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Factors Affecting Music Education in Ontario Secondary Schools: Teachers' Perspectives

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FACTORS AFFECTING MUSIC EDUCATION IN ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOLS: TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

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Graduate Program in Music (Music Education)

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the perceptions of secondary level music educators representing 20 English public Ontario school boards using a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods design combining large-scale data collection from an online survey (phase one) with more in-depth follow-up interviews (phase two). In both phases, music teachers offered their perceptions of music education programs (curricular and extra-curricular) in their schools and across the province concerning music enrolment trends, music course offerings, extra-curricular music activities, the factors facilitating and/or impeding positive change in music programs, and possible solutions to problems facing music education in Ontario public schools.

This study employed a grounded theory approach in order to ascertain the authentic viewpoints of the participants with minimal direction from the researcher. Two key themes emerged: first, music teachers expressed apprehension regarding the increasingly hierarchical business model of Ontario's education system (power above); second, the perceived decline of elementary music education in the province is viewed by participants as having a detrimental impact on secondary level music education (power below). Both of these issues are compounded by the perceived lack of control expressed by music educators in the implementation of solutions to these problems (power within).

The resulting model is informed by business and education literature (including New Public Management models and Kanter's Structural Theory of Organizational Behavior) to represent teacher perceptions of employee empowerment and professional

capital. The findings of this research and theoretical model generated may contribute to

positive change through a better understanding of the state of music education in Ontario.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In the 2009 revision of the Ontario arts curriculum for Grades 1 to 8, consisting of dance, drama, music, and visual art, the Ontario Ministry of Education acknowledges that arts education is essential to every student's intellectual and emotional growth and well-being (Government of Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 4). This document also affirms the importance of high-quality arts instruction, the significance of the teacher's role in providing arts instruction, and the necessity for students to have arts instruction on a consistent basis (p. 36-38). At the high school level, the arts are described as "intellectually rigorous disciplines" (Government of Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2010a, p. 4), with music study in particular recognized as fostering students' problem-solving skills, personal responsibility and a connection to self and community (p. 99). From Grade 1 through to Grade 12, the Ontario curriculum documents indicate that the Government of Ontario not only recognizes the benefits of high-quality music education for students, but also is dedicated to supporting and encouraging music programs in Ontario schools.

In the first nationwide study of music education to be conducted in Canada, the Coalition for Music Education in Canada (2005) reported several findings concerning music education practices – including some in Ontario in particular – that suggest music may not be as well-supported in schools as official documents imply. According to this *Music Education "State of the Nation" Benchmark Study*, when results were compared to other provinces and territories, respondents from Ontario reported the largest decrease in financial and administrative support for their music programs (p. 24), a high likelihood of

non-music specialists teaching elementary music (p. 35), and a lack of funding and resources (p. 42). Although this study exhibited a minimal response rate (only 6.1% in Ontario), it suggested that Ontario had the "lowest participation rates for music in the formal timetable" (p. 45), an observation supported by the declining music enrolment and retention rates from 1993 to 2003 in Ontario secondary schools (Vince, 2005b, pp. 215-216). These data suggest that, despite the avowed curricular support for music education in the province of Ontario, many school music programs appear to be in decline.

Beatty (2001c) also collected statistical data pertaining to music instruction in Ontario schools. His survey was extensive, covering topics pertaining to the teacher, the music program, the provincial curricula, resources and advocacy. Although, because of the low response rate (6.8%), the results of this study were not "statistically significant" (p. 36), the responses were nonetheless very thought-provoking. For example, the respondents reported that although specialist teachers were (for the most part) teaching music at the secondary level, there seemed to be a trend occurring at the elementary level in which non-specialist teachers were increasingly taking the place of music specialists in Ontario classrooms (p. 36). Not surprisingly, the non-specialist elementary music teachers reported experiencing great difficulty in attempting to accomplish the advanced expectations for music instruction outlined in the Ontario arts curriculum (p. 37). With many music teachers struggling at the elementary level, research is needed to explore the implications this might have on music education at the secondary level. If an increasing number of elementary music teachers are non-specialists lacking the musical training to implement the Ontario music curriculum for Grades 1 to 8, it follows that many students entering Grade 9 will not have the requisite knowledge to successfully study music at the

secondary level. This research suggests that there are some serious issues regarding the delivery of music education programs in Ontario. Moreover, despite the impassioned support for music education in Ontario from organizations such as the Ontario Music Educators' Association, there is still a dearth of information available to the general public regarding music education practices at the secondary level in Ontario.

Program data pertaining to enrolment, musical opportunities, and curricular/academic influence are seldom known to anyone beyond those directly involved in the individual music departments. The scant research that does exist is hardly representative of the entire province due to small sample size (6.1 % in the CMEC study, 2005; 6.8% in Beatty, 2001a/c). Even after acquiring Government data on music enrolment in Ontario, Vince (2005b) describes the difficulty in deriving any meaning from these official statistics, amid challenges such as multilevel classes, incorrectly labeled music courses, and the lack of standardization among schools offering the *repertoire credit*, a course credit for ensemble participation.[1] Although it would be expected that granting credits for what were formerly extra-curricular activities would increase enrolment, Vince's research indicates that secondary school enrolment in music was declining in Ontario, and that this province-wide trend was accentuated further when the repertoire credit was removed from the equation (p. 205). If, as Vince suggests, some Ontario high school students are obtaining duplicate music credits (p. 205), receiving "extraordinarily high grades for ensemble participation" (p. 212), or being subjected to a multilevel music class combining students from two or three grades (p. 173), then even

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[1] In Ontario secondary schools, some students who participate in what were traditionally extra-curricular music ensembles can instead earn repertoire credits for participating in these ensembles.

the Ontario Ministry of Education data do not help to clarify the muddled, incomplete picture of Ontario music education represented in the research literature. In fact, Vince's examination and analysis of the Ontario secondary school enrolment statistics further illustrates the confusion and inconsistency that thwart efforts to present a picture of music education practices in Ontario. The problem, therefore, is two-fold: there appear to be some distressing trends occurring in Ontario music programs and – due to discrepancies in the provincial data – it is impossible to accurately discern the extent to which these trends are occurring.

Rationale for the Study

If music education in Ontario schools is in a state of crisis, and the available provincial data is inadequate in determining the severity of the problem, there is a clear need for further research. Prior to analyzing the problems facing music education and music educators in Ontario, and framing possible solutions, one needs as accurate a picture as possible of the variety of pedagogical practices presently occurring in music education within the province. The picture created from previously acquired data is partial and fragmented due to the difficult task of piecing it together from survey statistics and official provincial data. In order to ascertain the state of music education in this province, exploring the viewpoints of those "on the ground" engaged in the process of teaching music in public secondary schools in Ontario would provide some considerable insight into music education practices. As music teachers are uniquely situated to provide a glimpse into the current music education practices occurring across the province, this study therefore inquires about their views and perceptions of music education practices in their schools. With the help of this key group of stakeholders, it may be possible to

develop a more accurate and representative depiction of the current state of music education in Ontario. Furthermore, by engaging with music teachers in an informed dialogue concerning future directions of music education in this province, one might also gain a clear understanding of a legitimate starting point from which to begin the process of positive change.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate secondary level music teachers' perceptions of public music education in Ontario secondary schools. Through a qualitative-dominant mixed methods approach[2] combining data from online surveys and teacher interviews, the study will endeavor to provide a comprehensive representation of teachers' views of music education in Ontario secondary schools. When assessed in conjunction with the data reported from previous studies, this research may help provide a sound analytical basis from which to begin to consider the problems facing music education in the province and formulate possible solutions. To that end, this study will address the following research questions:

1. How do practicing music educators in Ontario English language public secondary schools describe the state of music education in their schools with respect to:

   a. Enrolment patterns in music?

   b. Musical activities offered (curricular and extra-curricular)?

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[2] For a more detailed description of the qualitative-dominant mixed methods design used in this study, please refer to Chapter 3.

2. What factors are identified by practicing music educators as facilitating positive change in music education in the province?

3. What factors are identified by practicing music educators as impeding positive change in music education in the province?

