

Theses and Dissertations

2023

A phenomenological study of the experiences and teaching strategies of private music instructors working with elementary school students

Ana Maria Fusu-Kommidi

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/etd>



Part of the [Elementary Education Commons](#), and the [Music Education Commons](#)

Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCES AND TEACHING
STRATEGIES OF PRIVATE MUSIC INSTRUCTORS WORKING WITH ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL STUDENTS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy

by

Ana Maria Fusu-Kommidi

July, 2023

Dr. Paula Thompson, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

Ana Maria Fusu-Kommid

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Doctoral Committee:

Paula Thompson, Ed.D., Chairperson

Ebony Cain, Ph.D.

Gregory Hoepfner, DMA.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	v
DEDICATION	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
VITA	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
Chapter 1: The Background of the Study	1
Introduction.....	1
Problem Statement	6
The Purpose of the Study	7
Research Questions	7
Methodological Approach	7
Significance of Study	8
Definition of Terms.....	8
Theoretical Framework (Summary).....	11
Limitations	12
Delimitations.....	13
Assumptions.....	14
Chapter Summary and Organization of the Study	15
Chapter 2: Review of Literature	17
Introduction.....	17
Theoretical Framework.....	18
Private Music Education Overview	27
Literature Themes	31
Chapter Summary	46
Chapter 3: The Methodology	47
Introduction.....	47
Purpose Statement and Research Questions	48
Research design and rationale.....	48
Researcher's Role	50
Selection of Participants	51
Human Subjects Consideration.....	54

Data Collection Procedures.....	56
Data Analysis	62
Chapter Summary	64
Chapter 4: Results	66
Introduction.....	66
Statement of Purpose and Research Questions	66
Research Design Overview.....	66
Description of the Participants.....	67
Findings.....	68
Chapter Summary	90
Chapter 5: Discussions and Conclusions	93
Introduction.....	93
Theoretical Framework.....	93
Statement of Purpose and Research Questions	93
Research Design.....	94
Study Conclusions	95
Implications for Practice and Scholarship	102
Study Limitations.....	104
Recommendations for Policy	105
Recommendations for Practice and for Future Research.....	105
Closing Comments.....	107
REFERENCES	109
APPENDIX A: Recruitment Form	121
APPENDIX B: IRB Approval	122
APPENDIX C: Informed Consent	123

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: The Four Artistic Processes and the Process Components of Music.....	24
Table 2: Four Artistic Processes and the Eleven Anchor Standards.....	26
Table 3: Interview Guide	58
Table 4: Research Questions and Themes	69

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my wonderful family, my husband Raghu and our four incredible little dogs, Mathilda, Paris, Betsy, and Bobby, for their true love and relentless devotion, throughout this lengthy dissertation passage.

I dedicate this dissertation to Dr. Greg Hoepfner – for his perpetual professional support and friendship throughout the years.

I dedicate this dissertation to my first and only music pedagogy influencer, Dr. Martha Baker-Jordan (1937-2023).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all the participants in this study for their engagement and heartfelt contributions. Special thanks to the vast community of private music teachers, of whom many have been my esteemed colleagues for over two decades. I would like to also extend my thanks to the MTAC society for their steadfast support, musicianship aid and guidance throughout my music teaching career. A big thank you to Pepperdine's Writing Support, and especially Regina Meister and of course my exceptional Dissertation Chair Dr. Paula Thompson whose pure talent, diligence and constant reassurance has helped me navigate this vast topic of private music education and reach my destination after a very long dissertation voyage.

Finally, I would also like to thank all my students for being the main source of inspiration throughout the years, and the main catalysts behind this dissertation topic.

VITA

Objective

To make outstanding music education affordable and available to all students. Music education is a right, not a privilege.

Summary Statement

A life-long musician, Ana Maria Fusu-Kommidi has dedicated her past two decades to teaching music to students of all ages and backgrounds. Although she is a classically trained pianist, she believes that music should be approached like any other core subject in school, and not as an extracurricular activity. Ana-Maria's introduction to music started at the very young age of five, when she began composing music. Upon entering and placing in numerous music composition competitions, her first book of songs "Sun in the Window" was published at just nine years of age. The book is still being taught in primary schools today, as part of the general school curriculum in Moldova. The following decade was marked by intense competition and concert activity throughout Eastern Europe. Later, while studying at the State Conservatory of Music, G. Muzicescu in Moldova, Ana Maria was awarded a full music scholarship and moved to the United States to continue her studies. Upon graduating with Masters, she worked at Yamaha Music School in California, where besides teaching regular group and private music classes, she designed programs that fused multiple art forms and disciplines which she taught at a fraction of the cost. Her first class filled out within a day, and most of the students were clearly poor. This experience became the turning point in her career, and she made the decision to pursue a doctorate in education.

Education

- Ed.D., Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy, Pepperdine University, CA. July 2023.
- M.M., Piano Performance, California State University Fullerton, CA. May 2008.
- B.M. Piano Performance, Cameron University, OK. May 2004.

Research Interests

- Private Music Education in Public Schools
- Music Education and Poverty
- The Business of Music Education

Work Experience

- Lead music teacher at Diamond Bar Yamaha Music School (2006-2013)
- Private music instructor (2014-2017)
- Music director and teacher at Play Music Studios, inc. (2017-present)

ABSTRACT

The lack of consistent elementary musical education in the United States has sustained a steady demand for private music instruction. Private instruction, however, does not usually align with the general music education standards, or the school requirements. There is a lack of research about private music instructors' role in music education for elementary-aged students. The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education. The two research questions were:

- RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?
- RQ2: What are the teaching strategies used by private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?

The theoretical framework of this study was based on the California Music Standards, and the methodology was qualitative phenomenology. Four topics were discovered through the literature review process: music education and mathematic disciplines; music education and cognitive benefits; music education and student engagement; music education and accessibility.

Participants were chosen through a convenience sampling procedure. Five private music instructors answered open-ended questions in one-to-one Zoom interviews lasting 55-90 minutes. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. The data was analyzed using HyperRESEARCH.

The analysis identified seven themes which addressed the two research questions: (a) Private music instructors believe themselves to be the only source of music education; (b) Private music instructors prioritize getting to know their students; (c) Private music instructors believe

that music lessons benefits to students can extend beyond music skill; (d) Private music instructors see themselves as significant role models in their students' lives; (e) Private music instructors rely on individualized teaching strategies and creative approaches; (f) Private music instructors must navigate difficult relationships with their students' parents; (g) Private music instructors teach to outcomes.

Based on the seven themes, the researcher offered conclusions and implications for educational leaders, private music instructors, and policy makers. A recommendation is made to modify the California Music Standards to help private music instructors integrate them into their instruction.

Chapter 1: The Background of the Study

Introduction

Elementary school years are essential for developing fundamental music skills such as reading music and learning to play an instrument. Elementary students stand to gain many developmental benefits associated with high-quality music education (Walker, 2015). Music has been shown to help young students improve their ability to learn other academic subjects in school, such as linguistics, critical thinking, math, and science. The purely measured aspects of music such as rhythm and pitch show a clear connection between mathematics and music. These two apparently contrasting disciplines are at the core of music theory (Saloni, 2010). Music can help students do better in linguistics by expanding their vocabulary and writing ability, and develop problem-solving skills (Hutchins, 2018). Besides the many academic benefits, music education can also benefit students socially. An extended music education can enhance students' general learning satisfaction and make the schooling experience more enjoyable (Eerola & Eerola, 2014).

As academic interpretation of the many aspects of music as a scientific discipline is growing and music's relationships with other cognitive skills is becoming increasingly apparent, the benefits of music education are still being debated. Multiple studies have been done regarding cognition transfer from music to other fields (Bigand & Tillmann, 2022; Cochrane et al., 2013; Colley et al., 2018; Rose et al., 2015). Even though the theory that listening to music can make us more intelligent, also known as the Mozart effect, (Hetland, 2000)., has since been debunked by Steele and Brown in 1999, it is still possible to improve memory and increase cognitive function, such as intelligence, mathematic skills, special reasoning, writing, and reading through singing or playing music (Economidou Stavrou et al., 2011). For more

consistent results, however, first, distinctions should be drawn between music's active and passive perception, or between listening, or playing and singing (Kraus & Chandrasekaran, 2010). The conflict between these findings, nonetheless, enhances the significance of utilizing combined approaches in music teaching. These findings may help researchers recognize the benefits that music exerts on other cognitive sciences and intellectual capabilities (Jaschke et al., 2013).

Music education is one of the disciplines addressed by the National Standards for Arts Education. The standards also include dance, theater, and visual arts. Cumulatively they are an integral part of the core academic subjects in the 1994 Goals 2000: Educate America Act. The categorization appeared again in 2001 under the No Child Left Behind Act, which classified the arts as a core academic subject (Brewerton & Millward, 2001). The arts were declared as necessary to general education as English, mathematics, history, civics and government, geography, science, and foreign languages, and were required to be taught by highly qualified educators (Branscombe, 2005). Most states welcomed the disciplines addressed by the National Standards for Arts Education and agreed that all students have the right to a quality arts education, regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic location.

The Content and Achievement Standards for the arts were developed by the CNAEA (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations). These standards detailed specific achievement goals within the arts discipline. Skills and requirements for each of the arts at the completion of the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades were established. The CNAEA has since decided that students who complete their education in arts are expected to communicate in the four art disciplines: music, dance, theater, and visual arts, and become experts in at least one of them. Students needed to also be familiar with the most exemplary works of art, analyze them, and

correlate to various types of knowledge and skills across all the arts disciplines, various cultures, and historical art periods (Adderley et al., 2003).

The impact of the National Standards has been extensive and transformative, and it affected programs of study at higher education levels. As the standards provided adequate preparation to future K–4 music teachers, specific music skills such as composition and world music knowledge were generally improved. However, more work needed to be done in those standards that dealt with improvisation, and understanding relationships between music, other arts, and disciplines outside of the arts (Adderley et al., 2003).

The importance of music as part of a well-rounded music education, has been recognized by the United States government through the passage of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)—a historic victory for music education advocates. This new law, which was passed on August 1, 2016, modified the standards from the previous No Child Left Behind Act. ESSA required public schools (K-12) to give students exposure to a wide variety of subjects instead of focusing on just a few (Jarasek, 2017).

The priority of music being an equal subject to the core curriculum has been debated since music's inception in public schools in 1883. The value of music education, nonetheless, has been endorsed by education administrators and policymakers through various implementations and changing views. The belief that every child should be educated in the arts gained strength during the Goals, 2000 legislation act which resulted in National Standards for Music (Branscombe, 2005). Music education was assigned an important place in the United States educational policy. At the time of the passage of Goals 2000, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the United States Department of Education began an investigation into the status of arts education in the nation's public schools during the school year of 1999–2000. The

data included the accessibility of instruction in the arts, staffing, funding, supplemental programs and activities, and administrative support of arts education (Adderley et al., 2003).

At first glimpse, the public-school music education in the United States at the elementary level vary. Most school-based music instruction occurs in the form of a generalized music curriculum which includes study components such as singing, listening, and playing basic instruments. These general music classes are either taught by a certified music teacher or by the grade-level classroom teacher. Since these curriculums are designed to reach all students, questions of equity and social justice at this primary level refer to the equal distribution of resources and the use of applicable curricula (Frierson-Campbell, 2007). Music instruction becomes more specialized at secondary level elective courses, performance ensembles, such as band, orchestra, and chorus. Although some of these school performance programs in the United States are of exceptionally high quality, equal participation in these courses is also more limited. Those who participate in these high-quality music programs are often students whose parents can afford the musical instruments and often private music instruction (Frierson-Campbell, 2007).

Despite the effort to keep quality, accessible elementary music education in public schools today, many schools do not have enough funds to include music in their elementary grades, let alone produce a quality music curriculum. Throughout the United States, nearly half of all elementary students receive little designated music instruction (Walker, 2015). In Utah, less than 10% of elementary students receive music instruction. This comes as a sharp contrast to the rich musical culture, excellent orchestras, festivals, and music theaters throughout the country (Walker, 2015). According to NCES data, about 90% of public elementary schools, grade six and under, and secondary schools, grades seven and higher, have offered music instruction during the 1999–2000 school year. A recent survey study about music teachers who

hold teaching positions in public schools through the Midwest, has revealed that schools in Missouri, Iowa and Illinois are required to offer arts instruction at the elementary, middle, and high school levels (Prendergast, 2021). However, inequities are seen in low-income and high-minority schools which indicate that in 1997 only 20%–40% of Baltimore's secondary schools offered instrumental music instruction, and only 40% of Detroit secondary schools offered any music instruction (Sparshott, 1997). This information revealed that students from low-income communities in the United States are largely underrepresented by the music programs in schools. In an effort to provide better access to music education for low-income students, more understanding of the teaching structure and music programs in particularly lower-income areas is needed (Hoffman, 2013).

In the absence of consistent music education in elementary schools, an increase in demand for private music instruction has sprouted. In search of quality music lessons, students are enrolled in private music lessons or attend private music schools (Berman, 2013). Since the early twentieth century, private music instruction has been consistently linked to music education in American public schools. It was reported that 57% of Boston public school students were taking private music instructions to supplement their regular music classes. Crediting that school ensembles can benefit from band students' enrollment in private lessons, school administrators do more than encourage students to take private music lessons. They often require it (Cumberledge, 2016). Private music instruction can benefit individual students by improving their music performance abilities and help students prepare for school ensembles which in turn can generate successful community performances (Duke, 2000). However, private music instruction also presents its challenges. Most private music instruction is independent of the general music education requirements that students would otherwise receive in schools (Litterst,

2016). As a result, elementary students seeking private music education may still lack the music skills needed for middle and high school music programs. Bands, orchestras, and other music classes in middle schools often require more substantial if not more specific music preparation (Elpus & Abril, 2011).

Despite the current lack of research about the role of private music instruction in general elementary music education, significant research has been conducted about the benefits of music instruction in elementary school years. Specifically, the positive aspects in which music can benefit students in developing their cognitive skills, absorb knowledge, improve their social skills, and help their emotional development (Duke, 2000; Hutchins, 2018; Lukács & Honbolygó, 2019; May & Elliott, 1980; Pike, 2013; Piro & Ortiz, 2009). Several other researchers have studied and conducted projects that focus on the standards, their goals, and their far-reaching impact on the continuing education systems such as colleges and universities (Adderley et al., 2003). However, the gap in the literature about elementary private music instructor's experiences and teaching strategies to help supplement elementary students' school-based curriculum remains.

Problem Statement

The current lack of consistent elementary musical education in the United States has driven the demand for private music instruction. While many successful private music instructors provide strategies that enhance their students' music performance, those strategies do not necessarily substitute their students' regular music classes. Private music instructors have been faced with the increasing challenges of having to adapt their teaching programs to supplement their students' regular music classes while still pursuing their teaching techniques (Cumberledge,

2016). Therefore, there was a need and opportunity to explore private music instructors' experiences and teaching strategies when working elementary school students.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the experiences and teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education. The data was collected through interviewing five established and experienced private music instructors throughout California (Leticie, 2006).

Research Questions

Two research questions guided this study:

- RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?
- RQ2: What are the teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?

Methodological Approach

The methodology selected for this study was qualitative. The use of qualitative methodology enabled the researcher to better understand the complex portrayal of the participants' experiences for this research topic (Babbie, 2013). The research design in this study was phenomenology. A study of the development of human consciousness and self-awareness, phenomenology is a design of inquiry with its roots in philosophy (Smith, 2013). In the current contentious elementary music education climate, the private music instructors often find themselves assuming the roles of the music education providers (Cumberledge, 2016), helping to supplement their elementary students' music curricula with the basic and necessary music skills. As the study of phenomenology signifies the way a population experiences things firsthand, this

study was aimed at understanding the shared phenomenon of these five private music instructors' working experience with school-based elementary students, through their own consciousness (Groenewald, 2004).

Significance of Study

This study adds substantial importance to the music education literature for the following reasons: the current gap in research of this topic, the increasing need for private teachers to assume the role of general music educators (Cumberledge, 2016), and the lack of resources to help private teachers stay informed about the requirements of music programs in elementary school (MENC: The National Association for Music Education, 2007). There is also limited data about private music teachers who work with elementary students and the strategies they use to adapt their teaching programs to supplement their students' regular music classes.

Music instructors may benefit from this study by learning about new strategies they can teach to their elementary students. This study may also inspire music teachers, private music instructors, and private music school owners to create more effective and collaborative teaching methods. The use of more effective teaching methods may result in private music education playing an even bigger role in general elementary music education. Lastly, this study may lead to future research about private music instruction and an increase in college music majors (Cumberledge, 2016).

Definition of Terms

A list of essential terms and acronyms and their definition used throughout the five chapters of this dissertation are listed below. They are the theoretical and operational definitions of terms related to this study (NAfME, 2021).

- *ABRSM*: Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, and it is one of U.K.'s major music education association. ABRSM is also a major music publishing entity, and the world's most prominent provider of music exams. Founded in 1889, ABRSM provides more than 650,000 exams in more than 90 countries each year. ABRSM, that collaborates with four Royal Schools of Music, also makes considerable donations, and invests in music education projects globally (ABRSM, n.d.).
- *Artistic Processes*: There are four Artistic Processes: Creating, performing, responding, and connecting. Through them, students can connect, combine, and relate their musical knowledge (California Department of Education, 2020).
- *CNAEA*: Consortium of National Arts Education Association that developed the "Content and Achievement" standards for the arts. They determine what the students need to be fluent in and be ready to accomplish in the arts disciplines. They also plan the arts requirements for each of the school grades (Adderley et al., 2003).
- *Private music instructor*: Private music teacher, educator or provider specializing in any one particular musical instrument or a group of musical instruments. They usually work individually, teaching one student at a time, and focus on developing their student's instrumental performance skills. Some but not all private music instructors also teach comprehensive skills such as improvisation, music theory and music composition. Many private music instructors are self-employed, which enables them to have control over every aspect of their work, from the age range and skill level of the students they work with, to the musical styles and pedagogical methods (NAfME, 2021).

- *MENC*: National Association for Music Education. From 1998 until 2011 when it changed its name to NAFME. The organization was formed in 1907 by Hamlin Cogswell, who is the organization's founder. (NAFME, 2021).
- *MTAC*: Music Teachers Association of California, is a professional association incorporated in 1897, devoted to pursuing quality music education. The organization has over 4,700 members, with more than 63 self-governing, affiliated Branches throughout the state of California (MTAC, n.d.).
- *NAfME*: National Association for Music Education which is considered to be amongst the world's leading organizations of arts education. NAFME stands for all music education at the local, state, and nationwide levels. The organization supports and provides resources for teachers, parents, and administrators and hosts professional development events while offering various opportunities for students and teachers (NAFME, 2021).
- *NCCAS*: National Coalition for Core Art Standards, designed to teach students artistic literacy and essential skills such as reading music and learning to write music notation (Nationalartsstandards.org, 2016). NCCAS' primary goal was to provide students with necessary musical knowledge such as assessment challenges and college and career preparation (Shuler et al., 2014).
- *NCES*: National Center for Education Statistics and is the leading federal unit specializing in gathering and examining education data in the U.S. and other countries. NCES is part of the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences. NCES oversees collecting, organizing, investigating, and informing of complete statistics about American education and reporting on any foreign education activities (NCES, n.d.).

- *Pedagogue*: Another name for music teacher, and in this case, it signifies a music teacher who teaches musical instruments in a private setting.
- SBE: State Board of Education, which offers clarity and direction in K-12 education policy. It adequately supervises Washington K-12 schools and students (SBE, n.d.).

Theoretical Framework (Summary)

The theoretical framework for this study was based on the 2014 music standards philosophy, which aims for Music Literacy through the four artistic processes of creating, performing, connecting, and responding (MENC, 2007). The music standards also stress the importance and value of formal music education as equally important as other school disciplines.

