choir's participants can afford the low registration fees. Students who cannot afford them are requested to join for free. A single mother of one of the students, who was accepted after the audition to participate in the choir without any payment, showed up at the beginning of two rehearsals and then disappeared. The conductor contacted the mother to find out why, and she clarified that she could not afford the transportation fees. Another mother complained that leaving work to bring her daughter to the choir would cost some salary cuts, and she did not register her daughter in the choir. A plan after this was made to gather the areas where the students are living and choir members to help each other with transportation. The choir teachers and administrators collected students from their homes and back. This plan was not enough, though; the recruitment was influenced by socioeconomic status.

The psychosocial development experience that the Nai choir offers students is effective, as mothers claim, and unique due to the inclusion process. Two autistic students joined the choir since its foundation and showed successful stories. Many mothers ensured the conductor that their children were improving academically and psychologically. Their children became more responsible, their social skills and sense of belonging are in progress, and their taste in listening to music and music appreciation are influenced positively. One of the mothers clarified that her

daughter does not like to miss any rehearsal because she waits to be next to the autistic girl to help and be friends with her. The students accept their differences.

The students with autism have good voices, and the conductor insisted on registering them in the choir after auditioning them. Inclusion and offering music for all are crucial and part of the choir's mission and vision. In the first concert, when the autistic girl sang two lines alone, the conductor looked at the mother sitting with the audience; she was in tears. Later, she expressed her feelings and gratitude, taking into consideration the psychological stress that puts autistic students in this position. Her daughter succeeded in this mission, which meant the world to both. In Jordan, the Nai choir is the first children's choir in the country and the only one accepting special needs to join. Another mother confirmed that her daughter, who suffered from short memory syndrome since she was in elementary school, after four years of joining the choir, the girl started achieving higher results in math.

A male student joined the choir when he was eight years old, after years of practice. In grade eight at school, when his voice started to change, he could not join the choir and was too shy to do it because he could not reach the notes he used to sing before and thought the choir was now for girls. The conductor contacted the mother and talked to the student to explain that this was normal and that he would be doing a special part. He also arranged a line of a few notes matching his voice to help him be unique and stay in the choir. He managed for another year and then left.

During the COVID-19 pandemic between 2019 and 2021, the conductor of the Nai choir composed, arranged, and produced online songs performed by the choir. Some of these were broadcast on television to spread messages of strength to people, while others participated in international festivals. Mothers claimed that music was a crucial part of the curfew and

lockdown. They used to sing with their children during practice and record their videos. Enjoying music decreased their stress and worry at that time.

Conversations with the mothers surprised the conductor in various ways. The presence of Christianity through singing Christmas concerts indirectly enhances the spread of the word of Jesus among Muslim and Christian participants. Even if some students leave, this choral music still influences many others. Evidence from many mothers clarifies the psychological development achievement that their children experienced from participating in the Nai choir. Socioeconomic status remains an important issue for the equality of music education and extracurricular programs in Jordan.

Conclusion

The findings support previous studies on the influence of socioeconomic status on access to extracurricular activities. The psychosocial benefits of music education are well-documented in the existing literature. The results reinforce the multifaceted nature of factors influencing choir participation. The research contributes to the broader understanding of how various influences shape students' extracurricular engagement. The interconnectedness of socioeconomic status, psychosocial development, and religious heritage influence children's recruitment into the Nai choir. Addressing these factors requires a detailed approach that includes community support, inclusive practices, and respect for cultural and religious diversity. By recognizing and addressing these influences, educators and policymakers can enhance access to music education and support the development of middle school-aged children in Jordan.

Implications for Practice and Theory

Choir directors and educators should adopt inclusive practices that cater to diverse backgrounds. Financial assistance and transportation support are critical for removing

participation barriers. Sensitivity to cultural and religious beliefs is essential in designing choir programs. Collaboration between schools, community organizations, and religious institutions can enhance inclusivity and accessibility. There is a demand for designing choir programs to accommodate students from diverse backgrounds. By implementing these strategies, practitioners can create accessible and culturally responsive choir environments.

The findings have implications for future research on choir participation. Targeted interventions can increase access for students from diverse backgrounds. Community-based organizations and religious institutions promote choir participation. Additionally, community outreach and education about the benefits of music education can help shift cultural perceptions and increase participation. Addressing the developmental needs of middle school students by creating supportive environments for boys undergoing voice changes and offering peer support programs can also enhance engagement.¹⁶

The research adds to the understanding of how cultural and socioeconomic factors influence extracurricular participation. Future research could further explore these dynamics in different cultural settings or examine longitudinal influences on students who participate in choir programs. The findings suggest that socioeconomic status, psychosocial development, and religious heritage should be critical considerations in such research.