4. Can teachers identify potential solutions to these problems?

Background

The education system in Canada is entirely the responsibility of the provinces and territories: there is no national education system (Government of Canada, Constitution Act, 1867, s. 93). Each province and territory has a Department of Education (or Ministry of Education) to oversee the elementary and secondary education practices and policies in that particular jurisdiction. Each of these organizations has an appointed Minister of Education, and under his/her leadership they determine the elementary and secondary curricula, graduation requirements, and other educational policies. Therefore, the education policies and practices vary among the provinces and territories. Within Ontario's publically funded school system, there are also local school authorities and school boards that oversee the administration of the schools within their districts (Government of Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2013).

Although there is no national music curriculum, regional music curricula in Canada are fairly consistent. For example, Bolden (2012) explains that elementary music classes are typically mandatory, and focused on vocal music, whereas secondary level music courses are usually optional for students, and have a performance focus (p. 22). Unfortunately, authors report that there is also some consistency in the challenges facing music programs across the country, such as funding cutbacks, non-specialist teachers, and

the combination of the arts into one generic field (Beynon, 2012; Bolden, 2012; Hanley, 2000). Obstacles such as these have contributed to a disheartening trend in which music programs are eroding across the country (p. 32), painting a bleak picture of music education from coast to coast. Kennedy (2000) explains, "The present situation in Canada is that only a small percentage of high school students is involved in arts education. Of that small number, an even smaller percentage is enrolled in music education courses" (p. 141). In Ontario, there appears to be a trend in which the small percentage of students who do elect to enrol in music courses has been steadily declining since the 1990s (Beatty, 2001b; Vince, 2005a), creating a situation in which "music teachers are forever needing to attract students through enticing course outlines, engaging activities, and exotic field trips" (Kennedy, p. 141).

The 2010 high school curriculum documents released by the Ontario Ministry of Education refer only to a general music credit (represented as *AMU*), however, schools have the option of offering a wide range of additional music courses, referred to as *focus courses* (Government of Ontario, 2010b, p. 12). These specialty courses may be an example of the "enticing" courses to which Kennedy refers, as each emphasizes a specific area of music study, such as vocal jazz, electronic music, music theatre, and steel drum music. Courses with such a specific musical focus would appeal to students with an interest in that area, as Kennedy suggests. Focus courses may also provide an equally enticing appeal to music teachers, as there is no curriculum for them prescribed by the Ministry of Education, allowing the music teacher a certain degree of creative licence in their design and implementation. This ambiguity of course labels creates some confusion, however, in terms of enrolment data. For example, students participating in

their school jazz band could earn a music credit (*AMU*), a stage-band credit (*AMH*), a small ensemble credit (*AME*), or a repertoire credit (*AMR*). Alternatively, the jazz band may be considered an extra-curricular activity, for which the student receives no academic credit at all. Not surprisingly, this variation in course offerings between schools and school boards across Ontario has created some tensions among students, teachers and parents. The ambiguity of course credits is also an obstacle for researchers trying to decipher the provincial data. Using the jazz band example from above, how would one possibly ascertain the number of students in Ontario currently playing in a school jazz band? In addition to jazz band, the course credits representing music (*AMU*), small ensemble (*AME*) and repertoire (*AMR*) courses also correspond to a variety of other music courses, such as vocal/choral music, wind instruments/band, or strings/orchestra.

Music education research at the elementary level, where music is a mandatory subject for all students, should be much more straightforward. Not only is the elementary music curriculum in Ontario supportive of music education, with mandatory music instruction for all elementary students, it is extensive, including many components such as composition, notation, and polyphonic performance. Therefore, to effectively deliver the curriculum prescribed by the Ontario government, a teacher would require in-depth musical training. However, there exist "no guidelines about the qualifications that a teacher must have in order to act as a specialist at the elementary level" and "no specific funding for arts programs or specialists" (People for Education, 2011, p. 10). The contradictions arising from this information indicate that the Ontario curriculum documents may paint a very different picture from the reality of music education practices in Ontario schools.

The literature suggests that despite a mandatory and sophisticated elementary curriculum, music classes across the province are being taught by non-specialists (Beatty, 2001c; Bolden, 2012; People for Education, 2011; Vince, 2005b). In her discussion of choral music in Canada, Beynon (2012) describes the future of school music programs as "bleak" (p. 98), explaining that community organizations seem to be replacing school choirs. This is not a surprising trend, when one considers the declining number of elementary schools with specialist music teachers, and the numerous students with no formal music classes in their timetables (p. 97). Veblen (2012) argues that although community music initiatives, such as choirs, can complement music education in the school system, it "cannot, will not, and should not save or replace music education [in schools]" (p. 130). Research such as that cited above seems to suggest that music classes, and specialist music educators, are disappearing from many Ontario elementary schools.

According to Vince (2005b), there are also numerous obstacles and inconsistencies occurring in secondary music programs across Ontario. Issues such as those described above concerning the secondary course credit system, the resources available, the qualifications of the teachers, the music programs offered, and the implementation of the curriculum all indicate that the challenges facing secondary music educators in this province warrant attention. The findings of this study indicated that in the years from 1993-2002, "proportionately, fewer students are choosing to continue studying Music in secondary schools" (p. 196). Anecdotally, it appears that this trend has continued in the last decade, with fewer students enrolling in music courses during their high school career (Willingham & Cutler, 2005). It is more important than ever to research the present-day trends in music education, before public school music programs

cease to exist. By connecting with music teachers from public secondary schools across

the province, this research endeavours to provide a current and accurate picture of the

state of music education in Ontario.

Methodological Considerations

   This study utilizes a qualitative-dominant mixed methods approach in which data

from online surveys is combined with teacher interviews. Through this methodology, the

study endeavored to provide a comprehensive representation of teachers' views of music

education in Ontario. The methodology of the study is presented in detail in Chapter 3.

In the design of such a study, a number of methodological considerations must be taken

into account. In questionnaire studies, for example, a low response rate is one of the

most common challenges facing researchers (Drew, Hardman & Hosp, 2008; Krathwohl,

2009).

   Not surprisingly, many earlier studies involving Ontario music teachers share the

common limitation of low response rates. A variety of methods of survey distribution

have been implemented in successive studies, however, to try to encourage a greater

response from the potential participants. For example, the Coalition for Music Education

in Canada (CMEC) mailed 8025 surveys to both public and private Canadian schools in

their 2005 study with an overall response rate of 8%. Ontario schools received 2205 of

those surveys, and generated an even lower response rate of 6.1%. In a follow-up study

conducted later that year, the CMEC faxed surveys to 4927 Ontario schools, and 11% of

those surveys were completed and faxed back in response.

   In Beatty's 2001 survey research, he distributed a questionnaire both online and

using hard copies.   He reports that his response rate of 6.8% may have been due in part

to technological difficulties some respondents experienced using the web-based medium. There are two limitations common to these studies which, if addressed, were considered to have the potential to generate a more substantial response rate from Ontario teachers, and therefore, possibly produce more complete data.

For instance, it was considered that e-mailing an online survey as a hyperlink for teachers to use a website such as SurveyMonkey,[3] would allow them to receive and complete the survey in a simpler and timelier manner than with either mail or fax. Given the considerable advances in technology over the last decade and increased familiarity with online technologies acquired by many teachers in that period, some of the technical impediments to completing a survey online in 2001 would thus be alleviated in 2012. Secondly, none of the aforementioned studies indicated that ethics approval had been received from each of the school boards included in the studies. For some principals and/or teachers, this factor may have been a disincentive to participate in the study. Whilst this is a time-consuming process that had some negative effect on the number of participating teachers in the final sample of this study, obtaining ethical approval from each participating school board may well have encouraged more teachers and/or principals to support this study, as it implied oversight of the research by the school board and some measure of approval in that the research was allowed to proceed.

Researching music programs in Ontario elementary schools poses several challenges, as the programs offered at the elementary level are as varied as the backgrounds of the teachers delivering them. Three main concerns pertaining to

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[3] SurveyMonkey is a free, online service that allows users to create, distribute and publish online surveys. For more information, please see www.surveymonkey.com.

elementary music education in Ontario appear frequently in the literature (Beatty, 2001c; Bolden, 2012 CMEC, 2005; Willingham & Cutler, 2005):

- Many elementary music programs are being taught by non-specialists;

- Many elementary schools do not have any music instruction; and

- Many elementary music specialists are not teaching music.