The large group of expert educators that gathered to work on the new NCCAS had to reconcile keeping the authenticity of the discipline of music education while adapting it for today's new environment, with its technology and assessment challenges, as well as college and career readiness preparation (Shuler et al., 2014). In the revised NCCAS, music educators gained considerable freedom to use creativity in their classrooms. The new standards also provided music teachers with the new cross-cutting college and career-ready and 21st-century skills that are expected of students in all subject areas (Shuler et al., 2014). Besides teaching students to be skilled in reading and writing music NCCAS is designed to educate students about artistic literacy which includes the ability to independently carry out the four artistic processes: creating new music, performing existing music, responding to other's music, and connecting to and through music. The standards' main aim is to provide students with authentic pathways to understanding the field of music (Shuler et al., 2014).

Per the 2014 music standards philosophy, the music education curriculum should be designed much like the contemporary science educators use to engage students in their field, in

other words, empowering students to carry out independent processes authentic to the discipline itself (Shuler et al., 2014). According to the new 2014 standards, formal music education should be taught as a balanced, consequential program, as a separate discipline at least once per week, by qualified music teachers that provide elementary students with continuous music instruction throughout the elementary school designed to meet the requirements of the core standards. Anything less is simply arts exposure, arts entertainment, and arts enrichment (Richerme et al., 2012).

The National Standards for Music Education, and California Arts Standards is a guide for all music teachers, who endeavor to provide their students with quality music education. It should help the private music instructors to align their teaching methods and strategies with the K-6 requirements which in turn may help their students meet the music challenges of middle and high school programs. This guide involves creating a more effective teaching curriculum involving the four artistic processes: creating, performing, connecting, and responding (MENC: The National Association for Music Education, 2007).

Limitations

Several potential limitations influenced the interpretation of the findings or the generalizability of the results of this study. Gathering data across the population was limited due to the sample for this study being taken from private music instructors in the researchers' professional network. Those instructors tend to be more educated and experienced than the whole population of private music instructors. In this case, the findings cannot be made universal to the entire population of California or the rest of the United States (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

Another significant limitation to this study was the data collected, which was entirely at the sole discretion of participants and could not otherwise be verified by the researcher (Roberts

& Hyatt, 2019). The participants may have recalled past teaching experiences and events based on emotions rather than lived experiences (Fowler, 2008). Because of this, they spoke more positively or more disapprovingly about certain events than their actual involvement may have been at the time. Other participants may have chosen to only disclose evidence that reflected positively upon them and their students.

There were some variables outside the scope of the researcher that impacted and limited the study (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). For whatever reason, one participant was not able to offer answers to all of the researcher's questions and preferred to abstain from answering one specific question. Some willing participants could not be accessible during the designated time due to logistics and scheduling. Finally, a potential limitation to the study may have been caused by the recent Covid-19 pandemic which invoked the mandatory use of remote communication. This may have limited access to teachers that could, otherwise, be willing to participate in the study.

Delimitations

The delimitations set by the researcher in this study were determined by the need to gain a clearer insight into the experiences and teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education. There were several self-imposed limitations pre-set by the researcher on the extent and objective of this study (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). The study was restricted to only private music instructors who work with elementary students, which signified the purposeful exclusion of all other music instructors. Another delimitation inherent in this study was the population's qualification, which consisted of only well-established and experienced private music instructors with four or more years of experience in music teaching. This delimitation was based on the researcher's conviction that accumulating sufficient teaching experience and developing teaching strategies requires extended educational

background and sufficient teaching experience. Lastly, the time of the study also presented a delimitation, with a period set of one month for the data collection (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

Assumptions

Assumptions in this study included but were not limited to the nature, analysis, and explanation of the data collected. Through delineation, the assumptions helped influence the entire research work, from formulating research questions, interpreting the data, presenting constructive conclusions, and lending support to the recommendations (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

There are several assumptions included in this study. First, the researcher assumed that the private music instructors interviewed in this study answered the interview questions accurately and provided their insights about the use of their teaching strategies. A second assumption was that the selected population for this study understood the vocabulary and concepts associated with elementary music education, possibly the standards, and were experts in music terminology. Third, the data collected from the population interviewed helped measure the knowledge, skills, and involvement in their elementary students' school-based music education (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

Based on her background in music teaching, the researcher assumed that the participants were sincerely interested in contributing to this research study and did not have any other personal or ulterior business motives. The researcher also assumed that the inclusion norms of the sample were appropriate (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). The researcher had made assumptions based on her background as a private music educator specializing in comprehensive keyboard instruction since 2004 and being the owner of a private studio in Walnut, California, since 2013. Based on the experience and prior observations, the researcher assumed that most private

instructors teach according to their own trusted programs regardless of whether or not their elementary students received music education as part of their school-based curriculum. Finally, the researcher assumed that the private music instructors interviewed in this study were genuinely interested in providing their students with the best possible music education and that they will play an essential role in securing their students' music success in the future.

Chapter Summary and Organization of the Study

This dissertation study was written in five chapters. In Chapter 1, the background of the study consists of an overview of the advantages of elementary music education, followed by a brief description of core academic subjects, first defined in the 1994 Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which classified the arts and sequentially music as a core academic subject (Richerme et al., 2012). However, despite the music education being revered by music professionals, due to a lack of funds, today, the quality of elementary music education in public schools has been lacking (Walker, 2015). The statement of the problem reflects the current scarcity of consistent elementary musical education in the United States and its need, which has driven the demand for private elementary music instruction (Cumberledge, 2016). Therefore, the purpose of Chapter 1 was to review the importance and role of private music instruction in elementary schools through the experiences and strategies they implement to supplement their elementary students' education. The remaining components of Chapter 1 are the importance of the study, the definition of terms, theoretical framework, research questions, limitations, delimitations, and the assumptions of the study (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

In Chapter 2 the literature was reviewed through four literature themes: music education and mathematics discipline, music education and cognitive benefits, music education and student engagement, music education and accessibility. In Chapter 3, the methodology was introduced

alongside the selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis procedures. The findings of the study, including the demographic information, testing of the research questions, and the results of the data analysis were presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 summarized the entire study and discussed the findings and conclusions, the implications and the recommendations for further research and recommendations for policy (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Introduction

Chapter 2 presented a review of literature that related to the experiences and teaching strategies used by private music instructors who supplement their elementary students' school-based music education. The literature review explored four main topics which were discovered during the literature study. The themes are music education and the mathematic discipline, music education and cognitive benefits, music education and student engagement, and music education and accessibility. These literature topics were examined through the perspectives of private music instructors who work with elementary school students (Creswell, 2014).

The two research questions pertaining to the experiences and strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education, served as lenses to these four literature themes. The literature helped identify the consistencies between the experiences and best strategies of private elementary music instruction in connection to the general elementary school-based curriculum.

This literature review begins with an expanded review of the theoretical framework included in the study, which was largely based on the California Music Standards for Public Schools. The literature review then continues with an overview of music education in the current educational climate, followed by a discussion of the various aspects of learning music through private music instruction. This segment also explored the solutions private music instruction offer to music education, both from economical and practical standpoints, to supply students with quality music education (Litterst, 2016). The remaining chapter is dedicated to exploring each of the four literature themes. The relationship between music education and mathematics, as well as the role music plays in students' academic learning is explored through the theme music

education and mathematic disciplines (Saloni, 2010). The unique benefits of music education, and especially the use and transfer of cognitive skills from music to other academic disciplines, and the way music appears to help improve students' cognitive skills were explored in the second literature topic: music education and cognitive benefits. This topic also investigated the debate surrounding the music benefits on cognitive transfer between academic disciplines (Jaschke et al., 2013). The third topic, music education and student engagement reviewed the issue of maintaining students' interest in the subject of music over a longer period of time, and the strategies that private music educators undertake to ensure students' interest. This topic also explored the positive and adverse effects a structured music study has on students' interest in music (McPhail, 2010). The fourth topic, music education and accessibility, explored the music education reform which starts with every music instructor, private or public, and focuses on the importance of inclusivity and making music education available for all students (Salvador, 2019).

After creating a list of ideas, an open-ended search of literature was conducted by the researcher using Google scholar and ERIC search engines. The literature review continued with the library search engine EBSCO host as the main source, with a range of its electronic database Academic Search Complete, Project Muse, and ERIC. Other finds for this literature review include academic texts with topics about private music education, the use of music standards, elementary music education in the United States and the teaching strategies of private music instructors.

Theoretical Framework

Whether providing music education in a private setting or a school classroom, it is simply not sufficient to teach only instrumental performance. Students need to obtain long lasting and

impactful benefits from music instruction; therefore, it is important that they learn and become level efficient in all components of music education (Cheng & Durrant, 2007). For these reasons, the theoretical framework for this dissertation study is based on the new California Arts Education Framework for Public Schools, Transitional Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve (Arts Framework), adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) on July 8th, 2020. The Arts Framework also endorses the California Arts Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve, (Arts Standards), adopted by the SBE in 2019 (California Department of Education, 2020). California Music Standards offers a constructive variety of best musical components to foster student creativity, enhance their musicianship, provide pathways to understanding the discipline of music, and encourage ownership of the learning process (Bazinet & Marshall, 2015; Cheng & Durrant 2007; Economidou Stavrou et al., 2011; McPhail, 2010; Shuler et al., 2014).

California Arts Education Framework for Public Schools, Transitional Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve Arts Framework (2020), also known as California Art Standards, originated from the NAFME (2014), and previous standards which were developed as part of the “Goals 2000: Educate America Act.” The National Standards for Arts Education adopted by the United States Department of Education were established by the Consortium of National Arts Education Association (Frederickson, 2010). The same consortium developed standards which included Content and Achievement for the arts that were set to clarify specific goals within the arts discipline. As part of the goals, the understanding, and degrees of achievement that students were expected to obtain at the graduation of grade levels 4, 8, and 12 were also included. Combined, these standards provide insight into the strategies and principles that may also be used to support private music instruction (Shuler et al., 2014).

The Goals of California Arts Standards

This study focuses on elementary music education; therefore, it uses California Arts Standards grades K-5 only. The standards provide insight into best music teaching strategies that can be equally useful to both schools based elementary music education and private music instruction (Cheng & Durrant, 2007). The standards contain strategies and goals aimed specifically at the needs and challenges of music education; a resource designed to assist private and school-based music instruction alike. Private education is seen as an important element of helping improve education overall and may offer a remedy to the lack of consistent public elementary music education.

The California Arts Standards present a personally fulfilling, challenging and successive standard – based learning, and encourages students to improve their music literacy through the four artistic processes. The four artistic processes: creating, performing, responding, and connecting, constitute a base for the new music education standards and provide a scholarly musicianship development to all students. Through the four artistic processes, students can connect, combine, and relate their musical knowledge (California Department of Education, 2020).

Music, like all other art disciplines, offers life learning goals for all students. The goals can be seen through the four artistic processes which are explained in the following six categories:

- Music as Communication: Music can be a process of collaboration.
- Music as Creative Personal Realization: Music can be a creative individual fulfillment.

- Music as Culture, History and Connectors: Music can become (or explain) culture, history, and other connectors.
- Music as Means of Wellbeing: Music as a way of wellbeing (Cochrane et al., 2013).
- Music as Community Engagement: Music can bring together and engage communities.
- Music as Profession: Music can be a vocation (California Department of Education, 2020).

Through Music as Communication, musically educated individuals can benefit by making use of a wide range of media and other allegories. That enables musicians to not only conceptualize and produce work that expresses their creativity, but also respond to other artistic expressions. Through Music as Creative Personal Realization, musically educated individuals can benefit by developing sufficient skill to actively participate in creating, performing, responding, and connecting to music. Through Music as Culture, History and Connectors, musically educated individuals can benefit by understanding musical works throughout varied historical periods and cultures. They can also learn how music crosses over into other art forms, and even other knowledge. Through Music as Means of Wellbeing, musically educated individuals can benefit by finding life-enhancing qualities as well as intellectual stimulation, healing, and renewed meaning through diverse music involvement (Cochrane et al., 2013). Through Music as Community Engagement, musically educated individuals can benefit by seeking musical experiences and support music at local or global levels through various means of philanthropy and sponsorship. Through Music as Profession, musically educated individuals can benefit by engaging into various music professions, thus contributing to local, state, and global economies (California Department of Education, 2020).

The music standards were constructed as a development of student learning in music while perfecting students' technical musical skills, and artistry. Therefore, it is necessary to make use of a structure in order to better understand the relationship between structural elements and music standards that support an effective instructional design (Frederickson, 2010).

The Format of the Music Standards

There are five components to the Music Standards:

- Artistic Processes.
- Anchor Standards.
- Related Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions.
- Process Components.
- Student Performance Standards.

While Artistic Processes and Anchor Standards are universal across all arts disciplines, the Enduring Understandings, the Essential Questions, the Process Components, and Student Performance Standards are distinct only to music. The components of the California Arts Standards are structured to help design music instruction using the Process Components from Anchor Standards to achieve the Student Performance Standards (California Department of Education, 2020).

The four Artistic Processes in music are: Creating, performing, responding, and connecting. In the context of the Artistic Processes, creating is a process that encourages students to initiate new artistic concepts and develop them with the use of appropriate academic and technical music terminology. During the responding process, students learn to understand the special meaning the music conveys. The connecting process prompts students to link musical ideas and compositions with the external context. Finally, students can work to present and share

their musical ideas with others during the performing process. The four Artistic Processes require that students relate to artistic ideas and work with social, cultural, and historical context in order to deepen their musical understanding (Bazinet & Marshall, 2015). To facilitate student engagement and promote student development in music, it is important that the instructional design begins and flows through more than one Artistic Process within a unit of study. There are a multitude of valuable viewpoints into all aspects of music through the four Artistic Processes and their related Process Components that students stand to gain.

The Anchor Standards are present in all forms of arts disciplines. They articulate the expectations and results of students' TK-12 education. Although not discipline specific, as for example, Student Performance Standards are, they provide the key outcomes within music discipline every year (California Department of Education, 2020).

Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions can be helpful to teachers in organizing the instruction information within artistic processes into curriculum. Enduring understandings and Essential Questions focus on the big, central ideas within the music discipline. Structuring learning and reasoning about big ideas develops students' ability to link prior and new knowledge. By encouraging independent thought process through a series of strategies, teachers encourage students to build on their own understanding of music knowledge. Enduring Understanding and Essential Questions are not prescriptive mandates for teachers. They are helpful examples and guidelines, designed to clarify the goals of the standards (California Department of Education, 2020).

The Process Components are the next essential element of music standards. As seen in Table 1, the process components correspond to the Artistic Processes. They are functioning verbs that identify the activities and methods that engage the students, as they navigate through the

Artistic Processes. They are essential in providing pathways for student participation in creating, performing, responding, and connecting within music. The Process Components are not linear, nor are they simply strict teaching procedures. Contrarily, they are flexible and active recommendations throughout the learning stages. Not all Process Components require achievement when students take part in them. Students' ability to carry out the Process Components enables them to work in and through the Artistic Process independently (Bazinet & Marshall, 2015).

Table 1

The Four Artistic Processes and the Process Components of Music

The Four Artistic Processes	The Process Components
Creating	Imagine; Plan and Make; Evaluate and Perfect; Present.
Performing	Select; Analyze; Interpret; Rehearse; Evaluate and Perfect; Present.
Responding	Select. Analyze; Interpret; Evaluate.
Connecting	Combine; Relate.

Note. (California Department of Education, 2020., p.8).

The purpose of the Process Components together with the Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions, is to assist student's development in music. Process Components, a design that builds students' creativity, music academic knowledge and technical skills, can assist teachers with instruction planning to direct student-based inquiries. An effective instruction can create opportunities for students to portray the Process Component verbs, "which includes

opportunities in music to imagine, analyze, refine, select, and present.” (California Department of Education, 2020., p.9).

Student Performance Standards in music are the achievement expectations for music learning. They outline the requirements that students need to absorb as a result of learning specific content, and the skills the students need to develop. During the Performance Standards process students would need to demonstrate proficiency in the specific standards that teachers highlighted during preparation and learning. The teachers need to create opportunities to practice the material throughout the year to ensure students ‘mastery of the standards (California Department of Education, 2020).

Summary

California Arts Standards provides guidance to music teachers and assists them with elementary students’ school-based music instruction. The standards can help deepen students’ understanding of music using the Artistic Processes: creating, performing, responding, and connecting, and the Process Components within the standards (Cumberledge, 2016). The standards are meant to influence the quality of elementary music instruction which in turn can improve music education. The structure of the music standards does more than lead to the development of students’ musical understanding. As students grow into the Artistic Processes, through music education, they develop critical thinking and learn to demonstrate their musical knowledge in various ways (Adderley et al., 2003).

Table 2 shows the cooperation between the four Artistic Processes and eleven Anchor Standards. Combined, they assist students to take a conceptualized artistic work, perfect and ultimately share it with the outside world (California Department of Education, 2020). Effective

instruction should provide students with a balanced approach to learn about all Artistic Processes by the end of the course (McPhail, 2010).

Table 2

Four Artistic Processes and eleven Anchor Standards

Artistic Process as Concept	Attributed Meaning	Anchor Standards
Creating	The process of creating new artistic concepts and developing them.	Anchor Standard #1. Conceptualize an abstract artistic idea and work towards beginning to develop it. Anchor Standard #2. Structure the newly conceptualized artistic ideas into a specific design or work. Anchor Standard #3. Perfect and complete the artistic design.
Performing	The process of expressing artistic ideas and work through original presentation.	Anchor Standard #4. Chose, study, and interpret the artistic work, and prepare it for performance. Anchor Standard #5. Technically and artistically refine the work for performance. Anchor Standard #6. Communicate the meaning of your artistic work via means of performance.
Responding	The process of understanding and studying the meaning in which (music) the arts communicate.	Anchor Standard #7. Understand, appreciate, and study an artistic work. Anchor Standard #8. Communicate through your own interpretation of the artistic work. Anchor Standard # 9. Employ principles to better value artistic work.
Connecting	The process of linking artistic work with individual significance and outer perspective.	Anchor Standard #10. Combine and convey skill and individual experience to create artistic work. Anchor Standard #11. View artistic works from the public, educational, and historical perspective to deepen your understanding.

Note. (NCCAS, 2016)

The combination, teaching progression and delivery of the processes in a well-designed instruction and assessment, can also be helpful to private music instructors in their own teaching approaches, as it supports students in progressing through the grade and proficiency levels and demonstrate their musical knowledge. This process is not unlike other independent music teaching programs that private music instructors often follow. One such program is The MTAC's Certificate of Merit program, which offers a music curriculum designed to guide private music instructors in helping students become proficient in music. As a complete musicianship program, Certificate of Merit provides a detailed sequenced level curriculum for the successful and effective study of music (MTAC, n.d.).

The California Music Standards articulate music literacy while assisting the students to accomplish it. The Standards deliver comprehensive music practices, while supporting music education for all students through creating, performing, responding, and connecting to music.

Private Music Education Overview

There is a general belief in today's contentious education system that perhaps more could be done to improve education. As remedy to address the everlasting issue of education, various programs have been created, such as No Child Left Behind, Common Core, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), new ideas promoting longer school days, and high stakes testing. Amongst all disciplines no other has attracted more controversy than Music Education. As funds are being allocated to help finance state and national levels programs, music education often gets overlooked. Notwithstanding the situation involving music education programs in local schools, private music instruction is always available for everyone who seeks it (Litterst, 2016).

At first glimpse, private music education is a very unlikely solution to general music education, both from economical and practical standpoints. First, it is both challenging for the private music instructor to make a good living while teaching private one-on-one lessons, and expensive for a student to afford it (DeFazio, 2013). Second, it is also difficult to think of its effectiveness when the lessons occur at one hour per week frequency, under ideal circumstances. However, most lessons are less than one hour long, and less frequent than once per week, if sick days and vacations are to be considered, which further reduces the consistency of time the teacher spends with the student. A private music instructor has the nearly impossible task of teaching an already difficult subject within a small space of time and little interaction with the student (Litterst, 2016).