Theoretical Implications

The research findings contribute to the theoretical understanding of music education. Socioeconomic status, psychosocial development, and cultural influences shape students' engagement. Cultural sensitivity training for educators can foster inclusive environments. The research highlights the importance of cultural and religious contexts in music education theories.

¹⁶ Edwards, "Perceptions of Third, " 2022, 103.

Future research should continue exploring these complex dynamics to enhance the theoretical framework. The results challenge and expand existing models of educational engagement by integrating cultural context as a significant variable. This suggests that theories of extracurricular participation must account for cultural and socioeconomic diversity to be fully explanatory. Understanding the unique influences of socioeconomic status, developmental stages, and religious beliefs provides a more comprehensive framework for analyzing student engagement in music education.

Limitations

Qualitative research has limitations, including subjectivity and bias due to the researcher's interpretations, which can affect objectivity. The findings often have limited generalizability because they are based on small samples, making applying results to larger populations difficult. The process is time-consuming, with complex data analysis requiring detailed coding and thematic work. Repeating qualitative studies can be challenging due to their unique contexts and subjective nature, and ethical issues such as ensuring confidentiality and obtaining informed consent are more complex, especially with sensitive topics or vulnerable populations. Ethnographies, in particular, face additional challenges. The researcher's presence can influence participants' behavior, leading to bias, and cultural bias can result in misinterpretations or ethnocentric conclusions. Ethnographic research requires long-term involvement, making it time and resource-intensive. Ethical considerations, such as informed consent and confidentiality, are complex, and focusing on specific groups limits generalizability. Dynamic social contexts and cultures affect the relevance and accuracy of findings, and the qualitative nature of ethnography relies on subjective interpretation, which influences credibility.

Theoretical limitations clarify that the research focused solely on the Nai choir program, limiting generalizability to other contexts. While providing in-depth insights, the qualitative approach's methodological limitations may only be generalizable to some students or programs. Alongside this, the empirical limitations of the single-program focus limit the breadth of perspective captured. The analytical limitations indicate that the research bases its findings on the context of the Nai choir, and the ethical limitations show that the researcher faced challenges in ensuring confidentiality and obtaining consent.

Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases. The research's theoretical scope is limited to cultural and socioeconomic influences, potentially overlooking other significant factors such as school infrastructure and policy environment. Future studies should integrate a broader range of variables.

Recommendations for Future Research

The recommended strategy to address the issues is conducting in-depth qualitative studies on interpreting Islamic religious heritage. Exploring targeted interventions and support programs to increase access to choir participation can provide practice suggestions. Investigating the intersectionality of socioeconomic status, psychological development, and cultural influences can identify the gaps. Expanding studies to include multiple choir programs across different regions and cultural contexts can enhance reliability and validity.

Future research should address the identified limitations by adopting mixed-methods approaches and expanding the geographic scope to include diverse cultural settings. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into the long-term influences of choir participation on students' academic and personal development. Further investigation into the specific cultural and religious barriers to music education in conservative communities would also be beneficial.

Another quantitative research can be conducted about the psychosocial benefits of joining the choir, such as building self-esteem, social skills, a sense of belonging, emotional intelligence, resilience, social dynamics, and peer relationships. Statistics will help advertise these benefits, get people to know about the choir, and recruit more students.

Summary

This chapter concludes the research by highlighting the significant influence of socioeconomic status, psychosocial development, and the interpretation of Islamic religious heritage on students' participation in the Nai choir program. It discusses the researcher's findings on these influences and their implications, acknowledges limitations, and provides recommendations for future research. The research underscores the importance of inclusive practices, financial assistance, and cultural sensitivity in choir programs. By addressing the identified recommendations and implications, practitioners can create more accessible and culturally responsive choir environments that empower students to thrive and succeed.

Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

July 9, 2024

Diana Talhami
Nathan Street

Re: IRB Approval - IRB-FY23-24-1877 Cultural Influence on Recruiting Middle School Children to the Jordanian Nai Choir

Dear Diana Talhami, Nathan Street,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This approval is extended to you for one year from the following date: July 9, 2024. If you need to make changes to the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit a modification to the IRB. Modifications can be completed through your Cayuse IRB account.