Issues such as these would make it difficult to design a questionnaire study of elementary music teachers' perceptions of music education in Ontario. For example, which elementary teachers would be included? Even if respondents were invited to self-identify as music teachers (to alleviate the issue of specialists and non-specialists), what about the elementary schools without any music instruction? How would their interests be represented without having any music teachers at their schools to complete the survey? At the secondary level, however, the vast majority of music programs are taught by music specialists. Given the structure and implementation of the Ontario Arts curriculum at the secondary level, inclusion and exclusion criteria can be clearly established to identify music teachers. In a study of secondary school teachers' perceptions of music education in Ontario, participants could qualify for the study by having at least one music course in their annual teaching assignment. For this reason, this study will only include secondary level music teachers in the province of Ontario.

Grounded Theory

The theoretical framework applied to data analysis is that of grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In that the purpose of this research was to gain an understanding of the teachers' experiences of music education in Ontario, grounded theory was ideally suited to meet that goal. The continuous processes of grounded theory

– reviewing data, comparing data, and engaging with participants for their ongoing feedback – allowed themes and meanings to emerge from the data itself. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), "if a researcher knew all the relevant variables and relationships in data ahead of time, there would be no need to do a qualitative study" (p. 57). Using the grounded theory approach developed by Corbin and Strauss,[4] this study identified and examined the variables and relationships currently impacting music education practices in Ontario high schools, as identified by the music teachers.

Definition of Terms

It is important to clarify the terminology used in this study. According to the Ontario College of Teachers (2011), "Teachers who want to work in publicly-funded schools in Ontario must be certified to teach in the province and be members of the College" (Inspiring Public Confidence section, para. 1). In addition to these qualifications, many teachers have a subject area in which they are deemed a specialist. For the purpose of this paper, a specialist music teacher is an individual who has at least a bacchalaureate university degree in music. This designation excludes those teachers who have acquired Additional Qualifications (AQ) certification in music, and does not take into account musical achievements acquired outside of the university context (i.e. private music instruction). The language and terminology used in various educational contexts are varied and diverse. For the purpose of this study, the following terms assume the subsequent definitions.

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[4] For a more detailed overview of grounded theory, and its application in this study, please refer to Chapter 3.

Additional Qualifications (AQ): A regulated system of courses and programs approved

by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) which allow current members of the

OCT to update and expand their professional knowledge.

Axial Coding: The second stage of qualitative data analysis in a grounded theory

approach, involving the grouping of codes into interrelated categories and

subcategories.

Course Codes: The Ontario Ministry of Education assigns a code to each secondary

school course, consisting of three parts: the subject area (3 letters), year of study (1

number), and course level (1 letter). For example, the course code AMV 4M

represents an arts credit ("A") in music ("M"), focusing on vocal music ("V") at the

fourth level of secondary school study ("4"), at the mixed University/College level

("M").

Cross-panel Teaching: For the purpose of this study, cross-panel teaching will refer to all

cases of teachers working at the elementary and secondary levels simultaneously.

English Public: Ontario's 31 publicly-funded, English-language, school boards, which

originally consisted of Protestant schools, but has since evolved into a secular

school system.

English Catholic: Ontario's 29 publicly-funded, English-language, school boards,

affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church.

Extra-curricular: Activities that are conducted within a school, outside of instructional

school hours (for example, before/after the school day, or during lunch breaks).

For the purpose of this study, "extra-curricular" is synonymous with "co-

curricular."

French Public: Ontario's 4 publicly-funded, French-language, school boards, which

originally consisted of Protestant schools, but has since evolved into a secular

school system.

French Catholic: Ontario's 8 publicly-funded, French-language, school boards, affiliated

with the Roman Catholic Church.

Non-specialist: For the purpose of this study, the term "non-specialist" refers to a music

teacher who has not completed a baccalaureate university degree in music.

Ontario College of Teachers (OCT): A governing body founded in 1997 through which

Ontario teachers regulate their own profession.

Ontario Curriculum: Ontario Ministry of Education documents indicating the

Government of Ontario's expectations of each area of study offered in publicly-

funded schools.

Ontario Music Educators' Association (OMEA): A non-profit organization representing

Ontario music educators.

Open Coding: The first stage of qualitative data analysis in a grounded theory approach,

involving the identification and development of themes, or "codes."

Repertoire Credit: An academic credit, identified by the course code *AMR* and awarded

by a school for participation in music ensembles outside of instructional school

hours.

School Boards: Administrative councils responsible for governing a district of publicly-

funded schools in Ontario, consisting of both elected trustees and senior

supervisory administration.

Secondary School: In Ontario, secondary schools (also known as *high schools*) offer

courses in Grades 9 through 12. Most Ontario secondary schools split the school

year into 2 halves, referred to as "semesters." Children can start attending

elementary school during the calendar year in which they turn 4, and must

successfully complete Grades 1 through 8 before advancing to the secondary school

system. Therefore, most Ontario students begin high school around age 14 and

finish around age 18 (The Government of Ontario, 2012).

Selective Coding: The third and final stage of qualitative data analysis in a grounded

theory approach, involving the conceptualization and refinement of a theoretical

scheme, or theory.

Specialist: For the purpose of this study, the term "specialist" refers to a music teacher

who has successfully earned a baccalaureate university degree in music. This does

not include the "specialist" designation acquired through completion of AQ

courses.

Significance of the Study

There is a lacuna in the documentation of current practices in Ontario public

secondary school music education. According to Vince (2005b), "Secondary School

Music teachers often live in a professional vacuum, frequently self-imposed" (p. 16). In

order to affect positive change in music education, it is prudent to first conduct a

comprehensive and systematic analysis of the current situation. This study aims to

provide a substantial contribution to the music education community by providing a

starting point – a representation of how secondary school music educators perceive the

state of music education in the province. Their impressions and observations, combined

with statistical data analysis, will allow the researcher to identify the trends and characteristics of current music education practices across Ontario. This information will provide members of the music education community with an opportunity not only to examine the current system – and their place within it – but to conceptualize and implement new ideas and strategies.

This research will deliver a significant contribution to knowledge at a time when music education in Ontario appears to be facing substantial problems. By understanding the current challenges and obstacles facing music educators in this province, the results of this study will be beneficial to parents, policy makers, and society as a whole. It is hoped that this study will contribute to saving music education in Ontario's public education system before it is too late. Moreover, the findings of this study will establish a starting point from which to engage in new discourses, and will also indicate some possible directions towards which music education in Ontario might progress in the future. After all, it is futile to move in a direction without knowing from where the journey is to begin.

Organization of the Study

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter 2 explores the grounded theory approach, which includes a review of the literature in a variety of subject areas, such as business management and education management. The second chapter also provides a historical context for studying music education in Ontario, beginning in the late 18th century through to the current discourses pertaining to music education in this province. It also presents the paradox that often exists between music education in the school context and music listening practices engaged in by high school students outside of school. Chapter 3 provides a detailed account of the ethical procedures required prior to

the execution of this study, as well as a discussion of the refinement of the survey

instrument through the utilization of a pilot study. In addition, Chapter 3 outlines the

methodologies of Phase One (the online survey) and Phase Two (the telephone

interviews) of this study.

      Chapter 4 provides the quantitative and qualitative findings from Phase One of the

study (the online survey data), in addition to the qualitative findings from Phase Two of

the study (the follow-up telephone interviews). Chapter 5 discusses and analyzes the

significance of the findings through the lens of the original research questions. The

models generated from the coding and analysis of data are presented in this chapter, with

a discussion of their applicability within Ontario and in the wider music education

community. Chapter 5 concludes with a description of the limitations of the study,

followed by recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

In the spirit of grounded theory, and the ongoing, wide-ranging literature review process it suggests (Cohen et al., 2011; Corbin & Strauss, 2008), this chapter explores literature pertaining to a variety of subject areas that were encountered throughout the research process. Although it would be traditional for methodological material to be included in the methodology chapter, the interwoven nature of grounded theory advocates a more flexible approach to the presentation of such material throughout the thesis, as grounded theory is a determining factor in all aspects of the thesis including the selection of the literature. Therefore, following a discussion of the history and development of the grounded theory approach and its role in the literature selection for this research, I then examine the literature concerning the role of music within an education system that is increasingly shifting to a traditional business model. Kanter's writings on the role of "employee empowerment" within the field of business management, and Hargreaves' concept of "professional capital" as it pertains to the educational milieu are then explored. Finally, this chapter concludes with a discussion of the historical context of music education in Canada, and more specifically, in Ontario.