During the lesson, a private music instructor will work with students on specific issues that may come up in the process of learning such as fingering, rhythm, the beat, and phrasing, instructions that are specific to learning a particular piece. However, acquiring long term skills will unfold slowly and over time. One overarching long-term skill a private music teacher does is teach independent learning, which in other words is a student's ability to teach himself, through structured effective homework amongst other useful tools (Upitis et al., 2017).

Private Music Instructors

Private music instructors are independent music teachers who frequently specialize in one and sometimes several musical instruments. They usually provide individual music lessons to their students and aspire to develop their general performance instrumental technique and other skills such as music notation and theory, and sometimes even improvisation (Upitis et al., 2017). Well-established music instructors are in charge of every part of their work, from the age group and skill level of the students they chose to work with, to the curriculum programs, and teaching

practices they adhere to. Music instructors who specialize in teaching beginners, or elementary school students, will typically work on developing their fundamental skills first, and will select elementary level pieces to work with. On the other hand, instructors that work with more advanced students focus on performance skills and building music repertoire, while planning their students' auditions, recitals, and competitions. Most private music instructors, however, work with students of all levels, including professional musicians. Some of the most successful private music instructors spend their time outside the lessons researching new methods, practicing their instruments, and developing their music skills, reviewing new repertoire, perfecting their pedagogical strategies, and planning their curriculums while also managing their administrative tasks associated with running their studio business (DeFazio, 2013).

While there are many successful instructors of musical instruments, who know and teach the fundamental components of effective music teaching, not all of them are music teachers. Some musicians just happen to be teaching. Therefore, their teaching methods are not always educationally as well informed as would the training and continuing professional development of classroom teachers. Although this pertains to school setting teachers as well, private teachers often manage to teach music lessons by remaining professionally secluded from the improvements in the expertise base, which generally relate to teaching and learning music as part of school-based curriculum (McPhail, 2010).

Many classroom teachers also teach privately. They utilize their knowledge of classroom-based teaching strategies in a private-lesson setting. Their classroom-based teaching experience supplies the teachers with more effective instruction, which can better serve student learning. Classroom teaching experience can also help the teachers develop a more positive interaction with their students. The best music teachers, classroom or private, concentrate on exceeding in

their music instruction, provide constructive feedback to their students, demonstrate teacher effectiveness by engaging and collaborating with other colleagues, and practice continuous self-reflection to improve their instruction skills (Laubenthal, 2018).

The advantage of private music instruction over classroom teaching is the freedom to spend more time tailored to every student's individual needs and aptitudes. This one-to-one relationship between student and private instructor invites a highly effective personalized method of instruction (Jacobi, 2005).

Individual music instruction began to be formalized in the nineteenth century, at the beginning of the conservatory style teaching. Its main aspect is the one-to-one music instrument learning between teacher and pupil. Commonly known as hands-on knowledge, this approach takes place through demonstration and imitation. This teacher-centered approach is often called *instructivist*: a teaching strategy that treats the student as the recipient of music training skill rather than knowledge. A more recent *constructivist* approach where the instructor encourages dynamic student contribution and collaboration in the process of learning has become more predominant. In music education, *constructive* and *ethical* approach reflect training and education. As necessary as training is within instrumental music education, it is simply not enough, as there is always danger that instrumental teaching is approached in a manner more similar to controlled music rehearsal, and music educational process should be able to develop and supervise a broader set of learning goals and ideas (McPhail, 2010). This subject has been researched in greater detail by Cheng and Durrant, (2007), who conducted a study which was aimed at exploring and investigating the factors that contribute to effective music instrumental teaching, and to understanding the interdependence and collaboration between these factors. The study concluded that in order for students to gain long-term benefits from music in other areas of

learning, it is important for the teachers to focus on the students' learning process and not only the learning outcomes. Furthermore, the study also suggests that a great number of factors are required for instrumental music teaching and learning to become effective and benefit both the student and the teacher.

Literature Themes

A variety of peer reviewed articles, research studies, and books have revealed four distinctive topics that supported the problem and purpose of this study, which was to explore the experiences and teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education. The topics were music education and the mathematic disciplines, music education and cognitive benefits, music education and student engagement, music education and accessibility. These themes were detailed through empirical research and were related to strategies and experiences involving elementary private music instruction.

Music Education and the Mathematic Disciplines

Pythagoras (569-490 BCE) has been famously quoted to have stated that there is geometry in the vibration of the strings, and music in the alignment of the stars. The notion that music could have originated from mathematics rather than artistic expression, has been established during Ancient Greece, thanks to the Pythagorean's association of music intervals with numeral percentages, which forever defined the relationship between music and mathematics (Mutch, 2020). In Ancient Greece education, music was considered as one of the four stems of mathematics. A master's degree in classical Greece, involved the completion of the quadrivium. The quadrivium integrated mathematics, geometry, music, and astronomy (Serrano et al., 2017). All these disciplines were viewed as entirely mathematical. Mathematics was calculating the quantity, (arithmetic); magnitude at rest was geometry, and magnitude moving

was astronomy. Music was included for the fact that it was believed to be representing the connection between quantities of the proportions contained in melody and harmony (Winterer, 2002). During the Middle Ages the formal curricular presence of the quadrivium began to fluctuate. With the exception of some very conservative institutions such as Oxford, where students were required traditional quadrivial subjects in order to obtain a master's degree in arts, in some schools in France the traditional distinctions among these four branches of mathematics were no longer strictly preserved. Still, it was widely believed that mathematics can benefit students, particularly those who studied liberal arts, as it could help sharpen and discipline their minds (Grant, 1999).

Despite the ongoing debate about music's role and importance in the American education system, in American society, music and math are both treated as essential. The connections between music and mathematics are being overused so much (Bazinet, & Marshall, 2015), that they have begun to sound redundant. Nevertheless, the connection between mathematics and music, two seemingly contrasting disciplines, are at the core of music theory. This connection is due to the purely mathematical aspects of music, such as rhythm and pitch, but also the use of a scale—a music measuring tool used to write, analyze, and teach music.

Music can benefit young children to develop early mathematic skills. Children playing the piano show more advanced logical skills, similar to those present in solving jigsaw puzzles, or even playing chess (Koolidge & Holmes, 2018). The Standards for mathematical practice promote procedures that call for students to associate mathematics with the outside world, and to ensure mathematics maintains its importance and relevancy to solving real-world problems (Carrier et al., 2011). These concepts also emphasize the importance of perceiving the relationship between music and other disciplines, as well as mathematics (Mutch, 2020). Yet,

mathematics is regarded as more significant than music in general education, as elementary music in schools faces continuous cutbacks. In American public opinion both music and mathematics are perceived as similarly intricate and not for everyone. Both fields require expert knowledge, an extensive amount of time spent training as well as dedication. As such, it is difficult to see how might integrating the study of music and mathematics help one another, and how such an approach could bring resolution to the conflict of opinions and attitudes concerning the topic of music and mathematics (Bazinet & Marshall, 2015).

In elementary education, the role of music and mathematics are both believed culturally essential. Everywhere music is being created, mathematics is also being used in creative, practical, and ethnic ways (Mutch, 2020). The fields of mathematics and music both remind us that music and mathematics don't just belong to everybody. They are connected and have the ability to strengthen one another. If non-musicians can appreciate music, then non-mathematicians can appreciate mathematics (Bazinet & Marshall, 2015). In music lessons the focus is on counting, creating music patterns, understanding time values, and introducing polyrhythms and compositional techniques (Carrier et al., 2011). In a math lesson the focus is on fractions, addition, subtraction, multiplication, abstraction, and seeing the application of math in the world.

The Arts Integration Movement evolved from the idea that music and academic subjects are interconnected (Economidou Stavrou et al., 2011). The philosophy of Arts Integration flourished over one century of research, which informed educators about the mounting evidence of music's impact on brain capacity and cognitive skill development (Lackey, 2016). But the authors of Arts Integration (Zhou & Brown, 2018) believe that teaching music for the sake of music alone has done nothing but limit the evolution of music education school policy. In the

authors' view, the future of music education lies in its integration with other disciplines, Music plus Music Integration (M+MI) (Scripp & Gilbert, 2016). Music education should be taught first independently of all other disciplines, while accentuating, developing, and understanding the curriculum. This requires writers to articulate a limited set of insights that are central to each field, which are generally known as Enduring Understandings or Big Ideas (Shuler et al., 2014). Music integration reaches beyond common debate and platitudes, by teaching how music can be taught from an ethnomusicologist and a mathematics educator's point of view by pointing at clear connections between mathematics and music and integrating both disciplines to teach mathematics to non-music graduate students. Various studies suggest that integration with the arts increases student achievement in other disciplines. An integrated approach can provide a more meaningful and consistent instruction for students (Lackey, 2016). Arts integration combines various thinking strategies that have been shown to have the ability to enhance comprehension and longstanding memory. As reflected in the recent educational policy, there is an increasing interest in interdisciplinary teaching as a powerful means of education reform (Bazinet & Marshall, 2015).

Having already proven hugely beneficial, the greatest achievement of interdisciplinary learning is its promise to make connections across disciplines, and across the world. Rather than being taught with a curriculum that seems like an endless selection of abstract facts and skills, students should be presented with an integrated curriculum, where they can make their own connections through experiencing music and other disciplines as an integrated approach (California Department of Education, 2020). Unlike fragmented pieces of puzzle and abstract facts and skills that are seemingly unconnected, students can construct the representational pieces of the puzzle and reveal the bigger picture (Bazinet & Marshall, 2015).

Music Education and Cognitive Benefits

Music education is an essential factor in students' intellectual and emotional development. The positive impacts of music training are far reaching. They affect the important development areas such as psychomotor and social and emotional behaviors. The effects are even greater when music classes in the school consist of composing and experiencing of music, of music understanding and evaluating (Vidulin & Kazić, 2021). In ear training classes this can be achieved through music listening instruction, an initiative of the 19th and 20th centuries while technological advances facilitated the practical application of music listening. Plenty of examples point to fostering the emotional response and experience in music classes. However, only listening to music focuses mainly on cognitive assessments, understanding and distinguishing between music components (Chene, 2021). The real value of the ear-training classes is in the cognitive emotional music listening which emphasizes the experiencing, understanding and appreciation of classical music. This can help students learn about the musical-historical context, the compositional technique approach and the theoretical and harmony features utilized in the work, which in turn can help improve students' critical thinking and self-assessment (Vidulin & Kazić, 2021).

Neuroscience studies have shown that music education may have a vital effect on cognitive function and development of the brain. Rigorous music training can stir students' interest in a variety of other disciplines (Zhang, 2018). Listening to contemporary, atonal music, which is untraditional use of sonorous music material, presents inherent difficulties that impact the student's cognitive process, and thus the ability to perceive and interpret this type of music. The listeners may need longer time to adapt to this new atonal language, a time proportional to prior exposure to various styles of music. These findings underscore the need for a longer period

of time in order to help students with no prior atonal music experience perceive its timbre, motivic importance, register and dynamics (Esteve-Faubel et al., 2016).

Music education has been shown to have a positive role in improving and teaching meta-cognition skills, which signifies the process of organized thinking. The concept of meta-cognition, widely accepted in the United States has shown to also help lower performance anxiety levels in students. Meta-cognition is a process that can be broken into three steps: Planning, self-regulatory skills and evaluating. When learning to play a musical instrument, students must first learn to *plan* their practice, self-regulate their homework practice, and evaluate their practicing process (Greer, 2013). Further studies of the role of musicians' metacognitive skills learning and development reveal that students often report to have become metacognitive during their own practice time, and not during their lessons (Leon-Guerrero, 2008). Students' age and skill can also influence the level of meta-cognition skills level the teacher applies in class. More studies need to be done of the direct effects of music education on meta-cognitive skills. However, it can be surmised that the positive effects of music can enhance students' learning, home practice, and professional growth (Colombo & Antonietti, 2017).

As understanding of the many aspects of music as a scientific discipline is on the rise, music's relationship with other cognitive skills is sharpening. Cognition transmission from music to other disciplines is still debatable, however (O'Neill, 2005). The capacity to which the cognition is being transferred can be divided into two main parts: near and far transfer (Rose et al., 2015). Near transfer relates to fine motor control in music and musicianship, which is responsible for the way music is being perceived, such as pitch, rhythm, timbre, melody, sound distinction, and creativity, or in other words, general music skills that students develop when learning to sing or play an instrument. Contrastingly far transfer includes the influence of music

education on academic success in mathematics (Branscombe, 2012). Research into far transfer effects has raised further questions. Over the past one hundred years, researchers both approved and disapproved of this far transfer phenomena but stated that far transfer gives the ability learned in one domain and apply it in another (Jaschke et al., 2013).

A number of researchers have maintained that singing or playing musical instruments can enhance certain cognitive functions: intelligence, mathematics, spatial reasoning, writing, reading, and memorization. The obtained results are inconsistent, however. In order to clarify the findings, a distinction should be drawn between active and passive perception of music (Kraus & Chandrasekaran, 2010), or between listening, playing, or singing. Today we are well aware that purely listening to music will not necessarily improve our intelligence (Hetland, 2000). The contradiction between these findings however amplifies the importance of combined teaching strategies and may help researchers to better understand the direct effects music education has on other cognitive sciences and intellectual capabilities (Jaschke et al., 2013).

Music Education and Student Engagement

Success in music education is not due to student aptitude or talent, it is due to pedagogical competence. And rather than the teachers' competence alone, it is the network between teacher, parent and student that ultimately results in a combination of successful practices that positively challenge the beliefs in talent alone. According to Suzuki method, a student's successful music outcome in music is a mixture of teacher's instruction, group lessons, holiday courses, practice, and family involvement. However, such a strong infrastructure and too much one-to-one music teaching and training can ultimately counteract the improvements in artistic and educational change, and students' development and independence especially and may lead to student' disinterest and ultimately disengagement from instrumental music lesson

amongst students (McPhail, 2010). Reasons for giving up music lessons are in fact, predominantly associated with issues of autonomy, knowledge ownership and self-determination (O'Neill et al., 2002). Contrarily, musical identity, ownership and competence were the most important factors in a student's long-term interest, and commitment to music (Bryce, 2003).

Just as lack of practical music knowledge, which provides students with authentic pathways to understanding the field of music is simply arts exposure, arts entertainment, and arts enrichment, and can cause students to fall behind in their necessary music preparation, so do teaching approaches that under-emphasize important factors such music ownership, creativity, and independent musical knowledge, can too, contribute to students' loss of interest and disengagement from music lessons (Richerme et al., 2012). Therefore, there is an increased need for private music teachers to recontextualize their teaching approach by developing ways to enhance students' music ownership, and creativity, and balance the tendency to over-emphasize instrumental training at the expense with other music components that can improve music education (McPhail, 2010).

The music standards are a solid guide to music education curriculum and the way it should be designed to help students carry out independent processes authentic to the discipline itself (Shuler et al., 2014). Formal music education should be taught as a balanced, consequential program, as a separate discipline at least once per week. Music teachers and private instructors alike should be able to provide elementary students with continuous music instruction throughout the elementary school designed to meet the requirements of the core standards.

Perhaps one most crucial ingredient to help attain this ultimate goal is to transform student into independent learners and help ensure that they will continue to be involved in music on their own long after finishing their private music studies. Therefore, it is important to show

the students how to take ownership of their musical knowledge and where and how to use it. At start, this can be achieved by allowing students to be inquisitive about the things they learn, and to research on their own any interesting terminology that may lead to greater musical enlightenment, and to encourage independent learning that takes place at home especially as the student grows older (Litterst, 2018). After all, teaching involves, in part, supplying a student with the tools and knowledge needed to teach themselves (Litterst, 2016).

In his personal narrative “Random Access”, Litterst, (2016), a nationally known music educator, author, pianist, and music software developer presents his teaching experiences and provides a list of useful student engagement strategies to enhance student’s interest and empower their independent learning.

- Excite students about the subject matter.

This can be achieved by introducing a piece from a students’ favorite movie, or a popular piece they can enjoy playing for their friends. Such an introduction would provide the teacher with the opportunity to influence the student’s excitement and to use the piece to further their educational goals (Litterst, 2016).

- Teach students how to make choices.

This can be achieved by creating situations which would enable students to make their own selection of repertoire. Allowing the student to pick among two or more pieces could also prove helpful (Cheng & Durrant, 2007).

- Promote understanding of the educational challenges posed by the weekly assignment.

This can be achieved by encouraging students to use their music knowledge to complete independent assignments and also encouraging students to discuss their individual take on creating a weekly assignment plan (Cheng & Durrant, 2007).

- Create a method for applying current skills to the tasks at hand.

This can be achieved by creating a practical system of the steps required to help students accomplish the task at hand (Litterst, 2016).

- Provide regular, positive feedback.

Providing regular, positive feedback during the lesson and at home is paramount to student success. Sharing positive feedback between students and teachers will help foster creativity communication and collaboration and ensure that the student will stay continuously motivated about music education (Odegaard, 2016). A student will also have received incremental, positive feedback derived from the self-satisfaction of playing small portions of the piece at home in front of the family at first, which later could ultimately ensure students' greatest satisfaction that comes when performing in front of an audience (Litterst, 2016).

Student-centered learning is encouraged by teaching techniques that create choices and nurture self-monitoring. Students who were given the choice of practice strategies appreciated this form of guided practice and felt that they learned faster. Such approaches are more likely to result in increased enjoyment, interest, positive attitudes, motivation, and progress for pupils, and result in a better relationship between teacher and student (McPhail, 2010). In this approach teachers became receptive of students' ideas while extending and challenging their students' thinking.

During one-to-one lesson interactions, the students tend to participate less in diagnosing the problem, and not at all in assessment or advice. In the small-group lessons, the environment

is such that it generates teaching approaches and student responses which are more aligned with classroom practice resulting in higher levels of student reflection (McPhail, 2010).

Music Education and Accessibility

The demographic enrollment amongst music students in public schools in the United States shows disadvantage among lower-income communities. In order to help improve the situation, Hoffman (2013) proposed that music educators work on improving the music programs to meet their students' needs, thus boosting the music enrollment amongst the poorest students across the United States.

The structural and procedural decisions about classroom music teaching could also influence the music curriculums and create more music opportunities for low-income communities. There are ways in which classroom teachers might be able to create additional opportunities for those students who, for example, begin their music study later than others. It is important that these particular students also enjoy equal access to the music curriculum, whatever their financial status and background. In general music education, the only available opportunities for some students to first enroll in music classes is in high school. In such cases, program structures may need to be put in place to accommodate these students' needs and create at least two separate tracks for students instead of providing one set of opportunities for all students (Hoffman, 2013).

The reason why some students excel in their music studies and become proficient musicians in their middle and high school while others do not, it is because not all classroom teachers can accommodate all students in their teaching while providing a well-balanced, consequential program (Lee & Burkham, 2002). Quality music education supplies students with more than just arts exposure or music experience. Quality music education needs to provide all

students, and elementary students especially, with continuous music instruction throughout elementary school (Richerme et al., 2012).

In order to sustain a comprehensive music education, teachers need to communicate a consistent, and comprehensive set of core values when teaching music to students. Without it, they risk losing their own beliefs in teaching systems that work and become absorbed in objectives that do not align with their own teaching values. This contradiction between practices and beliefs can make it challenging to persevere in the teaching profession and create systemic change. One core belief that is universally agreed upon by music teachers is that all children deserve the kind of music education that they need. Numerous sources describe actions teachers can try to make their lessons more inclusive to all students, with references for individual needs. But sorting through this knowledge can be too much work, even for teachers who know where to search for it. Learning about the theories strengthening inclusive practices might be useful, and a better understanding can enable teachers to select or create a number of frameworks, content, and even person-specific practices (Salvador, 2019).

In the currently fast expanding access to learning, the education system cannot remain focused on exchanging sets of knowledge between teacher and student. More diverse approaches, which includes digital information and new modern ways of teaching, learning and assessment, are needed (Neagu, 2019). The implementation of the National Core Arts Standards has not only created the need for various teaching approaches but also provided opportunities for student learning. As a result, educators have been compelled to search and employ new teaching tools. With computer apps exceeding one million, and the practicality of smart devices, student access to technology in music learning is on the rise. Music teachers have all the assistance they

need to help meet the new music standards and enhance their students' learning experience (Heath-Reynolds & VanWeelden, 2015).