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

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. [45 CFR 46.101\(b\)\(2\)](#) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

For a PDF of your approval 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 stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found on the same page under the Attachments tab. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

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

Sincerely,

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

Appendix B: Child Assent to Participate in a Research Study in English

Child Assent to Participate in a Research Study

What is the name of the study and who is doing the study?

The name of the study is Cultural Influence on Recruiting Middle School Children to the Jordanian Nai choir, and the person doing the study is Diana Talhami.

Why is Diana Talhami doing this study?

Diana Talhami wants to know the factors influencing middle school children to enroll in the Nai choir.

Why am I being asked to be in this study?

You are being asked to be in this study because you are under 18 and a middle school student in the Nai choir.

If I decide to be in the study, what will happen and how long will it take?

If you decide to be in this study, you will be interviewed for 30 minutes.

Do I have to be in this study?

No, you do not have to be in this study. If you want to be in this study, then tell the researcher. If you don't want to, it's OK to say no. The researcher will not be angry. You can say yes now and change your mind later. It's up to you.

What if I have a question?

You can ask questions any time. You can ask now. You can ask later. You can talk to the researcher. If you do not understand something, please ask the researcher to explain it to you again.

Signing your name below means that you want to be in the study.

Signature of Child/Witness

Date

Diana Talhami
Mob. 00962796352211
talhamidiana@gmail.com.

Nathan Street
nstreet4@liberty.edu

Liberty University Institutional Review Board
1971 University Blvd, Green Hall 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515
irb@liberty.edu

Liberty University IRB-FY23-24-1877 Approved on 7-9-2024 Expires on 7-8-2025

Appendix C: Child Assent to Participate in a Research Study in Arabic

موافقة الطفل على المشاركة في دراسة بحثية

ما اسم الدراسة ومن يقوم بها؟ اسم الدراسة هو التأثير الثقافي على تجنيد الأطفال في المدارس المتوسطة للانضمام إلى جوقه الناي الأردنية، والشخص الذي يقوم بالدراسة هو ديانا تلحمي

لماذا تقوم ديانا تلحمي بهذه الدراسة؟ ديانا تلحمي تريد معرفة العوامل التي تؤثر على تسجيل الأطفال في المدارس المتوسطة في جوقه الناي.

لماذا أطلب أن أكون في هذه الدراسة؟ يُطلب منك المشاركة في هذه الدراسة لأن عمرك أقل من 18 عامًا وأنت طالب في المدرسة المتوسطة وتشارك في جوقه الناي.

إذا قررت أن أكون في الدراسة، ماذا سيحدث وكم من الوقت سيستغرق؟ إذا قررت المشاركة في هذه الدراسة، سيتم إجراء مقابلة معك لمدة 30 دقيقة.

هل يجب عليّ المشاركة في هذه الدراسة؟ لا، ليس عليك المشاركة في هذه الدراسة. إذا كنت ترغب في المشاركة في هذه الدراسة، فأخبر الباحث. إذا لم ترغب في ذلك، يمكنك قول لا. لن يغضب الباحث. يمكنك قول نعم الآن وتغيير رأيك لاحقًا. الأمر يعود لك.

ماذا لو كان لدي سؤال؟ يمكنك طرح الأسئلة في أي وقت. يمكنك السؤال الآن. يمكنك السؤال لاحقًا. يمكنك التحدث إلى الباحث. إذا كنت لا تفهم شيئًا ما، يرجى أن تطلب من الباحث شرح الأمر لك مرة أخرى.

توقيع اسمك أدناه يعني أنك ترغب في المشاركة في الدراسة

توقيع الطفل / الشاهد التاريخ

talhamidiana@gmail.com: ديانا تلحمي هاتف: 00962796352211 البريد الإلكتروني

nstreet4@liberty.edu: ناثان ستريت البريد الإلكتروني

University Blvd, Green Hall 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 مجلس المراجعة المؤسسية بجامعة ليبرتي 1971
liberty.edu: البريد الإلكتروني irb@liberty.edu

Appendix D: Consent letter in English

Consent

Title of the Project: Cultural Influence on Recruiting Middle School Children to the Jordanian Nai choir.