Grounded Theory

Glaser and Strauss published *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* in 1967, presenting a new approach for the analysis of data that combined the systematic scientific rigor typically associated with quantitative research with the analysis of qualitative data (Lichtman, 2010; Merriam, 2009). This original version of grounded theory, also referred to as *classic grounded theory* (Newby, 2010),

consists of a three-phase process for data analysis: *substantive coding*, *selective coding*, and *theoretical coding* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In the substantive coding phase, the researcher identifies and develops *codes* or ideas that occur in various data sources. Selective coding, or the grouping and linking of codes together, is the second phase of classic grounded theory. Theoretical coding is then used to develop a final core idea that encompasses all of the codes identified in the first two phases. Throughout all three stages, the researcher uses the processes of *constant comparison* and *memoing* (the ongoing note-taking process) in order to finally generate a theory from the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

In the decades that followed the original publication of Glaser and Strauss' formative work on grounded theory, the approach continued to develop and evolve (Merriam, 2009; Newby, 2010). Strauss published a new conceptualization of grounded theory with Corbin in 1990 that included much of the original grounded theory processes and terminology but with far greater flexibility in its application. For example, in *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (1990), the procedure of *constant comparison* developed into the "making of comparisons" and the "asking of questions" (Strauss & Corbin, p. 62). Similarly, the process of *memoing* is still integrated into the 1990 edition, but it is augmented by the use of diagrams as well. Both of these procedures still occur throughout the three-stage coding process, now identified as *open coding*, *axial coding* and *selective coding* (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In the two subsequent editions of *Basics of Qualitative Research* (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Corbin & Strauss, 2008), the grounded theory approach continued to evolve into many

different variations while still striving to maintain the "methodological vision" of

Strauss' original intention (Corbin & Strauss, p. viii).

In recent years, the generation of grounded theory has become a "mainstream

intention or outcome of analysing qualitative data" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 598). The

pervasiveness of grounded theory in current qualitative research literature suggests that it

has become a widely used and accepted approach to qualitative data analysis (Cohen et

al., 2011; Hartas, 2010a; Lichtman, 2010; Lodico et al., 2010; Merriam, 2009; Newby,

2010). Despite the minor variations that exist among different versions, interpretations,

and applications of grounded theory, Cohen et al. outline several components that are

common to most grounded theory research:

- Theoretical sampling

- Saturation

- Coding

- The core variable

- Constant comparison

These practices were all introduced in some form by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 and each

still plays a key role in grounded theory research today.

Theoretical sampling is a sequential and continuous approach to research in

which the collection and analysis of data occur concurrently (Corbin & Strauss, 2008;

Krathwohl, 2009; Merriam, 2009). Throughout the process, data is collected, analysed

and then used to determine "what data to collect next, from whom and where" (Cohen et

al., 2011, p. 599). According to Merriam (2009), theoretical sampling is "an ongoing

process guided by the emerging theory – hence, 'theoretical sampling.' Analysis occurs

simultaneously with identifying the sample and collecting the data" (p.80). Grounded theory research, therefore, comprises a constant interchange between data collection and data analysis, with each process dependent on the other.

The researcher engages in the recursive exercise of alternating between data collection and analysis until a point is reached when a conceptualization (or theoretical model) of the phenomenon has emerged, and further data collection adds little additional information (Cohen et al., 2011; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Krathwohl, 2009). This stage in the research process is known as *saturation* (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 143). According to Cohen et al. (2011), "the partner of saturation is theoretical completeness, [a point at which] the theory is able to explain the data fully and satisfactorily" (p. 601). At this point, when the researcher has arrived at data saturation and theoretical completeness, the data collection process is concluded (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

In contemporary grounded theory, the practice of assigning codes or labels to qualitative data, or *coding*, consists of the three phases identified by Strauss and Corbin (1990): open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The initial exploration of the data, involving the breaking apart of data in order to identify the properties and dimensions within the various parts, is known as open coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 195). The identification of the relationships that exist between the different parts of the data, and the process of reassembling them into a new configuration, constitutes the axial coding process (Corbin & Strauss, p. 199). The third phase, selective coding, involves the integration and refinement of the theoretical framework derived from the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 161). Although most current grounded theory literature continues to refer to this process as "selective coding," Corbin and Strauss (2008)

replaced this term with "integration" in the third edition of *Basics of Qualitative Research* (p. 263)*.

Regardless of the terminology used, this final stage of the grounded theory approach results in the generation of a theory or model incorporating the concepts and relationships identified in the earlier coding procedures. The final theory is developed from a central category, or *core variable*, to which all of the other concepts and codes connect (Cohen et al., 2011; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Lichtman, 2010; Merriam, 2009). Corbin and Strauss explain:

> A central category may evolve out of the list of existing categories. Or, a researcher may study the categories and determine that though each category tells part of the story, none capture it completely. Therefore, another more abstract term or phrase is needed, a conceptual idea under which all the other categories can be subsumed. (pp. 104-105)

This core variable, therefore, conveys the main theme of the research, representing the many categories identified through the coding process as one interconnected idea.

Although the grounded theory approach to qualitative data analysis is structured and specific, it does not progress in a linear manner (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Lichtman, 2010). Throughout the research process, new data are constantly compared to existing data resulting in continuous unstructured interactions between the researcher, the data, and the developing theory (Cohen et al., 2011; Johnson & Christensen, 2004). In this *constant comparison* of data, coding and analysis occur simultaneously for the purpose of theory generation (Cohen et al., p. 600). As Corbin and Strauss explain, "the actual procedures used for analyzing data are not as important as the task of identifying the

essence or meaning of data" (p. 160). As data are gathered and analysed, there is also an ongoing literature review, providing the researcher with an opportunity to constantly compare the data with other sources. The reviewed literature of a grounded theory study should represent a wide range of subject areas, both within and outside the phenomenon being studied (Cohen et al., 2011; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Due to the inductive nature of grounded theory data collection and analysis procedures, the direction of the research (and therefore, the selection of the literature) is constantly in a state of flux. Unlike the literature review used in the early stages of traditional research models, it is the data that influence the literature selection throughout a grounded theory study. There must, however, be a point of departure for the reading. As a starting point for this research, a review of the literature concerning young people and their relationships with music and music education was conducted and is reported below.

Young People, Music, and Education

The role of music in our current everyday lives has become so ubiquitous, that many of us hardly notice its presence at all. Listening to music, especially among young people, has become a means of modifying one's mood, controlling the surrounding environment, and even creating a variable soundtrack for everyday life (Bull, 2000; Williams, 2007). In past decades, some authors went so far as to lament that young people were suffering from a "rock music addiction" (Bloom, 1987, p. 80). In recent years, with the increased availability of the Internet and portable music devices, music has become even more transportable and accessible virtually anywhere in the world.

As the degree of youth engagement with popular music has intensified, so, too, has the prevalence of research studies exploring this phenomenon. This research

encompasses a wide variety of topics: music's role in youth culture and identity (Bennett, 2000; McCarthy et al., 1999; Seman & Vila, 2012); the connections between music, youth and corporate brand-building (Carah, 2010; Wang, 2005); the effects of youth music listening behaviours (Rabinowitz, 2000); and popular music in the music education context (Green, 2008; Karlsen & Väkevä, 2012). Despite the inescapable association between young people and music outside of the school environment, their relationship with music programs in schools appears to be another matter entirely.

Music has often struggled to establish its place within the education system (Bowman, 2012; Hanley, 2000), more often being regarded as a supplemental addition to a student's education rather than a worthwhile and legitimate component of the curriculum (Green & Vogan, 1991; Weiss, 1995). Further, when the focus of education becomes measurable results and standards, advocating for the arts becomes even more difficult. Teachers feeling pressured to prepare their students for standardized tests in areas such as literacy and numeracy may have less time (or no time) to devote to music instruction. Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) suggest that in a movement beginning in the late 1980s, education reforms around the world reflected a new emphasis on performance standardization, government control and competition between schools (Hargreaves, 2009; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012). This top-down business approach to education began in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, then emerged in Australia, and finally progressed to North America (Ball, 2008; Hargreaves, 2009; Robertson, 2005). As Ball explains, "the management of schools and school leadership are now modeled on the social relations, incentive systems and practices of business organisations. Schools are less and less specific institutions but rather are organized and

look and operate like businesses" (p. 200). In order to better understand the business models upon which schools are being structured in places such as the United Kingdom, Australia and North America, and the ways in which this trend is affecting teachers and music education, an examination of current business literature seemed prudent.