Professional debates about revolution and innovation in music curricula are necessary for supporting and developing the positive impacts that music education already has on schoolchildren. New and improved music teaching ideas could result from departing from traditional music program structure (Miksza, 2013). As an example, music teachers could offer beginning levels of instrumental and choral classes at various grade levels. Another example of a starting point for new students might be choosing a less complicated instrument such as a guitar or percussion to begin their music studies. Using a digital piano instead of a mechanical instrument could prove more exciting to elementary students. As technology bridges the gap between traditional music lessons and the music that is more appealing and suitable to our everyday lives, including the use of digital keyboards and computer to access online music education programs seem like a perfect way to combine excitement and learning. Blending the use of technology with music composition or popular music and smaller ensembles could provide yet another compelling introduction to music studies in schools (Vasil et al., 2019). In fact, the use of technology in music teaching, which coincided with the teaching of popular music in classrooms, could spur positive changes and generate new music teaching ideas (Powell, 2019). Whatever the courses, however, they should not only serve a separate population of students and should not block stratified population of students from a prolonged music course enrollment (Hoffman, 2013).

With a series of crises today across the globe converging, teachers hold not only the power to lessen equal access related issues. They also hold the imagination to write a new musical future. That includes a new way of making music that consists of listening, performing,

creating and policy making (Hess, 2021). While attempting to change large systems, teachers need to remember that policies, like individuals who wrote them, can also change. Positive convictions and significance might help acquire support and accolades which in turn could result in change (Zak, 2015). Establishing relationships and gathering knowledge about important policies and strategies can advise teachers about potential opportunities which could lead toward universal change and transform difficult times into better ones (Hess, 2021). Conversations with other people within systems can lead to solutions that might not have been obvious to either party. While sharing and knowing factual information could help, stories can help even more, through their effect building of empathy (Zak, 2015).

Today, students' access to music making opportunities depends on their ethnicity, economic status, social background and even location. These are the factors that decide the quality of the students' music education. Further data shows that the greater the percentage of students of color in high schools, the less probable is for the school to offer any music class at all. Despite residing in big cities, next to the nations' best music performance venues, students are being denied music opportunities and sequential music programs in schools (Yaffe et al., 2018). The current strategic plans that are being drafted by NAFME, are built on the fundamental realization that equity in music education is a priority. The plan is to research music teacher education and education policy as well as learning growth. These plans will create changes and materialize into advancement of equitable, accessible and comprehensive music programs (Spradley, 2021).

Upcoming changes will also affect evaluation practices. There are music educators who believe that teacher evaluation practices are impairing their ability to be more inclusive. Teacher evaluation practices and policies have been impacting music teachers' self-confidence,

classroom procedures and curriculum application (Potter, 2021). Teachers may be concerned that their professional evaluation scores would fall if they were to change the rules in an effort to be more inclusive. Other teachers carry the belief that specific performances could prevent them from embracing inclusive methods (Hash, 2013). Secondary ensemble directors were concerned that inclusive methods would lower their festival scores. Those ratings are often believed to be a true statement of the quality of the program or teacher efficiency. However, overseers and festival coordinators may be uninformed about the possible teacher evaluations and festival ratings leading to limited practices (Zak, 2015).

Yet, teachers can have dialogs with administrators and festival coordinators about improving their program quality as well as teacher efficiency that that reflect more inclusive and equitable mindsets. This can be obtained while still providing quality and accuracy of teaching practice (Hash, 2013). In these dialogs, teachers could suggest alternative ideas for program quality and teacher proficiency (David, 2014). Here are a few ideas:

- Measures the individual progress toward musical goals and encourages students alone to design them.
- Increase the proximity of music program ties with that of the community. Demonstrate that via mutually beneficial collaborations.
- Increase the quantity and range of musical events in the program.
- Encourage student expressivity of musical creativity (Salvador, 2019).

By starting these honest conversations, individual music educators may discover interest, support, and even valuable knowledge and assistance within communities (Zak, 2015).

Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 offered a review of literature that related to the experiences and best teaching strategies used by private music instructors who supplement their elementary students' school-based music education. This literature review began with an expanded theoretical framework review, which was largely based on California Music Standards for Public Schools. The review continued with a summary of music education in the current educational climate. This segment included an excerpt dedicated to the private music instructors and the solutions they offer to music education, both from economical and practical standpoints, to supply students with quality music education (Litterst, 2016). The literature review explored four main topics discovered during the study. The topics were music education and the mathematic disciplines, music education and cognitive benefits, music education and student engagement, and music education and accessibility. These topics were examined through the viewpoints of private music instructors, and the two research questions pertaining to the experiences and strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education (Creswell, 2014).

Chapter 3: The Methodology

Introduction

Chapter 3 begins with the purpose of the study and research questions followed by research design and rationale, researcher's role, selection of participants, human subjects' consideration, data collection procedures, and data analysis of the study followed by a summary. The research design and rationale section define the methodology of the study. In the researcher's role section, a description of the researcher's background, culture, and experiences are presented. The selection of participants section includes the setting as a subsection and reviews the sampling procedures for the study (Creswell, 2013). The human subjects' consideration section describes how this study followed Pepperdine University guidelines. Before any data was collected, the study proposal was submitted to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for review. The process of finding participants for the study is also described and included here (Pepperdine University, 2018).

The data collection procedure section covers the data collection method, which was conducted via semi-structured, in-depth interviews. This section also contains validity and reliability, instrumentation, and data management. Validity and reliability were instrumental in verifying the accuracy of the findings and describing steps taken to ensure their authenticity. The instrumentation subpart describes the instrument used to collect data. In the data management, the researcher introduces and describes the tool HyperRESEARCH, which was used to analyze the collected data (Creswell, 2014). Data analysis was conducted through thematic analysis of the data obtained from the five interviews.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the experiences and teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education. The researcher interviewed five well established private music instructors with over four years of teaching experience throughout California who teach elementary-aged students (Letice, 2006). The data was collected via semi-structured recorded interviews.

Two research questions guided this study:

- RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?
- RQ2: What are the teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?

Research design and rationale

The methodology used in this study was qualitative. As related to this study, the use of qualitative methodology enabled the researcher to understand the experiences and strategies of private music instructors. As qualitative methodology is generally used to obtain data through open-ended communication, it answers both "what" and "why" types of questions (Busetto et al., 2020). Qualitative research relies on text and image data; it consists of specific steps in the process of data analysis and educates readers as to the intention of the research. The multiple steps used in qualitative research can help validate and add credibility to the study (Creswell, 2014). A qualitative method was suitable for this study because it enabled the researcher to conduct in-depth conversations with the participants to reveal their lived experiences and

feelings. This helped reveal the participants' decision-making, which in turn, abetted the interviewer in drawing conclusions (Given, 2008).

As study design for this dissertation the researcher chose phenomenology. Phenomenology is both a philosophy and an approach to research. As a discipline, phenomenology is distinct from other key disciplines in philosophy such as ontology, epistemology, logic, and ethics (Smith, 2013). The distinction is that phenomenology is primarily concerned with understanding of the social and psychological phenomena from the perspective of those primarily involved (Welman & Krueger, 1999). While the roots of phenomenology can be traced back to Kant and Hegel, phenomenology was defined by the German philosopher Edmund Husserl in the 20th century, who was in pursuit of a new philosophical approach that would give absolute certainty to understanding the crumbling social order of capitalism in Europe during World War One (Groenewald, 2004). Husserl argued that the external world exists only as perceived through people's eyes, or their consciousness and anything besides the immediate experience must be excluded. Reality, as perceived through people's eyes is where everything originates, and is considered absolute phenomena (Groenewald, 2004).

The central goal of this phenomenological study was to explore and understand the shared lived experiences of several well-established private music instructors in a world where private music education has largely supplemented the elementary music education. In doing so, the researcher explored the most effective supplemental teaching strategies of five private music instructors. Additionally, the researcher gained more understanding of private music instructors' self-perceived placement in elementary music education (Groenewald, 2004).

Phenomenology allowed the researcher to address things that added meaning to the study, such as any specific significances of materials used to teach elementary students, (books, tools,

software); events that provided opportunities for students' growth; techniques used by private music instructors to extract enthusiasm from students; the flow of time it took to accomplish work of value; certain likes or dislikes of teaching experiences; the personal ways the interviewers perceived themselves in relationship to their students and their students' parents; or in short, how all of the above appeared in the interviewers' realm (Smith, 2013).

Researcher's Role

The researcher is a private music educator with over 22 years of music teaching experience, of which 18 years she spent teaching private music lessons in Southern California. As the researcher's personal and professional teaching experience would have affected the themes she was developing and the meaning she was attributing to the study data, she chose reflexivity approach for this qualitative study. Reflexivity is the researcher's way of relating to their own research pursuit (Medved & Turner, 2011). In this study, the researcher reflected how her personal role as private music instructor and her background added to the interpretations of the study; the biases and strengths she brought to the final analysis.

There were a few distinctive ways in which reflexivity was employed in this study; all of which may have affected the interviewing process and helped analyze the collected data. A former Yamaha music teacher, the researcher has spent a substantial portion of her music education career working with elementary music students. She used this experience to help describe the types of questions and observations acquired during interviews (Lohr, 2010). In this phase of the research process, the researcher employed *personal* reflexivity. During this process, she considered how her own identity and experience as a long-time private music educator conceptualized the way she related to other independent music educators who work with elementary music students (Medved & Turner, 2011).

The close professional connection between the researcher and the participants involved two types of reflexivity. *In the moment* is the first type of reflexivity which the researcher practiced during the interviews. The researcher's task was to reveal, when appropriate, and restrain, when necessary, the emotions she felt as reactions to participants' responses to questions and voiced opinions. Another form of reflexivity attributed here is *embodied* reflexivity. This type of reflexivity especially focused on the body language of the participants. This form of reflexivity helped connect the spoken words of the participants into meaningful stories. Finally, understanding the risks of diverting too much from the historic steams of research during interviews, the researcher utilized *historic reflexivity* to understand what scholarly conversations were being employed, and explain the findings (Medved & Turner, 2011).

Selection of Participants

The selection of the participants for the study occurred via convenience sampling, which took place primarily through the researcher's professional network. Convenience sampling is defined as a method adopted by researchers who collect data from a conveniently available pool of respondents (Brewerton & Millward, 2001). This sampling technique, which is one of the most frequently used, due in part due to its prompt and efficient technique, was best suited for this study because it enabled the researcher to invite all available private music instructors in the immediately available pool of colleagues, thus allowing for a timelier accommodation of the collection of data.

In addition to the researchers' pool of colleagues, linear snowball sampling was applied. Linear snowball sampling started with one participant, a private music teacher, who then provided information about other potential participants. This chain continued until five

participants completed the study. Due to COVID19 restrictions and the transition to remote teaching, private music instructors had become harder to locate. Using this sampling technique helped identify the target population much easier (Lohr, 2010).

The participants for this study were well-established, English-speaking private music instructors. Since this study sought only five private music instructors that worked in California at the time of the study, the results of this study may not be generalizable to the entire United States (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). To operationalize “well-established” private music instructors, the inclusion criteria were:

- Worked in California. Participants were limited to California because the theoretical framework for this study was based on the California Music Standards. Music Standards may be different in other states, which may impact the teaching experience and strategies of private music instructors (Bazinet & Marshall, 2015; Cheng & Durrant, 2007).
- Held a music degree. While there are many exceptionally talented musicians who do happen to teach musical instruments, teaching also implies having expert knowledge of the theory of music, and professional music terminology, which was important for this study (McPhail, 2010). Having a music degree enabled participants to become specialists in various teaching techniques, music analysis, teaching repertoire and music vocabulary—all essential parts of teaching elementary music (DeFazio, 2013; Jacobi, 2005; Laubenthal, 2018; Litterst, 2016; McPhail, 2010; Upitis et al., 2017).
- Specialized in at least one musical instrument. Private music instructors needed to become experts in their fields before becoming instructors themselves (McPhail, 2010). Being fluent in at least one instrument allows the instructor to teach the

fundamental skills such as technique, performance and sightreading, and invent new teaching techniques, if necessary (Litterst, 2016).

- Had experience in providing private music instruction to elementary aged students. This study explored elementary music instruction in particular. While most private instructors are known to have sufficient expertise in teaching students of all ages, some do specialize in teaching older, or more advanced students which would not have suited this study (DeFazio, 2013).
- Have not taught at a public or private K-12 school. This study was exploring private music instructors' experience and strategies of teaching elementary school-based students and supplementing their music education without having firsthand knowledge of the way standards were being used in schools (Cumberledge, 2016). Knowing the music standards could have thus contaminated the data which would have affected the result.

As a first step to recruiting and selecting potential participants, upon IRB approval, all potential participants in the researcher's network were sent an official recruitment e-mail (see Appendix A). The first respondents were selected for the study. The researcher then proceeded to recruit candidates via linear snowballing sampling. Each candidate in the chain of the linear snowballing sampling were sent the same official recruitment e-mail (Lohr, 2010).

Setting

Since this study took place during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and involved participants from all over California, all interviews were conducted via Zoom. Zoom was preferred to phone calls because it provided a richer interview experience and a friendlier atmosphere to the participants, while ensuring everyone's safety. The researcher conducted the

interviews over a period of one month, plus two more weeks for transcribing and cleaning the data. Each interview lasted anywhere from 55 to 90 minutes and took place at times mutually convenient for the participant and the researcher. The participants were encouraged to join from a quiet and comfortable place in their home office or studio (Brewerton & Millward, 2001).

Human Subjects Consideration

Before any data collection began, in compliance with Pepperdine University guidelines, the proposal was submitted to Pepperdine University's IRB for review and approval. Per Pepperdine University policy, all studies that involve human subjects must be done in accordance with ethically, professionally, and federally approved standards. As such, all research steps were first approved by one of the university's IRB (Pepperdine University, 2018). The IRB committee ensured that the present research study met ethical guidelines and did not impose on the rights of the participants, or any other human subjects involved in the study (Butin, 2010). The Pepperdine University IRB approval letter is attached as Appendix B.

Protection of the welfare and dignity of human subjects is the primary objective of Pepperdine University IRB. Addressing the concerns of human subjects in this dissertation, the researcher was also being protected and prevented from engaging in potentially unethical research practice (Pepperdine University, 2018).

Before the interviews took place, an informed consent form was emailed to the participants (Appendix C). In the form, the participants were formally asked to be interviewed, and their interview data was to be used for the sole purpose of the study. As part of the informed consent, the participants were notified of the option to withdraw from the interview at any time without penalty. The participants were also made aware of the minimal risks involved in the process of the study, including possible discomfort from sharing their experiences relating to

their work, and speaking about their teaching strategies. Other minimal risks involved possible tiredness or boredom in case that the interview prolonged. Another potential risk was breach of confidentiality. Although fictitious names are used in this study, participants could still be identifiable based on the information given to the researcher. This created some potential risk, especially if any unwanted information surfaced during the interviews. Any adverse portrayal of any aspects of the private businesses of the participants could have affected their business practice in the future and their competitive advantage (Creswell, 2014).

After consent forms were signed and returned to the researcher, interviews were scheduled. All interviews were recorded via Zoom. The interviews were conducted before, after, or in between participants' teaching hours; therefore, no students were present at the time when the interviews took place. During all phases of the data collection procedures, the names of the participants were modified, and any real names, membership details, in case any of the instructors holding MTAC memberships, were not used in this study (Creswell, 2014).

During the interview, participants were given options for breaks, but none were taken, and they were reminded of the right to refuse to answer any questions. All participants were made aware of their answers being kept confidential during the study and beyond, and that their participation in the study would not impact their role as private instructors.

The records of this study, including all data collection, transcripts, and personal information, are protected. All recorded files were safely stored, and password protected on the researcher's computer for archival purposes. No recorded data was ever to be shared with anyone other than the researcher.

Data Collection Procedures

Semi-structured, open-ended, in-depth interviews were used for data collection. The researcher followed a preset interview protocol to conduct the interviews (See Table 3). The open-ended interview questions drew upon participants' diverse teaching philosophies, knowledge, and gave participants an opportunity to reflect on the teaching approaches they applied while working with their students. The interview questions were directly related to the two guiding research questions that pertained to the experiences and strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education (Creswell, 2014).

Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity the researcher used detailed, rich descriptions to report the findings in Chapter 4. This technique did not only ensure more authenticity, but also helped the readers to better understand the setting and the specific shared experiences of the participants. Another technique to ensure validity was to spend prolonged time with the participants during the interviews, to develop an in-depth understanding of the experienced phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2014). The researcher also allowed ample time for the participants in case they needed to collect their thoughts to provide their best answers to some of the questions.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation selected for this phenomenological study was in-depth interviews. Open-ended interviews allowed the researcher to conduct conversations about the participants' experiences and strategies adopted when working with elementary school students. The ten-question interview guide (Table 3) facilitated a comfortable platform for the researcher to develop a rapport with each participant, which resulted in richer qualitative data. Building a close rapport with every participant gave the researcher the flexibility and freedom to ask follow-up

questions and explore additional discussion points. The selected questions were designed to give both the participants and the researcher plenty of freedom to change the direction of the interview process when and if needed (Given, 2008). The main advantage of these open-ended interviews was collecting rich detailed descriptions from real accounts provided by these selected participants, through their personal lived experiences as private music instructors (Yin, 2014). Prior to beginning the study, the researcher pilot-tested the interview guide with a private music instructor who did not entirely fit the criteria. While this participant did not qualify for the official study, her extensive teaching expertise has greatly helped polish the instrumentation preparing it for the official interviews. Pilot-testing the interview guide helped the researcher make any necessary last minute necessary adjustments to it.

The interview guide consisted of ten questions based on the two main research questions pertaining to the experiences and the strategies of private music instructors that work with elementary school students. The ten interview questions also mirrored the four themes discovered during the literature review and described in Chapter 2. The four themes are: music education and mathematic discipline, music education and cognitive benefits, music education and student engagement, and music education and accessibility. The relationship between the research questions, literature themes, interview, and literature that inspired the questions are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3*Interview Guide*

Literature Themes	Research Questions	Interview Questions	Literature
All themes	RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	1. What can you tell me about your personal experience teaching elementary students? Describe a particular teaching experience, that stands out in your mind. Take as much time as you need.	(Butke, 2014; Cochrane et al., 2013; Economidou Stavrou et al., 2011; Hess, 2021; Hickey, 1995; Laubenthal, 2018; Medved & Turner, 2011).
	RQ2: What are the teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	2. What can you tell me about your personal choice of teaching strategies when teaching elementary students? Are there particular methods of teaching that you feel are better than others? Any specific components that you prefer to begin with? What do you follow up with? Why that choice? Feel free to describe them as in – depth as you would like to.	(Butke, 2014; Cochrane et al., 2013; Hess, 2021; Hickey, 1995; Laubenthal, 2018; Medved & Turner, 2011).
Music Education and Student Engagement	RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	3. Did the students appear fully engaged in their music study? What do you feel were the factors that kept students engaged in their music lessons?	(May, 1980; McPhail, 2010; O'Neill, 2005; Richerme et al., 2012; Wallerstedt, 2013).