Principal Investigator: Diana Talhami, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Music Education, Liberty University

Key Information about the Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years old or older, and either a parent or Muslim mother whose children are Nai choir members, an old choir member who has participated in the Nai choir for 3 years or more, a teacher of the Nai choir, or a head of school which has a choir with students who also participate in the Nai choir.

Things you should know:

- The purpose of the study is to better understand the factors influencing middle school children's participation in the Jordanian Nai choir and to provide recruitment challenges in the enrollment of middle school students to the Nai choir, including socioeconomic status, psychosocial status, and interpretation of the Islamic religious heritage influences. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to take part in an in-person or online audio-recorded interview. This interview will take approximately 30 minutes.
- Your participation is not expected to receive any direct benefits.
- Taking part in this research project is voluntary. You do not have to participate, and you can stop at any time.

Please read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to participate in this research.

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

The purpose of the study is to investigate the cultural influence on recruiting middle school children to the Jordanian Nai choir, and to highlight recruitment challenges in the enrollment of middle school students to the Nai choir, including socioeconomic status, psychosocial status, and interpretation of the Islamic religious heritage influences.

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:

- Participate in an in-person or online audio-recorded interview that will take no more than 30 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect a direct benefit from participating in this study.

Benefits to society include gaining insights into the cultural factors influencing participation in choirs, which could inform future recruitment strategies.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

Liberty University
IRB-FY23-24-1877
Approved on 7-9-2024
Expires on 7-8-2025

Appendix E: Consent letter in Arabic

الموافقة

عنوان المشروع: التأثير الثقافي على تجنيد الأطفال في المدارس الإعدادية لجوقة الناي الأردنية. المحقق الرئيسي: ديانا تلحمي، مرشحة دكتوراه، قسم تعليم الموسيقى، جامعة ليبرتي

معلومات أساسية عن الدراسة البحثية أنت مدعو للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية. للمشاركة، يجب أن تكون تبلغ من العمر 18 عامًا أو أكثر، وواحدًا مما يلي: والد أو أم مسلمة لأطفال يشاركون في جوقة الناي، عضو سابق في الجوقة شارك لمدة 3 سنوات أو أكثر، مدرس لجوقة الناي، أو مدير مدرسة تحتوي على جوقة يشارك طلابها أيضًا في جوقة الناي.

أمر يجب معرفتها: • الغرض من الدراسة هو فهم أفضل للعوامل التي تؤثر على مشاركة الأطفال في المدارس الإعدادية في جوقة الناي الأردنية وتقديم تحديات التجنيد في تسجيل الطلاب في المدارس الإعدادية في جوقة الناي، بما في ذلك الحالة الاجتماعية والاقتصادية، والحالة النفسية والاجتماعية، وتفسير التأثيرات التراثية الدينية الإسلامية. إذا اخترت المشاركة، ستطلب منك المشاركة في مقابلة مسجلة صوتيًا بشكل شخصي أو عبر الإنترنت. ستستغرق هذه المقابلة حوالي 30 دقيقة. • من غير المتوقع أن تحصل على أي فوائد مباشرة من مشاركتك. • المشاركة في هذا المشروع البحثي اختياري. ليس عليك المشاركة، ويمكنك التوقف في أي وقت.

يرجى قراءة هذا النموذج بالكامل وطرح الأسئلة قبل اتخاذ قرار المشاركة في هذا البحث.

ما هي الدراسة ولماذا يتم إجراؤها؟ الغرض من الدراسة هو التحقيق في التأثير الثقافي على تجنيد الأطفال في المدارس الإعدادية لجوقة الناي الأردنية، وتسهيل الضوء على تحديات التجنيد في تسجيل الطلاب في المدارس الإعدادية لجوقة الناي، بما في ذلك الحالة الاجتماعية والاقتصادية، والحالة النفسية والاجتماعية، وتفسير التأثيرات التراثية الدينية الإسلامية.

ماذا سيحدث إذا شاركت في هذه الدراسة؟ إذا وافقت على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة، سأطلب منك ما يلي: • المشاركة في مقابلة مسجلة صوتيًا بشكل شخصي أو عبر الإنترنت ستستغرق حوالي 30 دقيقة.

كيف يمكن أن تستفيد أنت أو الآخرون من هذه الدراسة؟ لا يجب أن يتوقع المشاركون فائدة مباشرة من المشاركة في هذه الدراسة.

تشمل الفوائد للمجتمع اكتساب رؤى حول العوامل الثقافية التي تؤثر على المشاركة في الجوقات، مما يمكن أن يوجه استراتيجيات التجنيد المستقبلية.