Business Management

In the business literature of the last decade, themes such as collaboration, decentralization and employee empowerment abound (see for example, Fung, Fung & Wind, 2008; Mullins, 2010; Pongracic, 2009; Ritzman et al., 2007; Wood & Wood, 2012). There is a new business model emerging, in which "organizational structures are flattening, and hierarchies are giving way to networks" (Kanter, 2009). This shift in power from the top of the hierarchical organizational structure to a more collaborative or *flat* approach in which employees at every level of an organization play a significant role in decision-making processes is lauded by many as a crucial component in the management of successful 21st-century businesses (Bloch & Whiteley, 2009; Kanter, 2009; Maciariello & Linkletter, 2011; Pongracic, 2009). At the core of this decentralized, flat business model is an awareness of the value that people and relationships bring to the organization of which they are a part. The recognition of the capabilities of front-line employees, and of the value in giving these employees a voice within the organization, has become a common theme in current business management literature. The business leaders that employ this approach have been celebrated as *talent*

masters[5] (Conaty & Charan, 2009), leading *vanguard companies*[6] (Kanter, 2009) through

processes such as *decentralization* (transference of power from the head office to those in

the field) and *delayering* (a reduction of levels in the hierarchy of an organization).

Whatever the vocabulary used, these concepts are all based on the notion of a shift in

power within organizations from those on the "top" to those on the "bottom" of the

business hierarchy. This employee empowerment movement of the last half-century was

initiated by the publication of Kanter's *Men and Women of the Corporation* in 1977.

Rosabeth Moss Kanter

More than 30 years after her first ground-breaking publication (1977), Kanter is

still considered a "guru" in the area of business management (Chiapello & Fairclough,

2012; Hindle, 2008; Wooldridge, 2011). Currently, Kanter holds the Ernest L. Arbuckle

Professorship at Harvard Business School, and has "the unusual perspective of a

sociologist writing ethnography of complex social structures of the industrial enterprise"

(Bennis, 2012). Despite her varied areas of interest, there are some common themes that

permeate her many works. For example, Kanter (2009) suggests that "the role of the

human element in effective business strategies" has been a central concept throughout her

research from the beginning of her publishing career (p. 5). Kanter is most commonly

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[5] The terminology used in referencing business leaders who advocate a shift in organizational power from the managers to the front-line employees include "change masters" (Kanter, 1984), "talent masters" (Conaty & Charan, 2009) and "masters of management" (Wooldridge, 2011).

[6] Kanter's (2009) model of "vanguard companies," balances values such as efficiency and profit-generation with social responsibility and employee empowerment. This business model is reflected in Pongracic's conceptualization of employees as "entrepreneurs," experiencing "job enrichment" (Dessler, 2012, p. 304) in organizations that value the "human dimension" of their companies (Maciarielo & Linkletter, 2011).

associated with the idea of *employee empowerment*, which she first presented within her

Structural Theory of Organizational Behavior (1977). The social-structural approach to

empowerment employs a democratic view of the power structures in organizations.

Kanter contends that the "locus of control" in work-related situations should be situated

as much as possible within the employees (individuals or groups) that are actually doing

the work, rather than their supervisors (Kanter and Stein, 1979, p. 187).

Employee empowerment is developed and explored throughout Kanter's research,

appearing as a key component in differentiating between two contrasting approaches to

managing an organization: the *segmentalist* approach and the *integrative* approach

(Kanter, 1984). The various levels and departments of segmentalist organizations are

kept separate from each other, with each compartment of the organization operating on its

own. Segmentalist companies value the structures and ideas of the past, and as such,

struggle to manage change or innovation. Conversely, an integrative organization

embraces and combines new ideas from all levels and departments; collaboration among

various perspectives is encouraged so that new innovations might emerge. While the

segmentalist organization looks to the past, the integrative organization is guided by the

possibilities of the future. Kanter (1984) explains, "the highest proportion of

entrepreneurial accomplishments is found in the companies that are least segmented and

segmentalist, companies that instead have integrative structures and cultures emphasizing

pride, commitment, collaboration, and teamwork" (p. 178). In short, innovative

organizations empower their employees.

Kanter's latest book, *Supercorp: How Vanguard Companies Create Innovation,*

Profits, Growth, and Social Good (2009) presents a new model for the management of

organizations in which the pragmatism of making a profit is balanced with the idealism of

maintaining humanistic values (p. 8). In keeping with her previous work, Kanter

continues to advocate for employee empowerment in this book, explaining that

companies, providing empowered workplaces in which their employees thrive, will in

turn "attract and retain the best talent" (p. 267). In *Supercorp*, Kanter presents her

modern-day conceptualization of a new paradigm of managing organizations in the

"current global information age" (p. 28), and yet the principles encompassed by this

model are aligned with and supported by her previous work of the past several decades.

When Kanter's extensive body of work is considered in its entirety, there are several key

characteristics that are consistently associated with thriving organizations, past and

present:

- employees collaborate with each other

- leadership is distributed rather than concentrated at the "top"

- integrative structures allow employees to self-organize

- employees have a "voice" in the organization[7]

- organizations are flexible and open to change

These principles represent the humanistic ideals that are at the core of Kanter's work.

They apply not only to the corporate domain, but also to other organizations, groups, and

individuals. "This is a mind-set as well as a business model" Kanter explains, "and it is

possible for individuals as well as companies to adopt it" (p. 29). Based on the influence

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[7] In recent literature, the term "voice" within an organizational context refers to the level of autonomy experienced by employees regarding their contributions and communications within all levels of their company (Kanter, 2009; Wilkinson & Fay, 2011).

and recognition of Kanter's work, and the parallel global trends in other business literature, it appears that organizations around the world are becoming more employee-focused as vertical hierarchies are replaced with integrative, decentralized organizational structures. However, are these same trends also occurring in educational organizations? Furthermore, what is the role of music in a decentralized educational structure? The investigation of these questions necessitated the consideration of literature concerning the management and structure of educational organizations.

Education Management

The public sector, including education, has been experiencing a trend in recent decades towards a *New Public Management* (NPM) model (Ball, 2008; Peters, 2011). This ideology began in Australia and New Zealand in the 1980s and has since spread around the world (Clegg & Bailey, 2008). The objective of NPM, whether applied to an entire country, business or policy sector, is to make an organization more efficient and effective through means such as authoritarian executive control, low trust relationships and increased competition among employees, departments, and organizations (Ball; Clegg & Bailey). Within this paradigm, schools are conceptualized as corporate entities, with power and decision-making authority centralized at the executive levels of the organizational structure (Ball, 2008; Peters, 2011). Employees at the lower levels are "controlled, scrutinized, and rewarded or punished according to the results they obtain" (Clegg & Bailey, p. 980). Should the NPM trend continue to intensify in the future, Levy (2010) predicts "a vicious cycle for professional groups (doctors, teachers, social workers, etc.) in organizations, and an increasing conflict with strengthening management and control imperatives" (p. 237).

In countries such as the United States, England, Sweden, Norway and France, education reforms that align with the NPM model appear to be in a state of crisis (Sahlberg, 2011). These countries have responded to the challenges facing their education systems with solutions such as increased control over schools and more accountability for students and teachers. In Canada, England and the United States in particular, difficulties such as high student drop-out rates and early teacher attrition suggest that the NPM model may not be working (Sahlberg, 2011). Contrary to the empowerment models of the business literature, the public school systems in North America and the United Kingdom seem to be repositioning themselves in the opposite direction. Education is "market-oriented" in these countries, with an emphasis on competition, comparison, common standards and employee compliance (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, pp. 4-5).