Literature Themes	Research Questions	Interview Questions	Literature
		Describe any tools, objects or teaching material that helped your elementary students engage and willing to come back.	
Music Education and Student Engagement	RQ2: What are the teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	4. What strategies do you use most to engage elementary students in their music lessons? Is it the choice of repertoire, or any apps, any specific technique, activities, events...? I am interested in all of it. Please describe.	(May,1980; McPhail, 2010; O'Neill, 2005; Richerme et al., 2012; Wallerstedt, 2013).
Music Education and Cognitive Benefits	RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	5. In your view, what was the effect music had on students' cognition? By cognition I meant intelligence, communication, and focus. Did you notice any change in your students' cognition skills over time? How long did it take for you to notice changes in their cognitive skills? Feel free to elaborate.	(Detterman & Andrist, 1990; Gaser & Schlaug, 2003; Grant & Fonseca-Mora, 2016; Jaschke et al., 2013; Kraus & Chandrasekaran, 2010; Rose et al., 2015).
Music Education and Cognitive Benefits	RQ2: What are the teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	6. Can you think of any strategies that helped your elementary students' cognition, such as intelligence, communication, and focus? Please bring some examples. They can be anything from a simple	(Detterman & Andrist,1990; Gaser & Schlaug,2003; Grant & Fonseca-Mora, 2016; Jaschke et al., 2013; Kraus & Chandrasekaran,

Literature Themes	Research Questions	Interview Questions	Literature
		<p>exercise to anything such as a discussion or an activity.</p> <p>For example, I asked students to come up with a few words to describe the feeling they get from hearing a particular piece. Then they had to either write a story or draw it. I definitely was able to see an improvement in their playing of the piece as a result and it was a great cognition exercise as well. Do you have something similar you could tell me about?</p>	2010; Rose et al., 2015).
Music Education and Mathematic Discipline	RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	<p>7. As you probably know, numerous studies have been done on the positive effect music has on other disciplines, particularly mathematics. Did you feel your students progressed in their mathematics while taking music lessons with you?</p> <p>How did you perceive their progress?</p> <p>How did you measure their progress?</p> <p>Were there particular techniques that they developed? Improved their counting, rhythmic precision, theory etc.?</p>	(Bazinet & Marshall, 2015; Carrier et al., 2011; Economidou Stavrou et al., 2011; Mutch, 2020).
Music Education and Mathematic Discipline	RQ2: What are the teaching strategies of private music	8. Are there any particular strategies that you think might have	(Bazinet & Marshall, 2015; Carrier et al.,

Literature Themes	Research Questions	Interview Questions	Literature
Music Education and Accessibility	instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	helped your elementary students with math in school? Feel free to talk about some specific examples.	2011; Economidou Stavrou et al., 2011; Mutch, 2020).
	RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	9. Do you see/ feel any difference between elementary students who have had access to a rich music culture and exposure in schools versus those who didn't? How important, in your view, is for your students to have access to music exposure, performance events, and regular music lessons in schools?	(David, 2014; Salvador, 2019; Zak, 2015;).
Music Education and Accessibility	RQ2: What are the teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	10. Do you use different teaching strategies for elementary students who do have a rich exposure to music or access to music education in schools, as opposed to those who don't? Talk about some of the strategies you implement to teach students that are not exposed to music lessons as their school base curriculum. Do you usually find performance venues for your students, besides their weekly lessons with you?	(David, 2014; Salvador, 2019; Zak, 2015;).

Data Management

The researcher used Hyper TRANSCRIBE to playback and transcribe all interviews that took place via Zoom. After the transcription was complete, the researcher listened to the audio recordings, while simultaneously reading the transcriptions of the interviews to check for accuracy. The transcripts were verified for any mistakes made during transcription. The data will be preserved for five years and then destroyed (Creswell, 2014).

Data Analysis

As the main goal of phenomenology was to understand the essential meaning of the participants' lived experiences and omit everything that did not attribute to their awareness, not all the information collected was used in this qualitative study (Smith, 2013). The researcher sorted the data through the thick and rich text and selected some data while disregarding another. The goal of this analysis was to compile the data into a few themes; no more than seven (Guest, et al., 2012).

Unlike quantitative research, where the researcher must wait to write the report only after collecting and analyzing the data, in this qualitative study, the researcher started the data analysis while data collection was still in progress. For example, while Elvira's interview was still being scheduled, the researcher began analyzing Amy's interview and finishing transcribing Beatrice's interview (Creswell, 2014). This helped the researcher to finish all data analysis without extended delays.

The data analysis for this study was conducted via the software HyperRESEARCH. This software program helped the researcher to code, organize, and sort data more efficiently. Using the computer was a more efficient alternative to manual transcribing, storing, and locating qualitative data. Even with the help of the HyperRESEARCH tool, the researcher needed to read

through all the text, more than once or twice, one paragraph at a time, prior to begin assigning codes (Creswell, 2014). Coding is a fundamental data analysis process for qualitative studies which helped the researcher to break down detailed descriptions and disperse it through several themes (Creswell, 1998).

As the initial step to analyzing the data, the interviews, accompanied by field notes, were organized, and labeled alphabetically: Interview A, Interview B, Interview C, Interview D, and Interview E—one letter for each participant. As a next step, the interviews were loaded into HyperRESEARCH. The researcher organized and labeled the interviews while making notes of specific ideas and writing down thoughts which she believed could be helpful during the coding process. For example, the researcher thought that a particular interview had most details regarding useful teaching strategies, while another interview had more interesting stories relating to experience.

To gain momentum, the researcher chose to begin working with the interview that seemed the most appealing through the fact that it was concise and linear. The researcher read through the interview which she uploaded in HyperRESEARCH. At times the researcher asked questions to understand the underlying meaning of the text. As the researcher read through the document, she began highlighting sentences, phrases and paragraphs or any chunks of text, assigning them specific words or phrases to categorize each selection as codes. The new code, phrase, or term often came from the original language of the document. As this process continued, new codes appeared, and older codes were modified. Similar codes were combined to create code groups which were instrumental in revealing the themes. This task was being repeated until all data was exhausted, and a list of themes began to emerge (Silver & Lewins, 2020).

As soon as all the data from the five interviews was coded, the code lists of all the interviews were compared for possible commonalities. The researcher continued using the software to reveal common themes through the rich interview text, that related to experiences and strategies of the private music instructors, in connection to the two research questions and the literature themes (Creswell, 1998).

The seven themes that began to take form as a result of the data analysis were sorted into two groups, one for each of the initial research questions that guided the study (Creswell, 2014). Categorizing the themes into experiences and strategies helped the researcher understand why they are such valued concepts to the phenomenon of private music instructors who supplement their elementary school-based students music education. Finally, these important concepts were examined, developed, and later presented in the next two chapters.

Chapter Summary

The researcher outlined the methods used in the Chapter 3 through the following main sections: introduction, purpose statement and research questions, research design and rationale, researcher's role, selection of participants, human subjects' consideration, data collection procedures, and data analysis. In the research design and rationale division, the use of phenomenological methodology was justified. The researcher's role segment described the researcher's background, culture, and experiences, and introduced reflexivity techniques used in this study. The section that was devoted to the selection of participants described the sampling procedure. Human subjects' consideration portion explained Pepperdine University's IRB guidelines when collecting data, and defined the measures taken to protect the privacy of the participants. The data collection procedures section detailed how the data for this study was

accumulated and processed. Finally, the data analysis segment described the steps used in the analysis of the data including the use of the HyperRESEARCH software (Creswell, 2014).

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents the detailed results of the study. The chapter begins with a restatement of the purpose and research questions. The demographics of the participants, along with a short description of each participant are also presented here. The thematic findings of the study are organized by the two research questions that guided the study.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the individual experiences and teaching strategies of private music instructors, who supplement elementary students' school-based music education. The researcher interviewed five established private music instructors with over four years of teaching experience throughout California who teach elementary-aged students (Letice, 2006). The data was collected via semi-structured recorded interviews that took place between March 2022 and May 2022.

Two research questions guided this study:

- RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?
- RQ2: What are the teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education.

Research Design Overview

The methodology of this study was qualitative, and its research design was phenomenology. The researcher conducted interviews with five private music educators with four or more years of experience working with elementary aged students. At the start of the study, the participants were recruited from the available pool of colleagues, then, qualified

participants were found using snowballing sampling. The interview guide consisted of ten open ended questions, five designed around each research question, which focused on each of the four literature themes: music education and mathematic disciplines; music education and cognitive benefits; music education and student engagement; music education and accessibility.

Description of the Participants

The demographic description of the participants is based largely on the inclusion criteria. Other information such as gender, age, and education came through the interview, internet search, and any discussion preceding the interview. All five participants in this study are women ranging in age between 40 and 85 years old. A brief bio of each participant is provided below.

Amy is a Violinist performer who holds two Masters of Music degrees, one of which she obtained in California. Amy prioritizes teaching performance skills, focus, and learning anxiety control. She taught private lessons for elementary school-based and university students for many years. She has experience in teaching students of all ages, and actively enters her students in various performance competitions, festivals, and various performance opportunities.

Beatrice is a professor and Doctor of Music Pedagogy, who taught at several universities throughout a long, successful career and wrote extensively about music pedagogy. Although now retired from both private instruction and university teaching, while teaching at the university, Beatrice also maintained a large home-based studio for decades, where she taught students of all ages. She taught private piano lessons, improvisation, ensemble, and music composition. Although Beatrice stated that music theory is an essential ingredient to a wholesome music education, she chose to employ instructors who specialized in music theory rather than teach music theory herself.

Clara is an established private music educator who has taught both piano and music theory for decades. Clara is highly regarded in her community and is particularly experienced in teaching elementary school-based students. Clara enjoyed excellent music training as part of her formal education, a fact which fueled her love of music, and she believes in music education as a discipline.

A prominent private music educator, Diana holds a doctorate in music and is the director of one of the MTAC branches. Very involved with the Certificate of Merit program, Diana believes that all students benefit by instruction in line with the Certificate of Merit (CM) program. Besides managing a successful home-based studio, Diana maintains another studio in another city, to which she travels every week to teach for a couple of days.

Elvira holds a master's degree in music and has had a home-based studio for over 10 years. She is a keyboard and vocal instructor. Elvira follows the National Guild of Piano Teachers guidelines and encourages all students to enter that program. A Yamaha Music School-trained teacher, Elvira has taught at one of the branches of that school for many years and has extensive experience in working with elementary music students. Despite the Yamaha training, she does not follow a specific curriculum, instead adjusting her teaching according to the needs of the student. Elvira encourages music creativity, improvisation, and educating students about a variety of instruments.

Findings

Analysis of the data identified seven themes which address the two research questions that guided this study. Table 4 below illustrates the connection between the themes (right column) and the research questions (left column).

Table 4*Research Questions and Themes*

Research Questions	Themes
RQ 1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Private music instructors believe themselves to be the only source of music education. 2. Private music instructors prioritize getting to know their students. 3. Private music instructors believe that music lessons benefits to students can extend beyond music skill. 4. Private music instructors see themselves as significant role-models in their students' lives.
RQ 2: What are the teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Private music instructors rely on individualized teaching strategies and creative approaches. 6. Private music instructors must navigate difficult relationships with their students' parents. 7. Private music instructors teach to outcomes.

Theme 1. Private Music Instructors Believe Themselves to be the Only Source of Music Education

Private music educators seem to be well aware of the lack of consistent music education in elementary school grades, particularly in public schools, and are resolute in assuming the role of primary music educators in their students' life. Clara stated that music education is especially “crucial” for students in elementary grades, and “if we don't expose the children to this world of beauty and culture when they're young, they may never be exposed to it.” Diana said that she blames her elementary-age students' lack of general music knowledge, such as familiar songs, on poor or nonexistent music education in their schools. “I understand that although some schools offer recorders to the 4th graders, they offer no music [preparation] such as singing, reading

notes, or understand the music, so they just learn by rote.” This is the reason why Diana prefers to teach her students from scratch, covering all the essential components such as note reading, counting, technique, and aural skills. She added that she is aware that most schools do not offer music until middle school, when usually more advanced classes begin, such as bands and orchestras. She wondered, “how can a student who never picked up an instrument in elementary school join an orchestra in middle school? Are they expected to learn by themselves?”

Although Amy and Elvira stated they did not know what elementary students’ music education is like in schools, this lack of information has no effect on the choices of methods they use or the way they structure their curriculum. These participants prefer teaching in a way that mirrors their unique philosophy, which they said is the most suitable to them and their students. Beatrice said that she always had a general idea about her elementary students’ music preparedness in schools. She could easily see during the initial interviews that her elementary students “were not getting much [music] education in schools.” That is why she believes parents are desperate to find good private music educators and pay for them.

Although Beatrice, Clara, and Diana said that they had but a vague idea of what elementary students learned in school, they believed themselves to be their students’ only source of effective elementary music education. They said that they viewed music as one of the most important subjects that should be taught as regularly in schools as in other disciplines. Clara said that she found it hard to accept that students have so little music education in their elementary schools today. She said that she felt privileged to have had the opportunity to study music education in her elementary years and to choose between learning to play an instrument or singing in a choir. Clara maintained that it was her duty, and the duty of every private music educator to give elementary students the best education possible. According to her, music should

be studied regularly in elementary schools like every other subject. “Everyone seems to believe that students need math,” she said. “If math can be studied three times a week in elementary school, so should music.”

Summary. Although private music educators are unfamiliar with music programs in elementary schools, the fact that parents seek private instruction for their children leads them to conclude the worst. They believe that elementary music education is seriously flawed and lacking in most elementary schools. The participants, therefore, have assumed the roles of primary music educators in their elementary aged student’s lives and made decisions regarding the musical education of their elementary students.

Theme 2. Private Music Instructors Prioritize Getting to Know Their Students

Most private music education consists of one-to-one music lessons, which gives both the educator and the student sufficient time to bond and form a positive working relationship. In her interview, Amy revealed her strong commitment to fundamentally knowing the student first, then setting a teaching rhythm based on the individual needs of the student. Before music lessons begin, Amy needs to know whether the student likes music in the first place. Even the most enthusiastic students find violin learning challenging. It requires commitment, time, and dedication. Since learning music is often the parents’ idea, Amy said she needs to be convinced that the child is invested in it. “I have seen students that are forced to learn. They don’t even want to engage. It is very important to know them, to understand what kind of personality you are dealing with.”

Understanding a students’ personality is paramount for Beatrice. She recalls how she arrived at that understanding during her long teaching career. She said that during her early teaching years, she often held events at her home studio just to get to know her students. “If you

want to see the most uninhibited freedom and reveal personalities among your students, have a pool party with a sliding board going into the pool. Oh, my God! I was drenched.” Beatrice said that on this occasion, students came to the recital wearing anything they wanted, with their swimsuit underneath. She recalled these performances as the best she had ever gotten from her students. “It was because they were relaxed. They didn’t have to wear a tie, a white shirt, and shoes. It was wonderful.”

Clara believes that it is important to get to know the student because young students can sometimes appear older than they are. She remembers teaching a young transfer student. “I don’t remember how old he was at that point, but he was very gifted.” Clara said that because of his naturally good fingers, which enabled him to play a technically advanced repertoire, his former teachers were constantly assigning him repertoire well beyond his age. She continued: “I realized that he really had no idea what he was playing. He played it well, finger-wise, but there was certainly not that emotional connection or communication in his playing.”

Since teaching students to play violin is not a one-size-fits-all strategy, Amy believes it is her responsibility as a music educator to learn about her students first, their age, and physical faculties.

I inspect their hands to see what kind of hands they have; there are particular types of hands which can play violin a lot better than others. Some students might be double-jointed, which may affect the way they hold the bow. Other students have stiffer, more inflexible fingers which may be making playing larger intervals and covering bigger jumps harder.

Elvira noted that the most interesting thing about working with elementary students is how honest they are. Elementary students “are fun and hard to teach at the same time because

most of the time they are not structured in music learning.” Elvira therefore needs to get to know the students in order to find out how to gain their interest in learning music. “It is fun to teach them when they like the music, because they are really interested, but it is harder when they do not like music and tend to ignore it.” Elvira prefers getting close to her students in order to help them discover themselves first and foremost.

By bonding with the students, educators can find out more than just specific traits of the students’ character. Home life, school, a multitude of activities, and other various stressors in students’ lives can cause them anxiety, which can have an adverse effect on students’ response to music learning and, consequently, their performance ability. This is why Clara attempts to make her students comfortable by using her friendliness and “lots and lots of hugs and smiles.” She states: “I do not get angry with my students. Not ever.” Diana does not believe music learning should be put before the wellbeing of the students. If the student is stressed, she just finds something fun they can play together. Whenever she gets a new student, one that she does not yet know well, she plays some familiar songs for them. “I pick some easy songs and sing and sight-reading with them.” Even the shiest students will open up when they hear familiar music. Furthermore, Diana believes that engaging students in music learning can help alleviate the stress of everyday life.

Beatrice said that her interest in getting to know her students, has led her to study personality types. To learn more, she read Meyers Briggs and Dr. Keith Gole, which benefited her enormously in understanding of her students. She said that although she is “not a psychologist”, by observing her students she was able to determine whether the students were more “introverted or extroverted,” “intuitive, or logical.” Beatrice concluded that she wished all teachers would pay closer attention to the students they teach and match their teaching styles

with their students' personalities. Teachers should ask themselves, "What is the student interested in? How well does the student follow instructions? Does a particular student like school? What is their favorite subject? Does the student get along with the teachers? What would help motivate the student?" All these questions are important, and they could help private instructors be more efficient in their teaching.

Summary. When searching for the right methods to teach elementary students, some of the participants resorted to creative approaches in order to get to know their students' personality. Other participants needed to know of any particular stressors that may be preventing their students from learning. Finally, getting to know the students is crucial for identifying the maturity level and physical faculties of the students, which can help instructors assign more suitable repertoire. All these aspects are essential for a successful private music education.

Theme 3. Private Music Instructors Believe That Music Lessons Benefits to Students Can Extend Beyond Music Skill

Whether or not a student pursues a career in music, there are extensive benefits that elementary-aged students can gain by studying music. Participants of this study shared various views about the benefit of music instruction that extends beyond music skills. Amy and Clara believe that there is a broader purpose for music education than simply introducing students to music or attempting to create concert performers. According to Amy, playing music involves a lot of creativity, analysis, decision-making and problem-solving. "These are all lifelong survival skills every child needs to develop," she said. Clara and Elvira both shared the conviction that music education can contribute to students' general wellbeing and help students experience a more fulfilling childhood and a better quality of life.

Not all teachers see the direct correlation between math and music when teaching, but the benefits of math can be derived from music and vice versa (Bazinet, & Marshall, 2015; Grant, 1999; Koolidge & Holmes, 2018.) Elvira admitted that she doesn't think about math when teaching music, even though elementary music learning does contain simple math. Even so, she is not sure if she noticed music benefits to extend to learning math. Clara also admits that despite having to talk about numbers when teaching music, she does not worry about her students "cognitively understanding the mathematical relationships to music while in elementary school." Nevertheless, the relationship between math and music with respect to subdivisions or dotted note values in music can be taught to students once they have learned fourth-grade fractions. Clara added that should her students want to know about a dotted eighth and a 16th note value, then she should be able to explain to them how much [this or that is] related to math. "Until then," Clara states, "everything is done by listening and a little bit of writing. This is what it sounds like, and this is how you count it." Diana said she believes that music theory is inherently connected to math, and therefore introducing students to music theory early on can benefit them in school with math-related subjects.

Beatrice said that she cannot confirm whether her students' music learning has benefited their school subjects. She said that she has never taught music theory herself and preferred to employ a theory teacher for her students. To this end, she cannot make a connection between counting note values and math. It is her view that rather than trying to explain the music mathematically, music should be taught through employing lots of creativity and the art of performance. She stressed the importance of striving to provide her students with a variety of musical activities that ultimately helped her students "blossom".

Some participants said that music theory can often help reveal their students' potential problems with math-related subjects in school. Diana said that upon noticing that one of her students had difficulty understanding how to count note values, she asked the parent if the child showed any weakness in math. The parent confirmed that. "If the student is weak in theory, the student is also weak in math. I think music has a strong connection to math."

Beyond math skills, participants discussed other cognitive benefits of music education. Amy said that she "diagnoses the students' problems" while "using psychology" in her instructional approach. While teaching, she tries to identify and explain deeply rooted difficulties that could potentially cause her students to fall behind during their music learning process. Amy stated that difficulties in music learning can reveal a predisposition to cognitive issues. A lack of focus during performance can also reveal certain learning issues. "I have students who always stumble and stop in their performance. Instead of moving on, they get stuck on a small section and repeat it, never being able to continue, much like stuttering. This happens involuntarily." Amy believes that in order to help these students, the aim should be to reduce the number of stops and increase the students' continuous playing, if only by one measure at a time. "Our brain is like a computer," she says. "It can be reset. All we need is to start thinking differently."