ما هي المخاطر التي قد تواجهها من المشاركة في هذه الدراسة؟ المخاطر المتوقعة من المشاركة في هذه الدراسة قليلة، مما يعني أنها تعادل المخاطر التي قد تواجهها في حياتك اليومية.

كيف سيتم حماية المعلومات الشخصية؟ ستظل سجلات هذه الدراسة خاصة. لن تتضمن التقارير المنشورة أي معلومات يمكن أن تجعل من الممكن التعرف على الموضوع. سيتم تخزين سجلات البحث بشكل آمن، ولن يتمكن من الوصول إليها سوى الباحث. • سيتم الحفاظ على سرية ردود المشاركين عن طريق استبدال الأسماء بأسماء مستعارة. • ستجرى المقابلات في مكان لن يتمكن الآخرون من سماع المحادثة بسهولة. • سيتم تخزين البيانات على جهاز كمبيوتر مقفل بكلمة مرور. سيكون للباحث حق الوصول إلى البيانات. بعد ثلاث سنوات، سيتم حذف جميع السجلات الإلكترونية. • سيتم تخزين التسجيلات على جهاز كمبيوتر مقفل بكلمة مرور. سيكون للباحث حق الوصول إلى التسجيلات. بعد ثلاث سنوات سيتم حذف التسجيلات.

هل المشاركة في الدراسة اختيارية؟ المشاركة في هذه الدراسة اختيارية. لن تؤثر قراراتك بشأن المشاركة على علاقتك الحالية أو المستقبلية بجامعة ليبرتي. إذا قررت المشاركة، يمكنك عدم الإجابة على أي سؤال أو الانسحاب في أي وقت دون التأثير على أي علاقة.

Appendix F: Parental Consent Letter in English

Parental Consent

Title of the Project: Cultural Influence on Recruiting Middle School Children to the Jordanian Nai choir.

Principal Investigator: Diana Talhami, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Music Education, Liberty University

Key Information about the Research Study

Your child is invited to participate in a research study. To participate, she/he must be under 18 and must be a middle school student who participates in the Nai choir. Participation in this research project is voluntary.

Things you should know:

- The purpose of the study is to better understand the factors influencing middle school children's participation in the Jordanian Nai choir and to provide recruitment challenges in the enrollment of middle school students to the Nai choir, including socioeconomic status, psychosocial status, and interpretation of the Islamic religious heritage influences. If you allow your child to participate, he/she will be asked to be interviewed; this will take approximately 30 minutes.
- Participants should not expect to receive any direct benefits from participating in this study.
- Taking part in this research project is voluntary. Your child does not have to participate, and she/he can stop at any time.

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

What is the study about and why are we doing it?

The purpose of the study is to investigate the cultural influence on recruiting middle school children to the Jordanian Nai choir, and to highlight recruitment challenges in the enrollment of middle school students to the Nai choir, including socioeconomic status, psychosocial status, and interpretation of the Islamic religious heritage influences.

What will participants be asked to do in this study?

If you allow your child to participate, I will ask him or her to do the following:

- Complete an in-person or remote audio-recorded interview. This will take approximately 30 minutes.

How could participants or others benefit from this study?

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

What risks might participants experience from being in this study?

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

Liberty University
IRB-FY23-24-1877
Approved on 7-9-2024
Expires on 7-8-2025

Appendix G: Parental Consent Letter in Arabic

موافقة الوالدين

عنوان المشروع: التأثير الثقافي على تجنيد الأطفال في المدارس المتوسطة للانضمام إلى جوقه الناي الأردنية. الباحث الرئيسي: ديانا طلحمي، مرشحة للدكتوراه، قسم تعليم الموسيقى، جامعة ليبرتي

معلومات أساسية عن دراسة البحث تمت دعوة طفلك للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية. للمشاركة، يجب أن يكون عمره/عمرها أقل من 18 عامًا وأن يكون طالبًا في المدرسة المتوسطة الذي شارك/يشارك في جوقه الناي. المشاركة في هذا المشروع البحثي طوعية.