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) advocate for a movement in educational organizations from "power over" to "power with" the teaching profession (p. 9). In countries such as Finland, South Korea and Singapore, they argue, teachers are valued as "indispensable national assets" in successful school systems that invest in high-quality educators in order to provide a high-quality education for their students (p. 2). According to Hargreaves and Fullan, effective education systems invest in what they refer to as *professional capital*, in which teachers merge the "five Cs" of capability, commitment, career, culture and contexts/conditions in order to "teach like a pro" (p. 46). When highly-qualified educators (capability) are passionate about their students' success (commitment), receive the support appropriate for their level of experience (or stage in their careers), within a collaborative and supportive group of colleagues (culture) in a

positive working environment (context/conditions), the result is *professionalism.* In the Canadian education system, the degree to which governments and regional school boards invest in the professional capital of educators varies among the provinces and territories.

Music Education in Canada

The education system in Canada is entirely the responsibility of the provinces and territories, as there is no national education system.[8] Each province and territory has a Department of Education (or Ministry of Education) to oversee the elementary and secondary education practices and policies in that particular jurisdiction. Each of these organizations has an appointed Minister of Education, and under his/her leadership they determine the elementary and secondary curricula, graduation requirements, and other educational policies.[9] Within each province and territory, there is a publicly funded school system. In most cases, there are local school authorities and/or school boards to oversee the administration of the schools within their districts.

Like the general education system, music education in Canada varies greatly among the provinces and territories. This diversity in music programs, coupled with a population spread across a geographically vast country, may explain why the first Canadian music education think-tank did not occur until May of 2005. This long overdue pan-Canadian symposium endeavoured to address the question, "Music education in

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[8] The education of many First Nations Peoples in Canada is locally overseen by regional organizations in band-operated schools across the country. Unlike the public school systems managed by the provinces and territories, the education of First Nations, Inuit and Métis is supported at the federal level through Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

[9] This information was obtained from the Ministry/Department of Education websites for each province and territory, as included in the References section of this thesis. For more detailed information regarding the educational policies of any particular province or territory, please refer to these websites.

Canada: What is the state of the art?" and was attended by music education researchers from across Canada. Two peer-reviewed publications resulted from this event: an e-book of 34 chapters (Veblen & Beynon, 2007) and a printed book containing 13 chapters (Beynon & Veblen, 2012). Both books present historical reviews, personal reflections, and current assessments of music education practices in Canada, both within and outside of the school context.

In addition to discussions of the state of music education in the individual provinces and territories, the e-book chapters cover topics such as specialist versus non-specialist music teachers, traditional versus non-traditional music education practices, and professional identities of music teachers (Veblen & Beynon, 2007). The printed book includes chapters on music education in Canadian schools, music education in the community context, the teaching and learning of Inuit drumming, Canadian choral music education, e-teaching and learning in music education, music teacher education in Canada and the place of popular music in the music classroom (Beynon & Veblen, 2012). Worrisome issues such as the marginalization of music in the curriculum, the increasing prevalence of non-specialist music teachers and decreasing time allotted for music study in the school day surfaced in both publications. Not surprisingly, these issues were also common themes in the findings of the two nationwide studies of music education commissioned by the Coalition for Music Education in Canada (CMEC).[10]

In January 2005, the CMEC embarked on a journey to establish an understanding of "music program penetration, types of programs, teacher qualifications, resources,

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[10] The Coalition for Music Education in Canada (CMEC) is an organization comprised of music education organizations, parents and concerned citizens with a mandate of advocacy for music education in Canadian schools and communities.

support and the importance of music instruction in the educational experience" across the country (Coalition for Music Education in Canada, 2005). In the initial phase of the study, 8,025 surveys were mailed to Canadian private and public schools. Surveys were completed and returned by 675 schools for a response rate of 8.4% (Coalition, p. 16). The respondents represented music teachers, classroom teachers, vice principals, and principals from elementary and secondary schools across Canada. The four key themes that emerged from the responses included resources (lack of adequate funding), teacher qualifications (music being taught by non-specialists), curriculum (timetabling and scheduling pressures) and advocacy (lack of public awareness of the value of music education).

The second phase of the Coalition for Music Education in Canada's *Music Education "State of the Nation" Benchmark Study* occurred in May of 2005. In this follow-up phase of the research, approximately 13,000 elementary and secondary schools were faxed a one-page survey. Of those surveys, 1,791 were completed and returned by fax, for a 14% response rate. The findings indicate that the respondents report offering "sequential developmental music programs" (Coalition for Music Education in Canada, 2006, p. 24). There were two main limitations of the study outlined in the report:

- difficulty in ascertaining the overall incidence of school music programs due to an apparent lack of response from schools without music programs; and
- a perceived negative impact on the response rate due to lack of endorsement for the study from the individual school boards.

Despite these challenges, this second phase of survey distribution did provide valuable supplemental data to the original findings.

In 2010, the Coalition for Music Education in Canada commissioned another study, this time directed to principals. In the original 2005 survey, only 22% of the responses were completed by administrators (principals or vice-principals). The objective of the 2010 survey, however, was to seek the views of school administrators. As such, about 70% of the 2010 survey respondents were school administrators, about 25% were teachers, with the remaining respondents not indicating their employment position. The survey was accessible online, and participants were recruited through an advertisement in the *Canadian Association of Principals Journal*, follow-up emails in areas with low response rates, and a "last chance" fax to non-responding schools (p. 99). Of the 15,500 schools in Canada, 1,204 completed the survey, for a response rate of 7.8%. The findings of this survey suggest that the most common form of music education in secondary schools is performance-based learning, while the elementary music programs focus more on listening activities and integrated arts. Based on the findings of the study, the Coalition for Music Education in Canada (2010) developed six recommendations:

- More funding for more schools;

- More qualified teachers in more schools;

- Continuing advocacy;

- More support for elementary generalist classroom teachers;

- Better training in the arts for generalist teachers through universities; and

- Further research into schools with weaker music programs.

The obstacles facing music education in Canada today, as reported by teachers and administrators in both of the Coalition-commissioned studies, are not new. Unfortunately, these disquieting trends have been occurring in Canadian schools for years (see for example, Hanley, 2000; Kennedy, 2000). In order to better understand Ontario's part in this Canadian story, a return to the beginning of Ontario's music education narrative may be worthwhile.

Music Education in Ontario: Historical Context

Green and Vogan (1991) begin their discussion of music education in Ontario with the Colonial societies that immigrated from America, the Netherlands, Germany and Great Britain during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Musical performance activities in this time were largely limited to church choirs and military bands, both of which played a significant role in the development of cultural growth of Ontario in the pre-Confederation years – both inside and outside the church/military walls – influencing the greater society of the secular/civilian realm. In the early 1800s, singing schools emerged in both Canada and the United States, combining social and musical opportunities for children and adults alike. Although their purpose was supposedly to "improve the quality of congregational singing" (p.46) in the local churches, Green and Vogan explain that the singing school classes were most likely regarded primarily as a social activity, with less significance given to the musical component of the event. One of the reasons for this discrepancy may be attributed to the fact that singing schools existed independent of religious affiliation, and independent of the public schools, and basically functioned as private enterprises (p. 47). In fact, music education was not a part of the public school system in what is now Ontario until vocal music was officially

declared a school subject in the Common School Act of 1846 by Egerton Ryerson (Green & Vogan, p. 50).

During his time as the Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada in the 1840s, Dr. Egerton Ryerson declared music to be a required subject in the daily schedule of Ontario students (Green & Vogan, 1991, p. 48-49). In this case, however, "music education" primarily consisted of vocal music instruction in the elementary grades (p. 67). Green and Vogan (1991) report that an "intense rivalry" erupted in the second half of the 19th century, in which vocal music education practices in Ontario were aligned with one of two methodologies: the Wilhem-Hullah method supported by Ryerson and therefore included in the first Ontario music textbooks, and Curwen's Tonic Sol-fa method, which was first introduced to Canadians by the British immigrants (p. 51-52). By 1876, Ryerson had made a significant contribution to the promotion of music in schools, especially in the large urban areas (Green & Vogan, 1991, p. 55). Music education in the late 1800s was still primarily occurring as vocal instruction at the elementary level, and through private study, community organizations, and churches (Green & Vogan, p. 68). Instrumental music programs were not established in Ontario until the early part of the 20th century (Thompson, 1999, p. 35). During this time, music programs in schools situated in large cities were often taught by music specialists, and overseen by qualified Music Supervisors (Thompson, p. 35).