While it is important to begin teaching music to students during their elementary school years, the benefits of music education may be more apparent over a longer period of time. Elvira explains that elementary students respond more enthusiastically to music' rhythm and melody, which translates to excitement and is visible on their facial expression. Students may also be better focused when they have had a good day or a better night's sleep as opposed to when they are tired or when they dislike a piece of music. This should not indicate whether or not music benefits the students. When observing how music exerts itself on students, it is important to note

how students respond to music in the long-term. Elvira shared an example about twins who were very unfocused at the start of their music group lessons. Eventually, she taught them one-on-one. That is when they began improving slowly. After studying music for a couple of years, Elvira discovered how musical the twins actually were. They began participating in music festivals, where they placed among the top players. Elvira said that the twins have grown to be fine musicians now. “I believe music helps students improve many skills in the long run. Give it time.”

Summary. Although not all participants in this study were able to pinpoint particular benefits of music education, some did connect music theory with math skills. Other participants noted significant improvements in their students’ overall well-being such as with communication, multitasking, and coordination skills. For any substantial benefits to take place, however, most participants agreed that music needs to be studied over a longer period of time.

Theme 4. Private Instructors See Themselves as Significant Role Models in Their Students’ Lives

Private music instructors in this study see themselves as having the ability to exert primary influence on their students’ lives and change the way they perceive their career, purpose, and philosophy. Participants Clara and Diana both said that their influence on their students’ lives has nearly always extended beyond the duration of study. Clara said that she has been asked for her opinions and practical advice such as whether a student should enroll in certain classes in college. Perhaps the biggest factor that kept Elvira teaching for as long as she did was her realizing how much of a difference she made in her students’ lives. As a result, as she put it, the students found themselves. Amy said that her students trusted her guidance the most, even if it was contrary to what their parents wanted. Amy described a student who, soon after starting his

lessons, became so devoted to his violin lessons that, contrary to his parents' wishes, got up early in the morning to practice before he left for school. "I gave him something to be responsible for," she said. "Nobody forced him to do this. He made the decision on his own. That completely changed everything."

Some participants in this study stated that their elementary students like to emulate their instructors' music style. The students want to act and play like their teachers, which is a circumstance that instructors can use as part of their teaching strategy. Beatrice told a story about a student who was seven or eight years old at the time. He had a habit of keeping his hands on the keyboard after finishing the piece.

I said, "Andrew, look at me; I exaggerated, lifting the hands off the keyboard, and placing them on my lap." To my surprise, at the recital, [after] every piece he played, he stopped, picked up his hands and placed them on his lap, [then he] looked at me. It was so adorable! He never forgot to do this again.

Amy also said that at each enrollment her demonstrations were the number-one selling point for inspiring elementary students to start playing violin.

I play for them. I demonstrate. I am able to stir up excitement about music in them that way. Their eyes sparkle when I play, especially with the little ones. I am their first introduction to beautiful music and beautiful tone.

When responding to a question about the strategy that kept her students coming back to her for as long as they did, Beatrice exclaimed, "My personality, of course!" She related an example of a student who was asked to write an assignment describing someone who was the biggest influencer in his life.

He chose me! His description of me was so amusing. He began by writing that when he was first introduced to me, all he saw was a middle-aged, stern-looking lady with glasses who was a little frightening and who often joked, but no one laughed. He went on to say some very nice things about me and ended by saying how grateful he was to have had someone like me to be his piano teacher.

Beatrice said that even if no one realizes it, the music instructor provides elementary students with the longest relationship they will have in their life, besides their family members. During this time, they exert a big influence on their students. Students learn not just music and performance from their private instructors, they also learn about good behavior, work ethics, and even business practices. Elvira believes that most of her students are too young to know if they want to play an instrument when they begin their studies with her. It is her responsibility to make them interested in music. She does so by introducing them to all types of music styles and instruments and even social media apps. At some point she saw that her students were trying to copy her by the way they play, sing, or carry themselves. She realized then that music educators are students' "first influencers."

Summary. Elementary music students often draw their inspiration from their music instructors. As private music instructors become their elementary students' longest relationships, they also become their students' first influences. They have the ability to influence their students' personality, music taste, work ethic, and even business skills.

Theme 5. Private Music Instructors Rely on Individualized Teaching Strategies and Creative Approaches

Whether music instructors choose to teach their own curriculum or follow programs such as the CM or ABRSM, they also rely on individualized approaches. While participants Diana and

Clara said that they teach according to the CM curriculum, the other three, participants Amy, Beatrice, and Elvira, spoke at length about adjusting their methods to fit their students' strengths and personality, adding that they prefer teaching in a freer style. Before implementing a particular strategy, Amy said that it is important to understand each student's capacity for learning.

Elementary students are young, and while age doesn't always determine their abilities, Amy felt that students' age was often the factor that determined the amount of knowledge they can receive and how they receive it. Clara relied on the simple yet effective strategy of assigning "age-appropriate repertoire" to elementary students. She said that assigning a repertoire that students can understand and perform easily can impress the evaluators just as much as listening to a more advanced student play. There is absolutely no need to stress elementary students by assigning them a difficult repertoire.

Beatrice believes, however, that age does not always matter. All students, regardless of their age, she said, should be taught "in an adult way," with educators using their "normal speaking voice" instead of a "baby-tone voice." Beatrice said that this approach is essential to their growth."

Elementary students are not 10-month-old babies. Do not use finger numbers with baby names. Finger number five is not the pinky. Finger number two is not the pointer. When teaching music, you are also preparing students for life. Referring to a finger as the pinky, is not likely to prepare them for real life.

Diana believes in teaching all the components of music to all students, despite their young age. She thinks that young elementary students are not particularly good at reading music and tend to memorize everything instead. Yet that is no reason to avoid teaching them to read

notes. Diana suggests magnifying the notes for the young students to make it easier for them to read and identify them. This method has always worked well for her students, she said.

A few participants spoke about strategies that do more harm than good and should therefore be avoided. Clara said that no music educator should ever introduce a new piece of music to a young student, telling them to go home and practice it for a specific number of times or a duration of time (a week, 30 minutes, or 10 times). “They will end up practicing it wrong for a week! It just doesn't work.” Clara suggested that “a better way to introduce a piece of music, would be to teach the newest elements first,” quarter rests and dotted quarter notes, “and make sure students understand them.” Clara continued by stating that this is the best approach to assigning a new piece to a student. She added that as soon as her elementary students can read music, she teaches them how to practice. She breaks the piece into small parts. Clara created an assignment sheet called “steps,” which specifies five steps, from the beginning until the piece is ready for performance. “Do they use it?” She laughs. “No, but I can point out to them that certain difficulties in the learning process are due to them missing a particular step in their practice.”

Elvira said that teachers should never force a student to play music if they are not inclined to do so or having a bad day. Instead, she says educators should use their teaching time to create strong, long-lasting music experience for students. Music learning should be enjoyed, especially by elementary music students. Elvira said that when a student is not interested in a piece of music, she simply switches to another one or another book entirely, using a variety of books instead of focusing on just one. The change is necessary to ensure the student pays attention to and absorbs the important material. She believes that pieces are far less important than the actual content and learning certain skills. It is much more important that the students like the music they play. One main strategy Elvira uses with her elementary-aged students is

encouraging them to play slowly, just two or three measures at a time. “It doesn’t matter how slow as long as [the students] learn.”

Diana said that finding the right books to teach elementary students is very important. She said that children love colorful, interesting books, a factor that adds to their excitement about music learning. Diana stated that she believes in a step-by-step learning process, with plenty of songs to sing and play. She admitted that she found it surprising that elementary children don’t sing more songs. “Some are very shy to sing. So, if a student agrees to sing a song, I usually reward them with a small gift of encouragement.” Music Theory teaching is paramount for Diana, who also admits that she cannot teach performance without also teaching theory. All her students must learn it, “whether they like it or not.” She begins by teaching simple rhythms to the elementary students but makes sure they learn those well.

Elvira, on the other hand, said that she uses a piecemeal approach for teaching music theory. She teaches only what is necessary for her students to play a new piece. “I do not ask them to complete a whole page.” Elvira believes that the best way to teach music theory is to not make it obvious to students that they are learning theory. Elvira added that she teaches most music theory through music appreciation of different music styles. Contemporary music, for example, has a more elaborate music structure and a more frequent change of time signature, which can help improve students’ counting.

To some participants, following a balanced curriculum is secondary to developing creativity and imagination. Amy and Beatrice said they rely on personalized strategies to engage students in music and support their music enjoyment. Amy uses storytelling to engage and inspire her students to individualize the music they play. “When students play a particular piece, they have to come up with the story for it. This could be anything from objects to nature to

feelings, relationships, or fantasies. I like to develop my students' imagination." Amy said that some of their ideas are "crazy," but they make for a good laugh. This activity stirs students' imagination, which is exactly what she wants. Beatrice said that she often disguises difficult assignments by using themed events that included music performances.

During Christmas, we had a pizza/recital party. We threw tablecloths onto the floor, ate pizza, and played Christmas carols. Students had to bring two Christmas carols and improvise and harmonize the accompaniment. Older students had to vary left hand, not just plain cords.

Beatrice said that this party had a hidden meaning. It encouraged students to improvise their own accompaniment, which was quite hard for some to do. Elvira also uses creativity in her teaching. She suggested that improvisation and composition can also be used as a teaching strategy. "Asking students to improvise or compose can help educators [ascertain] how much of the new material the students had absorbed." Beatrice added that as much as this seems fun and easy, not all students possess the free spirit of self-expression. She had to insist on composition and improvisation with the students who weren't good at it or who didn't want that freedom. "They are in a box in public school, and they are in a box at home with what they must do. When you tell them they don't have to be boxed in, they don't know what to do."

Clara spoke about using humor and positivity with all her students, especially the young ones. "I'm very positive. I do not get upset with kids. My main strategy is to have an encouraging attitude and trying to make the lesson as fun as possible." She went on to describe her method of working with very young students to help them feel the music they play. The key is to try to "get her students off the bench." She walks or hops while holding hands with them if a particular music piece involves detached playing or smooth playing. "I use my arms to

demonstrate sound dynamic increase and decrease. In short, these strategies are based on acting out every essential performance detail of the music piece.”

While most keyboard music educators prefer to begin teaching their students with piano, Elvira believes that it is important to introduce elementary music students to a variety of instruments before focusing on a particular one. She first introduces them to a few simple percussion instruments and teaches them to tap simple rhythms while listening to the piece. Using a variety of percussion tools to make music, she said, can make the lesson more fun but also helps students feel the rhythm and the downbeats. Another favorite strategy of participant Elvira is to engage elementary-age students by using an electronic piano instead of a mechanical one, which helps them play with different sounds.

Instead of focusing on classical music, Elvira introduces them to world music and a variety of styles such as jazz, gospel, and others that students love. “I think of this as watering a seed. This ensures that the seed will sprout strong and healthy.” Clara teaches her students to recognize and study various music styles, including contemporary atonal music. She believes it is important for students to learn and interpret atonal music. “Most of the students don’t like doing this at first, but I insist that they try it. Surprisingly, they all end up loving it.”

Summary. The private music instructors in this study strived to strike a balance between teaching basic skills, such as note-reading and theory, and the freedom of musical expression and creativity. According to them, their particular strategies helped their elementary students grow into experienced musicians. Some participants elaborated on certain harmful strategies that, in their opinion, should be avoided. While all teaching methods are undoubtedly helpful in providing students with a basic music foundation, some participants emphasized that teaching should not deny students their originality.

Theme 6. Private Music Instructors Must Navigate Difficult Relationships with Their Students' Parents

Participants stated that peer pressure and social media often make parents impatient with their child's music progress. This subjects students and educators to stress and often causes a student to lose interest in learning music. According to Elvira, the main reason students quit lessons is because of parents' pressure. Parents do not realize that their children "may not be ready for [a faster learning pace]." Elvira said that teaching elementary music students is not easy, because it involves playing games and doing fun activities during the lesson, which parents don't approve of. "They want their children to advance quickly without understanding that their kids are still very young."

The participants interviewed for this study said that parents often draw a negative conclusion much too soon, which usually happens at the first conflict between the student and the parent regarding their individual understanding of music practice. Amy remembered a parent calling her to suspend her eight-year-olds' son private music lessons, after just a couple of weeks. The reason for this, she said, was her son's refusal to practice when she asked him to. Amy persuaded the parent to allow her to teach her son for one month and let her, his teacher, talk to the child about practicing. "I explained to the parent that her son had to learn to feel responsible to me, his teacher." She added that when parents "break and enter" their children's relationship with their music instrument, children can become resentful. Amy said that there was a happy ending to this story, with the student graduating from high school while still enrolled in private violin lessons. "Just to think. ..." Amy said. "His parents were going to stop his lessons after only a couple of weeks."

Amy stated that parental interference with their students' music assignments and home practice can be devastating, not just for the parent-teacher relationship but for the students, as well. "I had another student whose dad criticized him every time he heard him play at home. The father was not a musician. This resulted in his son (my student) refusing to practice when his dad came home." Some participants say that musically inexperienced parents often fail to see the reason for slow and steady progress and question the instructors' attempt to teach music theory or ear-training. Diana said that although she is always up front with her students' parents about the program she teaches, she constantly finds herself defending her teaching methods. "The beginning can be difficult for students and parents because they are not familiar with my teaching program." Diana said that even though parents chose her, during the process some of them ask why the students need to know the particular things she teaches and why they are needed in order for the student to play the piano.

In some cases, shared by participants in this study, musically experienced parents can serve as allies for the music instructors. Elvira said that some students do well with their parents' guidance, which she welcomes, particularly with elementary-age students. "If parents tell their kids to follow their teachers' instructions, that can definitely help everyone." Elvira said that musically experienced parents help support music lessons and the instructors, too. "Their children grow up with some music exposure before they even start learning. They already have the musical instincts formed."

Not all musically experienced parents can be helpful to all music educators, however. Amy said that while it is usually a good thing to have those parents in her studio, teachers could also get pushed or manipulated by parents who understand music. "They have their own ideas and experiences, and they think they know a lot more about music teaching than they actually

do.” Diana also said that it is hard to deal with musically experienced parents and that she would rather deal with parents who do not know much about music. Musically experienced parents tend to interfere too often and “don’t allow the kids to grow and learn at their own pace.” She describes a situation where “one poor boy was so paranoid about learning music that he rarely played.” He felt the pressure of his mother’s knowing some music because she “snaped and commented” during her lessons with him. Diana said that this constant correction from the parent did not benefit the child.

Some participants shared their experiences about certain advantages that students from musical families may have over other students. Elvira said that these students may appear musically superior at the start of their lessons, which is to be expected given their upbringing and their living in a home “filled with music.” They have a natural predisposition for ear-training and singing. However, according to Clara, “The intrinsic motivation has to be present, too.” If students are not intrinsically motivated, nothing the parent or instructor does will help. Elvira said that she has taught students from musical families who did not initially show any interest in music and wanted to do something other than what their parents did. In some cases, however, their musical background did tend to catch up with them later. Elvira described a case where a student from a musical family was forced by her parents to study music with her privately, but this student’s interest didn’t emerge until after she went to college. She suddenly changed her major to music halfway through college and went on to pursue a singing career.

The perception that students from musically experienced families tend to possess more musical talent is not always true. Participants Amy and Elvira talked about their students who did not come from musical families or had musical experienced parents. They initially did not

display any enthusiasm for music but ended up pursuing a career in music. Elvira said that “it is all up to their talent and their own interest.”

Summary. According to the participants in this study, relationships between parents and educators are often complex and require careful and constant navigation. Musically inexperienced parents tend to be impatient with their children’s progress and are often overly demanding of results. Musically experienced parents, on the other hand, are more often inclined to support their child’s music education, and their participation in music education is often welcomed by the educators, as long as they do not interfere with the educator’s teaching strategies. While students from musical families often show more inclination toward music than other students, having musically experienced parents is not an absolute indicator of the further student’s musical success. Having musical parents does not substitute for motivation or a natural inclination toward music.

Theme 7. Private Music Instructors Teach to Outcomes

Although highly appreciated for its process, private music education is applauded for its outcomes. While all five participants spoke about the significance of the results, there was no consensus on how they defined them. As private music education consists of independent music teachers offering their services to individuals, private educators rely on outcomes to help sustain their businesses. These outcomes include performance events, competitions, festivals, themed recitals, and music exams. Diana said that what keeps her students coming back every year is the CM exams. She described the CM exams as the biggest event of the year for her and her students. “These exams are a must for all my students because they keep my studio going. Everyone respects them. They are not some mom-and-pop events.” Diana said that being the president of an MTAC branch, she uses her status to encourage all teachers to enter their students

in more performance events. These events greatly encourage the students. “Some of these performance opportunities even offer award money to winners.” Diana stated that all performances need not be competitive in order to be effective. She said that some of the best music exposures for students are relaxed and noncompetitive. They help build students’ stage presence and confidence and add to their overall performance experience.

In spite of expecting less than a fraction of her students to pursue music careers, Clara was convinced that the music education she offers can not only contribute to students’ well-being but also helps them become the kind of persons they are meant to be in society. She said,

Ninety-nine-point nine percent of my students stop playing piano when they graduate from high school, but if they love music, if I can create a new audience to turn on a radio station and listen to classical music, my goal is achieved.

She added that in order to keep her students interested in playing in her two recitals she organizes every 6 months, she assigns them, besides their classical pieces, various different styles such as Christmas carols, jazz pieces, Disney arrangements and pop songs. Participants Amy and Diana said that engaging students in concerts, competitions, and other events benefits everyone. Students begin to assess how they have grown, which is a common reward music educators, students, and parents share. “I think successful results are always important,” Amy said, “and it is really [pleasing] to hear compliments from other teachers’ students about your own students being the best. That is when you know that nobody will ever dare question your teaching strategies again.”

Of course, not all outcomes are happy outcomes. Some are decision-making points in time. Amy described an incident where, after a recital, which was supposed to be a very happy occasion, she was confronted by an angry father who expressed his disappointment at the

absence of ethnic music in his daughter's program. The escalation resulted in him discontinuing the lessons of all three of his children.

Sometimes the point of the outcome is not all about achieving results in music but about students finding themselves. Elvira said that she once had a very shy student. Being shy, the student rarely spoke during lessons. After a few years of teaching her, Elvira realized that she could not see much progress, and she decided to have a conversation with her. She was surprised to hear her students' voice, which sounded very musical and pleasant. She decided to try another way. "We started singing together," Elvira said. From that point on, the student continued her private music education as a singer. She went on to get a music-related degree.

Summary. Successful outcomes are important for everyone, especially music educators, and they come in different forms such as competitions, recitals, and exams. While outcomes have different types of significance, for some educators they are simply a way to attract and keep their students and grow their business. Outcomes can also have a more philosophical meaning, as some educators are convinced that they contribute to a better society through their music teaching. Finally, outcomes are simply moments of unexpected realizations for educators, students, and parents.

Chapter Summary

The data from this study resulted in seven themes that shed light on private elementary music education. Theme 1 helped the researcher understand why the participants in this study, (private music instructors), assume the roles of primary music providers in their elementary aged student's lives, and how they make their decisions regarding what musical knowledge their students need to have for a well-rounded music education. Theme 2 focused on the importance of closeknit relationship between student-music instructor and stressed the importance of truly

getting to know each individual student. All participants agreed that forming a strong bond between themselves and their students often results in a better musical outcome and helps them identify and prevent stressors that could stand in the way of their students' progress.

Theme 3 helped the researcher see how private music instructors perceive the extent of music benefits. Regardless of whether or not a student will pursue a music career, there are many advantages to be held as a result of studying music. Some, if not most of the benefits can extend beyond music skill. They are decision-making and problem-solving, relationship building, to name just a few. Although not all participants seemed to agree on cognitive or math benefits to music, most are in accord that a solid music education can contribute to students' general wellbeing and students' feeling generally happier with their lives.