أمور يجب أن تعرفها: • الهدف من الدراسة هو فهم العوامل التي تؤثر على مشاركة الأطفال في المدرسة المتوسطة في جوقه الناي الأردنية وتقديم تحديات التوظيف في تسجيل طلاب المدرسة المتوسطة في جوقه الناي، بما في ذلك الوضع الاجتماعي والاقتصادي، والحالة النفسية والاجتماعية، وتفسير تأثيرات التراث الديني الإسلامي. إذا سمحت لطفلك بالمشاركة، سيطلب منه/منها إجراء مقابلة؛ ستستغرق المقابلة حوالي 30 دقيقة. • لا يجب على المشاركين توقع الحصول على أي فوائد مباشرة من المشاركة في هذه الدراسة. • المشاركة في هذا المشروع البحثي طوعية. لا يجب على طفلك المشاركة، ويمكنه التوقف في أي وقت.

يرجى أخذ الوقت لقراءة هذا النموذج بالكامل وطرح الأسئلة قبل اتخاذ القرار بشأن السماح لطفلك بالمشاركة في هذا المشروع البحثي.

ما هي الدراسة ولماذا نقوم بها؟ الهدف من الدراسة هو التحقيق في التأثير الثقافي على تجنيد الأطفال في المدارس المتوسطة للانضمام إلى جوقه الناي الأردنية، وتبسيط الضوء على تحديات التوظيف في تسجيل طلاب المدرسة المتوسطة في جوقه الناي، بما في ذلك الوضع الاجتماعي والاقتصادي، والحالة النفسية والاجتماعية، وتفسير تأثيرات التراث الديني الإسلامي.

ما الذي سيطلب من المشاركين فعله في هذه الدراسة؟ إذا سمحت لطفلك بالمشاركة، سأطلب منه/منها القيام بالآتي: • إكمال مقابلة مسجلة صوتيًا شخصيًا أو عن بُعد. ستستغرق حوالي 30 دقيقة.

كيف يمكن أن يستفيد المشاركون أو الآخرون من هذه الدراسة؟ لا يجب على المشاركين توقع الحصول على فائدة مباشرة من هذه الدراسة.

ما هي المخاطر التي قد يواجهها المشاركون من المشاركة في هذه الدراسة؟ المخاطر المتوقعة من المشاركة في هذه الدراسة ضئيلة، مما يعني أنها تساوي المخاطر التي يواجهها طفلك في الحياة اليومية.

كيف سيتم حماية المعلومات الشخصية؟ سيتم الاحتفاظ بسجلات هذه الدراسة بسرية. لن تتضمن التقارير المنشورة أي معلومات تجعل من الممكن تحديد هوية أي موضوع. سيتم تخزين سجلات البحث بشكل آمن، وسيكون لدى الباحث فقط الوصول إلى السجلات. • سيتم الحفاظ على سرية ردود المشاركين عن طريق استبدال الأسماء بأسماء مستعارة. • ستجرى المقابلات في مكان لا يمكن للأخريين بسهولة سماع المحادثة. • سيتم تخزين البيانات على جهاز كمبيوتر مغلق بكلمة مرور. سيكون لدى الباحث الوصول إلى البيانات. بعد ثلاث سنوات، سيتم حذف جميع السجلات الإلكترونية. • سيتم تخزين التسجيلات على جهاز كمبيوتر مغلق بكلمة مرور. سيكون لدى الباحث الوصول إلى التسجيلات. بعد ثلاث سنوات، سيتم حذف التسجيلات.

هل المشاركة في الدراسة طوعية؟ المشاركة في هذه الدراسة طوعية. قرارك بالسماح لطفلك بالمشاركة لن يؤثر على علاقتك الحالية أو المستقبلية مع جامعة ليبرتي. إذا قررت السماح لطفلك بالمشاركة، فإنه حر في عدم الإجابة على أي سؤال أو الانسحاب في أي وقت دون التأثير على تلك العلاقات.

ماذا يجب أن يتم إذا رغب المشاركون في الانسحاب من الدراسة؟ إذا اخترت سحب طفلك من الدراسة أو اختار طفلك الانسحاب، يرجى إبلاغ الباحث برغبتك في إيقاف مشاركته. لن يتم تسجيل ردود طفلك أو تضمينها في الدراسة.

Appendix H: CITI Program Certificate

Completion Date 14-Mar-2024
Expiration Date 14-Mar-2027
Record ID 61695680

This is to certify that:

Diana Talhami

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

101 NE 3rd Avenue, Suite 320
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US
www.citiprogram.org

Generated on 14-Mar-2024. Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w659f11bd-2296-4954-8af8-b10ed74b34ba-61695680

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