In the 1940s, Ontario had over 4000 school boards to oversee schooling practices in both urban and rural areas (Gidney, 1999, p. 9-10). In March of 1945, a twenty-member royal commission was established to study the long-range educational future of Ontario. Stamp (1982) describes how this group, under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice

Hope, was charged with considering the opposing progressive and traditional educational philosophies of the time, in order to provide a "blueprint" for future educational directions in Ontario schools. The 900-page report, when it was finally released in December of 1950, reflected values such as social conservatism, Calvinism, and a work-oriented approach to education (Government of Ontario, 1950). Although the report reflected the conservative/traditionalist perspective of many Ontarians, its impact on the education system was minimal. The report's suggestion that Catholic schools should be restricted to elementary grades was not politically feasible. Furthermore, the curricular suggestions made by the report had essentially been implemented a year before the report was even released, making the report itself somewhat redundant. Much to the chagrin of Mr. Justice Hope, "for all practical purposes, his report was being shelved" (Stamp, p. 189).

Just as the Hope Report reflected the traditionalist views of the society in its time, the Hall-Dennis Report, released almost two decades later, reflected the progressivism of the social changes occurring in Ontario in the late 1960s (Government of Ontario, 1968). Like the Hope Report, the Hall-Dennis Report was created by an appointed committee, the members of which were entrusted with the task of constructing a vision for the future of education in Ontario's school system. The report that they produced in 1967 could not have been more glaringly different from the Hope Report in every way.

The Hall-Dennis Report, officially titled *Living and Learning* was released in May of 1968. This document was about one fourth the size of the Hope Report, and rather than plain text, it contained text printed in blue or red ink and brightly colored pictures. It was critical of the previous trend towards conservatism in educational

practices, and instead emphasized the personal fulfillment of the students as the central

goal of education. As Gidney (1999) explains, the Hall-Dennis Report "reflected the

anti-technocratic, anti-traditionalist, romantic impulses of the 1960s" (p. 72). In addition

to the viewpoints and findings of the committee, the report also contained 258 specific

recommendations, among them the inclusion of musicians and other artists in the schools

(Government of Ontario, 1968, p. 182). The report also suggested that schools schedule

more time for children to "play" as they are learning (p. 57), focused on the importance

of technology and media in learning (p. 61), and championed every child's right to the

best education (p. 9).

     Music curricula in the subsequent years reflected the child-centered, decentralized

perspective reflected in the Hall-Dennis Report. For example, the music requirements

outlined in the 1977 curriculum documents were brief, consisting of only seven points.

Each point could be interpreted in a variety of ways by different teachers, depending on

each teacher's individual circumstances. One point required students to study "the

relationship of music to the other arts," without specifying which other arts were to be

included and for what purpose (Government of Ontario, 1977). Decisions pertaining to

the specific implementation of the music curriculum were left up to the music teachers.

     In the years following the Hall-Dennis Report, educational thought and practice in

Ontario continued to change and evolve. The Catholic school system, after decades of

being significantly disadvantaged in comparison to its public counterpart, finally received

an announcement that adequate funding would be provided for all of its elementary and

secondary schools, through a program beginning in September of 1985 (Gidney, 1999,

p.124). In 1993, Ontario established the Royal Commission on Learning charged with

producing an action plan to guide public education into the 21st century. In January,

1995, the Commission released *For the Love of Learning*, a report emphasizing

accountability at all levels of the education system and increased education governance

(Royal Commission on Learning, 1994).

The centralized, accountability-focused educational model championed in the

Commission's report typified education trends that have been occurring across Canada

and beyond Canadian borders in recent decades. Various government policies in a

variety of countries contributed to this "global educational accountability movement" in

which test-focused school systems were used to counteract a perceived deficit in the

quality of public education (Lee, 2007, p. 66). In countries such as the United States,

New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, accountability-focused education reforms have

been transforming public education.

In the United States, the National Commission on Excellence in Education

published *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, which recommended a return to the curriculum

"basics" in American schools (p. 23) and an emphasis on standardized testing (p. 25). In

2002, the prominence of accountability and standardized testing in the American

education system intensified with the arrival of the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act*

(United States Department of Education). This legislation, signed into law by President

George W. Bush (and still employed by the current Obama administration), utilized

standardized testing as a tool with which to "identify, threaten, and, if necessary, sanction

schools and districts" (Abernathy, 2007, p.viii). Since its inception, NCLB has resulted

in the allocation of more classroom time for standardized test preparation in reading,

mathematics and science. Consequently, there has been less time in many American

classrooms for subjects such as music and the other arts (Hayes, 2008; Mark, 2008; Mark & Gary, 2007).

Similar to Ontario and the United States, the National Party in New Zealand introduced a new "back to basics" national curriculum in 1990, with a focus on English, math, science and technology (McCulloch, 1992, p. 19). During these years, education in New Zealand was viewed as something to be "sold, traded and consumed" (Roberts, 2006, p. 186). The basis for educational reform during this time was *Tomorrow's Schools* (1988), a document largely based on the recommendations of *Administering for Excellence: Effective Administration in Education* (often referred to as the "Picot Report") released earlier that year (McCulloch, 1992; Middleton et al., 1990; Openshaw, 2009). Like America's *No Child Left Behind*, the influence of New Zealand's Picot Report launched a renewed emphasis on principles such as competition and accountability in education (Dobbins, 2010; Olssen & Morris Matthews, 1997).

Britain's *Education Reform Act*, also released in 1988, mirrored the global trend towards accountability in education, complete with a corresponding new national curriculum and national assessments (National Archives, 1988). This document, coupled with the 1992 *Education Act* (National Archives, 1992), had a significant impact on the whole secondary education system in the UK. The sweeping reforms that resulted from these changes in legislation not only included national standardized testing, but also the publication of the standardized test scores. This practice, combined with a new policy allowing parents to choose which school their children would attend, solidified the marketization of the British education system (Green, 2011; Knodel & Walkenhorst, 2010). Within this business model of education, schools were managed and made

accountable by "leader-managers" rather than head teachers or administrators (Green, 2011, p. 44).   Schools became products, forced to compete with each other for potential consumers (the parents) in the emerging educational market (Chitty, 2009; Green, 2011; Knodel & Walkenhorst, 2010).

In Ontario, the *Common Sense Revolution*, introduced by the Mike Harris Government in 1995-1998, promised to make schools "better for less" (Gidney, p. 235). This plan included initiatives such as the establishment of the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) in 1995, a new provincial curriculum in 1995, the creation of the Ontario College of Teachers in 1996, and the abolition of Grade 13 in 1999 (Gidney, p. 237). As might be expected, so many drastic changes over such a short period of time resulted in tremendous turmoil in Ontario schools in the late 1990s.

In 1997, the Progressive Conservative government tabled Bill 160, or the *Education Quality Improvement Act*, introducing drastic educational reforms. After two months of negotiating, Ontario teachers (including elementary, secondary, public and Catholic teachers) began a province-wide strike against Bill 160. The government responded with an application to the Supreme Court of Ontario in an effort to order the strikers back to work. Although the teachers technically won in court, their victory was short-lived. After the strike, many of the educational reforms against which the teachers were protesting remained in Bill 160, which was passed in December of 1997. As the province struggled to cope with the repercussions of these changes, the Government of Ontario released three new arts curriculum documents: the elementary document in 1998 (revised in 2009), the document for Grades 9 and 10 in 1999 (revised in 2010), and the document for Grades 11 and 12 in 2000 (revised in 2010).

Music Education in Ontario: Current Context

The current Ontario arts curricula include mandatory music instruction in Grade 1 through Grade 8, and one mandatory arts credit[11] at the secondary level. In addition to (or alternatively for) the music courses offered in Ontario secondary schools, students can also earn a maximum of two course credits (one Grade 11 credit and one Grade 12 credit) for the successful completion of music examinations through ministry-approved organizations such as the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto.[12]

The Ontario secondary curriculum for the arts is comprised of three strands: creating and presenting; reflecting, responding and analyzing; and foundations. In recent years, in an effort to help more students to graduate from high school, the Ontario government has also offered several educational initiatives, including the Specialty High Skills Major (SHSM) programs. In the 2011-2012 school year, every Ontario school board offered a unique combination of SHSMs, allowing students to "bundle" eight Grade 11 and Grade 12 credits with various other requirements in order to receive an additional acknowledgement (appearing on the student's Ontario Secondary School Diploma and Ontario Student Transcript) of their skills and experience in a specialized sector. Perusal of the 31 English Public school board websites revealed that 27 of them offered SHSM programs in the Arts and Culture category in at least one school during the 2011-2012 academic year. Music was included in some, but not all, of these programs.