Private music instructors often exert tremendous influence on their elementary students shaping more than just their music tastes and attitudes, but also their ambitions, their work ethics, and even some business skills. This was the topic that emerged in theme 4. Furthermore, the cause for private music instructors' influence on their students is the long relationship they manage to form over the years, surpassing perhaps all but their students' relationships with their parents and siblings.

Theme 5 showed how much private music instructors revere their own private teaching methods. According to each music instructor that participated in this study, it is their particular strategies that help their elementary students grow into experienced musicians and pave their paths to success. There was no shortage of teaching ideas between these five participants, and while most of the teaching methods are generally helpful to cover the basics, some participants expressed their desire to give their students more freedom to roam and experience creativity.

Theme 6 revealed the importance of building positive relationships between parents and instructors and the difficulty navigating through the perpetual disagreements and differences of opinions. The main contradiction between parents and instructors is the pace of the students' learning. Although musically experienced parents tend to interfere in their children's progress, their music knowledge is highly appreciated by most private instructors. The musical influence that musically experienced parents exert on their children often results in faster musical progress. Musically inexperienced parents, on the other hand, can become impatient about their children's progress which can result in constant instructor-parent conflict.

Theme 7 conveyed the importance of teaching to outcomes. Outcomes are checkpoints of unexpected realizations, and progress evaluation for both students and parents. Outcomes are also lucrative in the sense that they enable music instructors to build various performance platforms for their students, which often results in a growing business.

Chapter 5: Discussions and Conclusions

Introduction

Chapter 5 presented a discussion of the conclusions and recommendations. The chapter begins with a summarized description of the study, including the problem, the purpose, and the two research questions that guided the study, followed by the theoretical framework, the methods, and the key findings. A brief description of the research design follows, along with the conclusions based on the data analysis. Chapter 5 ends with recommendations for practice and future research.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was the California Music Standards. Modeled by the National Arts standards, California Music Standards is a detailed guide intended to supply music teachers with music education strategies. The guide includes several important components such as the Four Artistic Processes: creating, performing, connecting, and responding (MENC: The National Association for Music Education, 2007); the Anchor Standards; The Enduring Understandings and Questions, the Process Components in Music; and the Student Performance Standards. As this study is intended for elementary-aged students, the researcher used the portion of the standards that are aimed at guiding and teaching K-5 grades only.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the experiences and teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement their elementary students' school-based music education. In accordance with this study design, the researcher interviewed

five established private music educators who live and work in California and have extensive experience in teaching elementary-aged students (Letice, 2006).

Two research questions guided this study:

- RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?
- RQ 2: What are the teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education?

Research Design

To conduct this study, the researcher used a qualitative, phenomenological research design. Phenomenology's primary objective is to understand the personal and most immediate lived experiences of the participants (Groenewald, 2004). The researcher utilized phenomenology to better understand the original experiences and strategies of private music instructors while working with elementary aged school-based students. During the study, the researcher was able to discover specific approaches used by private music instructors that provided valuable insight into their work rhythm and philosophy, from running their business to supporting students musical output, which, in their opinion, have contributed to their success. The researcher was also able to collect information about specific materials such as musical instruments used by the participants during their instruction.

The researcher conducted virtual, semi-structured interviews. The instrumentation used for the study was an interview guide of 10 questions that provided the researcher with the flexibility to change the sequence of questions or switch one question for another to support the flow of the interview. All interviews were recorded and conducted virtually via Zoom. Each interview lasted between 55–90 minutes. The interview guide mirrored the literature themes

reflected through the two main research questions. The themes that emerged from the interviews were:

- Theme 1. Private music instructors believe themselves to be the only source of music education.
- Theme 2. Private instructors prioritize getting to know their students.
- Theme 3. Private music instructors believe that music lesson benefits to students can extend beyond music skill.
- Theme 4. Private music instructors see themselves as significant role models in their students' lives.
- Theme 5. Private music instructors rely on individualized teaching strategies and creative approaches.
- Theme 6. Private music instructors must navigate difficult relationships with their students' parents.
- Theme 7. Private music instructors teach to outcomes.

Study Conclusions

Four conclusions related to the strategies and experiences of private music educators working with elementary school-based students have resulted from the thematic analysis of the interview data. This section presents the four conclusions in light of the themes described in Chapter 4, the two main research questions that guided the present study, and the existing literature presented in Chapter 2.

Conclusion 1: The Lived Experiences of Private Music Instructors Suggest They Are the Primary Source of Their Elementary Students' Music Education

Conclusion 1 answers RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education? The findings that contributed the most to this conclusion came from Theme 1: Private music instructors believe themselves to be the only source of music education., and Theme 4: Private educators see themselves as significant role-models in their students' lives.

The participants' responses in this study demonstrated a sense of superiority about their role in their elementary students' music education. Their presumed responsibility as the primary music educators in their elementary students' lives stems from the idea, which is supported by McPhail (2010), that success in music education results from pedagogical expertise first, and students' ability second.

Elementary students desire to be and act like their teachers often resulted in demonstration and role modeling becoming key ingredients for music instructors in inspiring their students love for music. Shuler et al. (2014) supports this notion and emphasizes that elementary music instruction should be taught by demonstration. Demonstration also plays a significant role in getting students started on more advanced music components such as composition and improvisation while still expanding their basic music skills.

The participants responses in this study suggested that the lack of consistent elementary music education in elementary schools appears to be common knowledge among private music instructors. Because individualized music instruction has been consistently linked to music education in American public schools since the early 20th century (Berman, 2013), it became an unwritten rule that private music instruction is the first choice for all those seeking music

instruction (Berman, 2013). This information has no doubt contributed to the confidence that private music instructors feel about their input in elementary students' music education and has enabled them to brand themselves as the main source of music instruction and music aspiration.

Conclusion 2: The Strategies of Private Music Instructors Reflects their Diverging Views on What Constitutes Quality Music Education

Conclusion 2 answers RQ 2: What are the strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education? The findings that contributed the most to this conclusion came from Theme 5: Private music instructors rely on individualized teaching strategies and creative approaches; and Theme 3: Private music educators believe that music education benefits to students extend beyond music skills.

The participants in this study revealed an array of different and sometimes conflicting views about the most vital music components and the way they benefit elementary students. Examples of different teaching strategies include expanding instrumental and artistic performance, studying more or less music theory, taking on improvisation, practicing music appreciation, etc. McPhail (2010) emphasized the tendency private music educators have to exaggerate instrumental performance and leave out other useful music components. While all participants have special approaches to teaching music, the true scope of music education is to provide students with skills and knowledge. This assertion is supported by Cheng & Durrant (2007), who emphasizes that in both private and school-based classroom settings it is important for students to acquire long-lasting and impactful benefits from music education. Students should learn and become level-proficient in all components of music education (Hickey, 1995).

Participants Diana and Clara generally focus more on providing their elementary students with skills such as singing, music theory, and sight-reading. Their answers suggested that they

were more inclined to use classroom time to build music skills and prepare students for a professional music career, should their students want to pursue it. McPhail (2010) supports this notion by stating that private music instructors can work to improve music education by recontextualizing their teaching strategies and developing ways to enhance their students' music ownership by balancing creativity, instrumental performance, and other music education components (Hickey, 1995).

While teaching methods are undoubtedly helpful in providing students with a solid music foundation, some participants said that individualized music teaching strategies should not imply boxing students in by not allowing them enough room for creativity and originality. This resonates with Richerme et al. (2012), who stated that the lack of teaching approaches that incorporate creativity, music ownership, and independent musical knowledge can result in students' disengagement from music lessons.

Some participants stated that there was a broader purpose for music education than just introducing students to music or attempting to create concert performers. As participants said, studying music involves a great deal of critical thinking, analysis, decision-making, and problem-solving as well as communication, multitasking, and coordination skills, all of which are lifelong survival skills every child needs to develop (Duke, 2000; Gaser & Schlaug, 2003; Hutchins, 2018; Lukács & Honbolygó, 2019; May & Elliott, 1980; Pike, 2013; Piro & Ortiz, 2009). In addition, participants in this study stated that music education can contribute to students' general well-being and help them experience a more fulfilling childhood and, consequently, a better quality of life (Eerola, & Eerola, 2014).

Conclusion 3: Developing a Relational Network with Parents and Students is an Essential Element of Private Music Instructors' Lived Experience

Conclusion 3 answers RQ1: What are the experiences of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education? The primary findings for this conclusion came from Theme 2: Private music instructors prioritize getting to know their students; Theme 6: Private music educators must navigate difficult relationships with their students' parents. Other material came from Theme 7: Private music educators teach to outcomes.

According to the participants' responses, relationships between parents and instructors are necessary to ensure that the students enjoy a successful music education. If properly cultivated, a positive networking relationship between the instructor, student, and parent can be very beneficial to the music outcome. With proper navigation, parents can become staunch allies of private music educators. This finding supports McPhail's (2010) assertion that it is the network between teacher, parent, and student that ultimately results in a combination of successful practices that positively challenges the belief in students' talent. According to the Suzuki method, a student's successful outcome in music is a mixture of teacher's instruction, holiday courses, practice, and family involvement (McPhail, 2010).

Participants said that although challenging, involving students' parents in their music lessons is part of the lived experience for learning to navigate important relationships and cope with occasional misunderstandings. Parents need to know that their feedback is valuable and needed. By providing regular, positive feedback for their children, either during the lesson or at home, parents help ensure that their children's private music instruction is effective. Their input can help foster creativity, communication, and collaboration and safeguard students' continuous

motivation and engagement in music (Odegaard, 2016). Students could also receive incremental, positive feedback derived from the satisfaction of playing in front of the family at first, fulfillment which could later double, when performing in front of an entire audience (Litterst, 2016).

Conclusion 4: For Most Private Music Instructors, California Music Standards do Not Influence Their Teaching Strategies

Conclusion 4 answers RQ2: What are the strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education? The primary findings for this conclusion came from Theme 5: Private music educators rely on individualized teaching strategies and creative approaches. Additional information came from Theme 3: Private music instructors believe that music education benefits can extend beyond music skills.

Despite the research that has been done on the far-reaching impact music standards have on the education systems such as colleges and universities (Adderley et al., 2003), the participants in this study demonstrated little knowledge of the California Music Standards and spoke instead of the importance of individualized instruction and role modeling as their most effective music teaching strategies. Private music instructors trust in their own, personalized teaching above all others poses its challenges. Private music instruction has proven to be insufficient in preparing elementary students for music bands and orchestra music programs and frequently even in acquiring the necessary skills needed to help them transition into middle and high school music programs. As stated by Elpus and Abril (2011), bands, orchestras, and other music activities often require more extensive music preparation. With the exception of one participant's stating that she has worried about her elementary students' lack of proper music education in schools, none of the participants in this study has mentioned the need to integrate

their teaching methods with their local schools' program or planning to prepare their students for bands or orchestra programs in middle and high schools.

Instead of teaching strategies and adhering to the standards, participants spoke instead of student's personality, character, courage, fun activities, parties, stories, and love of music as being the go-to approaches they use. This is not wrong, considering that the new NCCAS has opted to give the instructor considerable freedom when teaching music (Shuler et al., 2014). However, the NCCAS also provided music teachers with the new 21st-century college and career-ready skills that are expected of students in all subject areas, including music (Shuler et al., 2014). Private music instructors could benefit from employing some of these approaches and knowledge, particularly when faced with the technology and distractions that are available to students today.

Although the researcher did not ask the participants questions about the California Music Standards, she implied them, while asking questions about the ways in which music can exert influence on other skills such as mathematics and cognition, all of which are at the base of music standards. Participants' opinion on these topics were split, with half of them having some knowledge and half denying that there is any such connection between music, math, and cognition. According to Saloni (2010), the purely mathematical aspects of music, such as rhythm and pitch, show a clear connection between mathematics and music. Hutchins, (2018) also claimed that besides the many academic benefits, music can develop problem-solving skills and benefit students generally. Above all, an extended music education can enhance students general learning satisfaction and make the schooling experience more enjoyable (Eerola & Eerola, 2014).

With one exception, all participants seemed to hesitate when asked about identifying the link between music and mathematics. (Bazinet, & Marshall, 2015; Grant, 1999; Koolidge, &

Holmes, 2018; Mutch, 2020; Serrano et al., 2017; Walker, 2015; Winterer, 2002). Two of them flatly denied any similarity between mathematics and music and asserted that this topic has not been studied enough. The participants were more willing to expand on the topic of the cognitive benefits of studying music and offered their views on particular advantages they believe are most important (Detterman & Andrist 1990; Economidou Stavrou et al., 2011; Gaser & Schlaug, 2003; Grant & Fonseca-Mora, 2016; Rose et al., 2015). It is worth noting that it is because of these proven benefits that music gained more importance during 2001 under the No Child Left Behind Act (Brewerton & Millward, 2001), which declared that music and the arts are necessary for general education, which includes English, mathematics, history, civics, government, geography, science, and foreign languages, all of which must be taught by qualified educators (Branscombe, 2005). This change has also signaled the start of arts integration. The arts integration movement, which influenced the new California Art Standards, grew from the idea that music and academic subjects are interlinked. Arts integration evolved over a century of research, providing increasing evidence of music's impact on brain function and cognitive skill development (Lackey, 2016).

Implications for Practice and Scholarship

The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences and the teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education. Based on the findings, the following implications have been identified for educational leaders, private music instructors, and policy makers.

1. Private use of California Music Standards. Despite the best efforts of the California Department of Education to make the California Music Standards available for private instruction, this study indicates that private instructors are not using them. The

- private music instructors in this study do not rely on California Music Standards, and some are even unaware of their existence. While California Music Standards are designed to assist private educators as well as classroom music teachers (Cheng & Durrant, 2007), they are written for a classroom context rather than the one-on-one individualized music instruction (MENC: The National Association for Music Education, 2007). As such, they are not easy to comprehend and utilize by private instructors.
2. The music education in the K-12 system and private instruction do not work together to benefit all students. Today, progressively more elementary students are relying on individualized music instruction (Berman, 2013), which often results in insufficient preparation for bands and orchestras for middle and high school (Cumberledge, 2016). While the K-12 system needs the students to be ready to pick up various instruments and instantly join bands and orchestras to engage in school and community performances (Duke, 2000), the private music instruction has an entirely different set of goals that do not coincide with the ones required in schools. This is not beneficial for students. The findings of this study point to the need for the two systems to work together and be more complementary of one another. Such collaborations have the potential to benefit the relationship between private music instructors, public schools, students, and parents.
 3. Private music instructors could be more effective by expanding their teaching strategies. Continuous one-to-one private music instruction can become redundant and result in students' loss of music interest after just a few years (O'Neill et al., 2002). Supplying students with music ownership and competence can help stir

students' long-term interest and improve their commitment to further their music studies (Bryce, 2003). Instead of focusing on teaching just the discipline of music, private music instructors can help their students define and acquire the new college and career-ready and 21st-century skills that are expected of students in all subject areas (Shuler et al., 2014).

Study Limitations

Several limitations may have influenced the interpretation of the findings or the capacity to transfer the findings to a larger context. Because data collection was limited to five private music instructors throughout California, findings cannot be applied to the entire population of California or the rest of the United States (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). Another significant limitation to this study was the data collected, which was entirely at the sole discretion of music instructors and cannot be otherwise verified by the researcher (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). No other perspectives, such as those of students and parents, were collected.

New limitations surfaced during the recruitment and the interview procedures. One such limitation occurred when a participant refused to respond to one of the interview questions, which she considered to be outside the scope of the investigation. Later, the same participant hesitated to answer a question about the positive effects that music can benefit students' cognitive, social, and emotional skills development.

Another new limitation was caused by one exclusion criteria which prevented participants with prior or current teaching experience in public or private K-5 school from participating in the study. This factor made recruitment more difficult. Many potential candidates had, at one point or another, taught in public schools which, according to the exclusion criteria of this study, made them ineligible for participation. This situation became an impediment during

the candidate's recruitment process, which resulted in a prolonged recruitment timeline. Even though the exclusion criteria were justified, future researchers on this topic may want to be more inclusive with their criteria or allow more time for the completion of the recruitment process.

Recommendations for Policy

This study underlined at least one area that the researcher recommends for new policy: California Music Standards should be modified to help private music instructors easily integrate them in their own teaching curriculum. The recommendation therefore is that the California Music Standards are revisited and translated into usable guidance for private instructors. The standards should be modified to include the following important parts:

- The Four Artistic Processes.
- The Anchor Standards.
- Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions.
- The Process Components.
- The Student Performance Standards.

(California Department of Education, 2020).

Recommendations for Practice and for Future Research

This study revealed the following areas that the researcher recommends for practice and further study:

- Two consecutive studies, one about private music instructors who work with middle school students and one about private music instructors who work with high school students to supplement their school-based music education. While the present study provides data about the experiences and strategies of private music instructors working to supplement their elementary students' music education, there are no

studies that focus on private music instructors working to supplement their middle school, or high school students' music education. Such studies could be especially valuable for learning more about the private music educators' strategies, the way they help their middle school students transition to more advanced music classes.

Sequentially, a study that targets private music instructors that work to supplement their high school music curriculum could be valuable in learning more about the instructors' goals, strategies, and experiences, about the way they manage to help high-school students interested in music, and graduate from more advanced music programs.

- Relationship building and business skills for new private music instructors.

While there are independent teacher associations that assist private music instructors with exam programs, festivals, and competitions, there are no groups that teach new music instructors about relationship building and business skills. These groups can offer continuous advice and may be especially valuable to new or novice private music instructors. Courses could teach instructors about the importance of building relationships with parents and approaches for turning them into their allies.

- A research project assessing private music teaching strategies and student outcomes.

As shown in the findings of this study, private music teaching is all about individualized instruction. Individualized music instruction has many teaching systems, methods, and viewpoints. Because of too many choices, it is impossible to know which strategies are most effective. Figuring it all out would require a complex, prospective research project that would compare various popular teaching strategies

- to student outcomes over time. Studying and comparing the outcomes could prove helpful with bringing us an inch closer to establishing music as a discipline.
- Research on integrating music standards with private music education. While extensive research has been done regarding private music education, (Berman, 2013; Duke, 2000; Litterst, 2016) and the benefits of music standards (Bazinet & Marshall, 2015; Cheng & Durrant, 2007; Elpus & Abril, 2011; Richerme et al., 2012; Shuler et al., 2014), there is a gap in the literature about the use of the California Music Standards in elementary individualized music instruction. To fill that gap, the researcher recommends that more studies be conducted regarding the use of music standards to assist and supplement individualized music education. For new studies it would be more constructive to survey a larger group of private music instructors to see how they feel about integrating the musical standards with their one-to-one teaching instruction.

Closing Comments

This study explored the experiences and teaching strategies of private music instructors, and especially the approaches in which their teachings supplement their elementary students' school music curriculum. The emerging themes highlighted the participants' varied experiences working with elementary students, their contrasting views concerning their teaching strategies and goals, and their distinct philosophies about what constitutes quality music education. As the interviews were taking place, it was apparent that none of the participants in this study ever used California Music Standards in their music teaching. While the reasons why were not discussed in the interviews, some of the conversations revealed that these private instructors saw themselves as having full autonomy over their teaching approaches and curriculums. They do not see

themselves as part of a larger educational system nor do they have any obligation to link their work with California Music Standards. These private music instructors perceive themselves to be instrumental in changing their students' lives for the better. Through their teaching, private music instructors aim to create future music professionals, erudite teachers, and famous performance artists we all admire.

REFERENCES

- ABRSM. (n.d.). *About us*. <https://us.abrsm.org/en/about-us/>.
- Adderley, C., Schneider, C. & Kirckland, N. (2003). Elementary music teacher preparation in U.S. colleges and universities relative to the National Standards – Goals.
- Babbie, E. R. (2013). *The practice of social research* (13th ed.). Wadsworth.
- Bazinet, R., & Marshall, A. M. (2015). Ethnomusicology, Ethnomathematics, and integrating curriculum. *General Music Today*, 28(3), 5–11. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/1048371315573566>
- Berman, A. S. (2013). Teaching private music lessons. *Teaching Music*, 21(3), 60.
- Bigand, E., & Tillmann, B. (2022). Near and far transfer: Is music special? *Memory & Cognition*, 50(2), 339–347. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.3758/s13421-021-01226-6>
- Branscombe, E.E. (2005). A historical analysis of textbook development in American music: Education and the impetus for the National Standards for music education. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 107(2), 13–19. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.3200/AEPR.107.2.13-20>
- Branscombe, E.E. (2012). The impact of education reform on music education: Paradigm shifts in music education curriculum, advocacy, and philosophy from Sputnik to race to the top. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 113, 112–118.
- Brewerton P.M., & Millward L.J. (2001). *Organizational research methods*. Sage.
- Butin, D. W. (2010). *The education dissertation: A Guide for practitioner scholars*. Corwin, A Sage Company.

- Butke, M.A. (2014). Assessing expressive movement. Measuring student learning outcomes in general music classroom. *General Music Today*, 27(3), 23–27.
doi:10.1177/1048371314525782
- Camlin, D. A. (2014). Whose quality is it anyway? Inhabiting the creative tension between presentational and participatory music. *Journal of Arts and Communities*, 6(2–3), 99–118.
- California Department of Education. (2020). California arts education framework.
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/vp/cf/>
- Carrier, S., Wiebe, E. N., Gray, P., & Teachout, D. (2011). BioMusic in the classroom: Interdisciplinary elementary science and music curriculum development. *School Science & Mathematics*, 111(8), 425–434. doi:10.1111/j.1949-8594.2011.00116.x
- Chene, T. (2021). What are the truly aural skills? *Music Theory Online*, 27(2), 109–127.
<https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.30535/mto.27.2.0>
- Cheng, E. & Durrant, C. (2007). An investigation into effective string teaching in a variety of learning contexts: A single case study. *British Journal of Music Education*, 24(2), 191–205.
- Cochrane, T., Fantini, B., & Scherer, K. R. (2013). *The emotional power of music: Multidisciplinary perspectives on musical arousal, expression, and social control*. Oxford University Press.
- Colley, I. D., Keller, P. E., & Halpern, A. R. (2018). Working memory and auditory imagery predict sensorimotor synchronization with expressively timed music. *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 71(8), 1781–1796. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/17470218.2017.1366531>
- Colombo, B., & Antonietti, A. (2017). The role of metacognitive strategies in learning music:

- A Multiple case study. *British Journal of Music Education*, 34(1), 95–113. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1017/S0265051716000267>
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five traditions*. Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five approaches*. (Third Edition). Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.
- Cumberledge, J. P. (2016). Private music instruction: An investigation of the effects of pre-college music lessons on undergraduate ensemble placement. *Journal of Band Research*, 51(2), 18–25.
- DeFazio, R. (2013). Private Music Teaching: As a business. *American Music Teacher*, 62(4), 35–38.
- Detterman, D.K. & Andrist, C.G. (1990). Effect of instructions on elementary cognitive tasks sensitive to individual differences. *American Journal of Psychology*, 103(3), 367. doi: 10.2307/1423216
- Duke, R. A. (2000). Measures of instructional effectiveness in music research. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 143, 1–48.
- Economidou Stavrou, N., Chrysostomou, S., & Socratous, H. (2011). Music learning in the early years: Interdisciplinary approaches based on multiple intelligences. *Journal for Learning Through the Arts*, 7(1).

- Eerola, P. S. & Eerola, T. (2014). Extended music education enhances the quality of school life. *Music Education Research*, 16(1), 88–104. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/14613808.2013.829428>
- Elpus, K. & Abril, C. R. (2011). High school music ensemble students in the United States: A demographic profile. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 59, 128–45.
- Esteve-Faubel, J. M., Francés-Luna, B., Stephens, J. P., & Bartel, L. (2016). Cognition of stability in atonal music in teenagers with no musical experience. *Psychomusicology: Music, Mind & Brain*, 26(1), 43–55. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1037/pmu0000133>
- Fowler, F. (2008). *Survey research methods* (4th ed.). CA: Sage.
- Frederickson, M. L. (2010). The national standards for music education. *Music Educators Journal*, 97(2), 44–50. doi:10.1177/0027432110387829
- Frierson-Campbell, C. (2007). Without the 'ism: thoughts about equity and social justice in music education. *Music Education Research*, 9(2), 255–265. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/14613800701384383>
- Gaser, C., & Schlaug, G. (2003). Brain structures differ between musicians and non-musicians. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 23(27), 9240.
- Given, L.M. (2008). *The Sage Encyclopedia of qualitative methods*. Sage.
- Grant, H. (1999). Mathematics and the liberal arts--II. *College Mathematics Journal*, 30(3), 197. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.2307/2687598>
- Grant M. M. & Fonseca-Mora, M. C. (2016). *Melodies, rhythm, and cognition in foreign language learning* (2nded.) S.L: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Greer, A. (2013). Meta-Cognition and the music lesson. *American Music Teacher*, 62(5), 24–27.

- Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1), 42–55. <http://doi.org/10.1177/160940690400300104>
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K.M., & Namey, E. E. (2012). *Applied thematic analysis*. Sage.
- Hash, P. (2013). Large-Group contest ratings and music teacher evaluation: Issues and recommendations. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 114(4), 163–169. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/10632913.2013.826035>
- Heath-Reynolds, J., & VanWeelden, K. (2015). Integrating apps with the Core Arts Standards in the 21st-Century elementary music classroom. *General Music Today*, 29(1), 24–27. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/1048371315589127>
- Hetland, L. (2000). Listening to music enhances spatial-temporal reasoning: Evidence for the “Mozart Effect.” *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 34(3/4), 105–148. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3333640>
- Hess, J. (2021). Musicking a different possible future: the role of music in imagination. *Music Education Research*, 23(2), 270–285. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/14613808.2021.1893679>
- Hickey, M. M. (1995). *Qualitative and quantitative relationships between children's creative musical thinking processes and products* [Doctoral dissertation. Northwestern University]. ProQuest Dissertations & <http://search.proquest.com.lib.pepperdine.edu/docview/304224038?accountid=13159>
- Hoffman, A. R. (2013). Compelling questions about music, education, and socioeconomic status. *Music Educators Journal*, 100(1), 63–68. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0027432113494414>

- Hutchins, S. (2018). Early childhood music training and associated improvements in music and language abilities. *Music Perception, 35*(5), 579–593. doi:10.1525/MP.2018.35.5.579
- Jacobi, B. S. (2005). Accelerando! Picking up the pace in our private teaching. *American Music Teacher, 55*(1), 34–38.
- Jaschke, A. C., Eggermont, L. H. P., Honing, H., & Scherder, E. J. A. (2013). Music education and its effect on intellectual abilities in children: a systematic review. *Reviews in Neurosciences, 24*(6), 665–675.
- Koolidge, L., & Holmes, R. M. (2018). Piecing it together: The effect of background music on children's puzzle assembly. *Perceptual & Motor Skills, 125*(2), 387–399. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0031512517752817>
- Kraus, N., & Chandrasekaran, B. (2010). Music training for the development of auditory skills. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience, 11*(8), 599–605.
- Lackey, L. (2016). Arts integration and school reform. *Arts Education Policy Review, 117*(4), 183–185. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/10632913.2016.1213124>
- Laubenthal, J. (2018). Assessment in the private studio setting: Supporting student learning, providing effective instruction, and building faculty-student interaction. *Music Educators Journal, 104*(3), 54–59. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0027432117745139>
- Lee, V., & Burkham, D. T. (2002). Inequality at the starting gate: Social background differences in achievement as children begin school. *Economic Policy Institute, 7*.
- Leon-Guerrero, A. (2008). Self-regulation strategies used by student musicians during music practice. *Music Education Research, 10*(1), 91–106. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/14613800701871439>

- Leticie, H. (2006). Relationality and phenomenological organizational studies. *Tamara Journal for Critical Organization Inquiry*, 5(3).
- Litterst, G. F. (2016). Random access. Give me just 0.23 percent of your time, and I'll teach you how to play the piano. *American Music Teacher*, 66(3), 43–45.
- Litterst, G. F. (2018). Random access. Flipping out! *American Music Teacher*, 68(3), 40–42.
- Lukács, B., & Honbolygó, F. (2019). Task-dependent mechanisms in the perception of music and speech: Domain-specific transfer effects of elementary school music education. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 67(2), 153–170. doi:10.1177/0022429419836422
- Lohr, S. L. (2010). *Sampling: Design and analysis* (2nd ed.). CENGAGE Learning.
- Lunenburg, F. C., & Irby, B. J. (2008). *Writing a successful thesis or dissertation*. Corwin Press.
- May, W. V., & Elliott, C. A. (1980). Relationships among ensemble participation, private instruction, and aural skill development. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 28(3), 155–161.
- McPhail, G. (2010). Crossing boundaries: Sharing concepts of music teaching from classroom to studio. *Music Education Research*, 12(1), 33–45. <https://doi.org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/14613800903568296>
- Medved, C. E., & Turner, L.H. (2011). Qualitative research: Practices and practicing Reflexivity. *Women & Language*, 34(2), 109–113.
- MENC: The National Association for Music Education. (2007). *MENC strategic plan*. Retrieved February 25, 2021 from <http://www.menc.org/documents/07stratplanfinal.pdf>
- Miksza, P. (2013). The future of music education: Continuing the dialogue about curricular reform. *Music Educators Journal*, 99(4), 45–50. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0027432113476305>

Music Teachers' Association of California (n.d). *Programs & information*. <http://www.mtac.org/>.

Mutch, C. (2020). Mathematical approaches to defining the semitone in antiquity. *Journal of Mathematics & Music*, 14(3), 292–306. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/17459737.2020.1753122>

National Association for Music Education. (2021, April 19). <https://nafme.org/>

National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). *National Center for Education Statistics*. <https://nces.ed.gov/>.

National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (2016). *National Core Arts Standards: A conceptual framework for arts learning*. <https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/sites/default/files/Conceptual%20Framework%2007-21-16.pdf>

Neagu, G. (2019). Innovative techniques and methods in contemporary musical education. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brasov, Series VIII: Performing Arts*, 12(1), 53–64. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.31926/but.pa.2019.12.61.6>

Odegaard, D. (2016). Music education is key to success in school and life. *Music Educators Journal*, 103(2), 6–7. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0027432116678200>

O'Neill, S. A. (2005). Youth music engagement in diverse contexts. In J. L. Mahoney, R. W. Larson, & J. S. Eccles (Eds.), *Organized activities as contexts of development: Extracurricular activities, after-school and community programs* (pp. 255–273). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Pepperdine University. (2018). *Protection of human subjects in research: Policies and procedures. Manual*. https://community.pepperdine.edu/irb/content/irbmanual_revised.pdf

- Piro, J. M., & Ortiz, C. (2009). The effect of piano lessons on the vocabulary and verbal sequencing skills of primary grade students. *Psychology of Music*, 37(3), 325–347.
- Pike, P. D. (2013). Profiles in successful group piano for children: A collective case study of children's group-piano lessons. *Music Education Research*, 15(1), 92–106.
- Potter, D. (2021). Music teacher perceptions of evaluation: A case study of the Tennessee fine arts portfolio model. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 1–13. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/10632913.2021.1992324>
- Powell, B. (2019). The integration of music technology into popular music ensembles: Perspectives of modern band teachers. *Journal of Music, Technology & Education*, 12(3), 297–310. https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1386/jmte_00012_1
- Prendergast, J. S. (2021). Music education and educators in missouri, Iowa, and Illinois. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 69(2), 228–243. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0022429420961501>
- Richerme, L. K., Schuler, S. C., & McCaffrey, M. (2012). *Roles of certified arts educators, certified non-arts educators, and providers of supplemental arts instruction*. State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education.
- Roberts, C., & Hyatt, L. (2019). *The Dissertation Journey*. (3rd ed.) SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Rose, D. C., Jones-Bartoli, A., & Heaton, P. H. (2015). A study of cognitive and behavioral transfer effects associated with children learning musical instruments for the first year over one academic year. *Psychology of Education Review*, 39(2), 54–70.
- Saloni, Shah. (2010). *An exploration of the relationship between mathematics and music*. The University of Manchester.
- Salvador, K. (2019). Equity in music education: Sustaining the courage to change. *Music*

Educators Journal, 105(4), 59–63. [https://doi](https://doi.org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0027432119846841)

[org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0027432119846841](https://doi.org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0027432119846841)

- Scripp, L., & Gilbert, J. (2016). Music plus music integration: A model for music education policy reform that reflects the evolution and success of arts integration practices in 21st century American public schools. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 117(4), 186–202. doi:10.1080/10632913.2016.1211923
- Serrano, I., Odom, L., & Suceavă, B. (2017). Quadrivium: The structure of mathematics as described in Isidore of Seville's Etymologies. *Mathematical Intelligencer*, 39 (4), 51–56. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1007/s00283-017-9762-6>
- Shuler, S. C., Norgaard, M., & Blakeslee, M. J. (2014). The new national standards for music educators. *Music Educators Journal*, 101(1), 41-49. doi:10.1177/0027432114540120
- Silver, C., & Lewins, A. (2020). *Using software in qualitative research*. Sage. <https://study.sagepub.com/using-software-in-qualitative-research>
- Smith, D.W. (2013). *Husserl*. (2nd ed., rev. ed). Revised edition. Routledge.
- Sparshott, F., (Author). (1997). Singing and speaking. *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 37(3), 199-210.
- Spradley, M. V. (2021). Believe ... in the change we can make together. *Music Educators Journal*, 70(1), 5. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/00274321211021077>
- Steele, K. M., & Brown, J. D. (1999). Failure to confirm the Rauscher and Shaw description of recovery of the Mozart effect. *Perceptual & Motor Skills*, 88(1), 843. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.2466/pms.1999.88.3.843>

- Upitis, R., Abrami, P. C., Brook, J., Boese, K., & King, M. (2017). Characteristics of independent music teachers. *Music Education Research*, 19(2), 169–194. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1080/14613808.2016.1204277>
- Vasil, M., Weiss, L. & Powell, B. (2019). Popular music pedagogies: An approach to teaching 21st Century skills. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 28(3), 85–95.
- Vidulin, S., & Kazić, S. (2021). Cognitive-Emotional music listening paradigm in professional music education. *International Journal of Cognitive Research in Science, Engineering & Education (IJCRSEE)*, 9(1), 135–145. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.23947/2334-8496-2021-9-1-135-145>
- Walker, L. N. (2015). Do you really want to know? Elementary music programs and potential in Utah. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 116(4), 189-200.
doi:10.1080/10632913.2014.944967
- Wallerstedt, C. (2013). ‘Here comes the sausage’: An empirical study of children's verbal communication during a collaborative music-making activity. *Music Education Research*, 15(4), 421-434. doi:10.1080/14613808.2013.812626
- Welman, J. C., & Kruger, S. J. (1999). *Research methodology for the business and administrative sciences*. International Thompson.
- Winterer, C. (2002). *The culture of classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American intellectual life*. John Hopkins University Press.
- Yaffe, M., Rodríguez, R., & Glodo, R. (2018). Every student, every city: A call to equity. *Music Educators Journal*, 105(2), 5–6. <https://doi-org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1177/0027432118809323>
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Sage Publications.

Zak, P. J., (2015) "Why inspiring stories make us react: The Neuroscience of narrative,"
cerebrum: *The Dana Forum on Brain Science*, 2015(2),

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4445577/>

Zhang, Q. (2018). Application of music education in brain cognition. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 18(5), 1960–1967. <https://doi.org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.12738/estp.2018.5.095>

Zhou, M. & Brown, D. (2018). *Arts integration in elementary curriculum*, 2nd edition.

University System of Georgia. [https://alg.manifoldapp.org/read/arts-](https://alg.manifoldapp.org/read/arts-integration/section/b07d1f6e-b420-4c34-9874-2d6e753bdd50#chapter-one-arts-integration)

[integration/section/b07d1f6e-b420-4c34-9874-2d6e753bdd50#chapter-one-arts-integration](https://alg.manifoldapp.org/read/arts-integration/section/b07d1f6e-b420-4c34-9874-2d6e753bdd50#chapter-one-arts-integration)

APPENDIX A

Recruitment Form

Dear (Name)

My name is Ana Maria Fusu. I am a doctoral student at the Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education and Psychology. I am conducting a research study to explore the experiences and strategies used by successful private music educators who work with elementary school-aged students to supplement their school-based music in California. This study has the potential to assist other private music educators in achieving their music teaching goals through learning about your experiences and teaching strategies.

To qualify for the study the participants must have the following:

- Work in California,
- Hold a music degree,
- Specialize in at least one musical instrument,
- Have experience providing private music instruction to elementary aged students,
- Are not currently teaching at a public or private K-12 school.

You are cordially invited to participate in a 60–90-minute interview via Zoom. Participation in this study is voluntary and, should you agree, your identity as a participant and your workplace or studio will remain confidential. Confidentiality will be assured through aliases for your name, and a fictitious business name for your workplace or studio. Your personal information and data will be safely stored on a password protected computer in the researcher's place of residence and will only be available to the researcher and dissertation committee.

If you are interested in participating, please contact me at afusu@pepperdine.edu

Thank you for your consideration,

Ana Maria Fusu

Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Doctoral Student

APPENDIX B

IRB Approval

Pepperdine University
24255 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90263
TEL: 310-506-4000

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: March 17, 2022

Protocol Investigator Name: Anamaria Fusu

Protocol #: 22-01-1739

Project Title: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCES AND TEACHING STRATEGIES OF PRIVATE MUSIC INSTRUCTORS WORKING WITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL-BASED STUDENTS

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Anamaria Fusu:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at community.pepperdine.edu/irb.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

cc: Mrs. Katy Carr, Assistant Provost for Research

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent

Dear perspective participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Ana Maria Fusu M.M under the supervision of Dr. Paula Thompson at Pepperdine University. Your participation is voluntary. Please take all the time you need to read this consent form before deciding whether to participate in this study or not. Should you have any questions about any of the information presented to you in the form, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to explore the experiences and teaching strategies of private music instructors who supplement elementary students' school-based music education.

As a participant, you will be asked to be interviewed about your experiences teaching elementary school students. You will also be asked to share your best teaching strategies and talk about your views about general music education. Interviews will last 60-90 minutes and will be conducted via Zoom.

Upon your agreement, you understand that the interview will be video recorded, and your answers, the interview process along with any impressions that the researcher might form during the interview used for the purpose of the research study only. All the interview data will be later transcribed and coded.

During and after the study, all the data will be kept confidential. Following the study, all the data collected will be secured on the researcher's computer in their place of residence. The data will be destroyed after five years.

Potential risks associated with participation in this study may include but not limited to fatigue, disinterest, and discomfort sharing information related to your work experience and teaching strategies. In the event that you experience any of the above, you will be given the option for a break. You reserve the right to not answer any questions. You understand that you may opt out of the interview at any time.

Pepperdine University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may also access the collected data. The HSPP occasionally reviews and monitors research studies to see that the rights and welfare of research subjects are well protected.

Your participation is strictly voluntary, and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. Your refusal to participate will not result in any kind of penalty or loss of eligibility to any benefits. You are not being asked to wave any legal claims or rights as a result of your participation in this study.

Should you become injured as a direct result of the research procedure, you will be offered medical treatment, but you will be responsible for the cost. Pepperdine University does not provide any monetary compensation for injury.

Should you have any further questions regarding this study, please contact Ana Maria Fusu at Anamaria.fusu@pepperdine.edu. Please contact Dr. Paula Thompson, dissertation chairperson with any other questions at: paula.thompson@pepperdine.edu

With any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University, 6100 Center Drive Suite 500, Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753

By signing, you consent to all terms and conditions and agree to participate in this study.
Please sign and date the form here_____

Thank you for your voluntary participation.

Sincerely,

Ana Maria Fusu