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[11] The mandatory arts credit requirement may be acquired in any of the following subject areas: Dance, Drama, Integrated Arts, Media Arts, Music, or Visual Arts. (Government of Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2010a)

[12] The university/college preparation music credits may be awarded at the Grade 11 level (AMX3M) and/or the Grade 12 level (AMX4M). For more information regarding the specific requirements for obtaining these credits, please refer to *Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12*, p. 100.

In a case study of social-economic climate in music classrooms, Carlisle (2008) highlights three examples of secondary schools in southern Ontario who offer "student-centered" approaches to music education (p. 50). After spending six weeks in each school, she reports that these music programs – all of which offer an alternative curriculum to the traditional band/choir/orchestra performance-based model – encourage students to be creative, autonomous, and reflective learners. Examples such as these would suggest that there are some exciting and innovative approaches to music education occurring in Ontario. Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) celebrate Ontario as an example to the rest of the world for its "educational high performance" (p. 19), hailing the province as "an outstanding international performer in education" (p. 130). This thriving educational environment, supplemented with support from organizations such as the *Ontario Music Educators' Association* suggest that Ontario is a global leader in music education. Some of the literature, however, conveys causes for concern.

Willingham and Cutler (2005) present a grim depiction of music education trends in Ontario. The opinions expressed by Ontario music educators in this informal questionnaire study reflect concerns regarding reduced budgets, curriculum challenges, qualifications required to teach music, and the elimination of Music Department Head positions. These questionnaire responses are presented by Willingham and Cutler within the context of their broader exploration of the political and historical factors that have contributed to a feeling of marginalization among Ontario arts educators in Ontario. It is obvious that music is a significant part of everyday life for today's youth, and that they come to the music classroom as experienced music listeners. Despite their fervent interest in music within their daily life experiences, only a small percentage (about 10%)

of Ontario youth elect to participate in school music opportunities (Kennedy, 2000; Willingham & Cutler, 2005). If music plays such an integral role in the lives of young people in Ontario today, why are so few of these youth electing to participate in secondary school music courses?

There are several possible factors that may be contributing to the declining enrolment and/or interest in music education opportunities available to students in Ontario schools. For example, government data indicate that overall student enrolment is declining in secondary schools in this province (see Figure 1). Perhaps the declining music course enrolment is proportionate to the declining student enrolment in Ontario. The relationship between declining enrolment in music programs and in school populations across the province certainly merits further investigation.
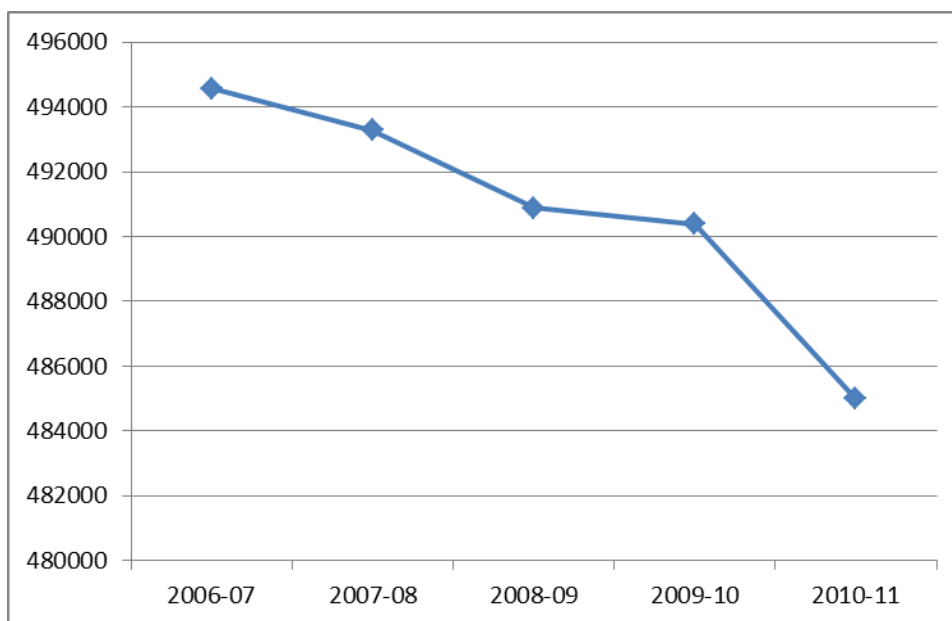
*Figure 1.*Graph of Ontario secondary public school enrolment over the last 5 years. Data obtained from *Quick Facts: Ontario Schools, 2010-11*, by the Government of Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2012. Copyright 2012 by the Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Pedagogical factors may also be a deterrent for young people considering participation in formal music education opportunities. Kennedy (2000) suggests that the diminutive percentages of Canadian high school students enrolled in music courses may be a consequence of performance-based music programs that cater to the misconception that music education is only for the small minority of elite students perceived as musically gifted (pp. 141-145). Similarly, Carlisle (2008) suggests that large ensemble performance models of music education have a very limited ability to meet the cognitive, academic, personal, or social development needs of their participants (p. 2, p. 25). Traditional music programs, she argues, follow a rehearsal model that is wrought with "persistent power relations" (p. 33) and, therefore, foster a climate in which the students have no voice. Within this model, all musical decisions are made by the teacher/director, while the students/ensembles are reduced to a "submissive body" (O'Toole, 1993/94, p.71).

In one American study, adolescents' attitudes are reported to be more negative regarding music instruction than other subject areas (Vispoel, 1998, p. 39).   The emphasis on "ability grouping, competition and public evaluation of student work" (Vispoel, p. 27) in many North American music classrooms fosters an environment in which the elite few flourish, while the majority of the student population perceive formal music education to be restrictive and boring (Carlisle, p. 200). Green's (2008) research reports that formal music education practices are described as "unhelpful" and "detrimental" by young, successful, popular musicians (p. 3). Music education experiences in the classroom context, according to Green, are seldom based on the "real-life learning practices of musicians drawn from the world outside school" (p. 176), thus

making them meaningless and impractical for many students. This disconnect between what students experience in a music classroom and their "real life" musical experiences may be a contributing factor to the diminishing interest among young people in enrolling in high school music courses.

Beatty (2001a; 2001b; 2001c) surveyed 401 elementary teachers, secondary teachers, principals and vice principals across Ontario. The 286 respondents representing schools at the elementary level reported the following trends:

- Music enrolment is staying the same or increasing in their schools;

- There is a perceived lack of support from their school boards;

- There is inadequate funding for music equipment and resources; and

- 40.4% of the respondents indicated that less than one hour per week was allocated for music instruction.

At the secondary level, respondents in Beatty's research were predominantly teachers, with administrators representing less than 1% of the participants (2001b). A variety of schools were represented in this study, from the public, Catholic, and private school systems. Unlike their colleagues at the elementary level, secondary teachers reported a decrease in enrolment in music courses, even as their school enrolments were increasing or remaining consistent. Similar to the elementary level respondents, secondary teachers also expressed perceived lack of support for their music program from their school boards and inadequate funding for music equipment and resources. The respondents reported offering music ensembles such as concert band (87.8%), jazz band (67.8%), choir (60.9%), chamber groups (27.0%), guitar ensemble (23.5%) and jazz choir (22.6%). Interestingly, in some of the participating schools, course credits were awarded

to students for involvement in these ensembles, while at other schools this was not the

case. For a more detailed representation of Beatty's findings, please refer to Table 1.

Table 1

Music Ensembles in Secondary Schools (Beatty, 2001b)

Ensemble	Percentage
Concert Band	87.8%
Jazz Band	67.8%
Choir	60.9%
Chamber Group	27.0%
Guitar Ensemble	23.5%
Jazz Choir	22.6%
String Orchestra	14.8%
Electronic Music	13.0%
Full Orchestra	13.0%
String Ensemble	9.6%
Percussion Ensemble	9.6%
Recorder Ensemble	3.5%
Marching Band	2.6%
Orff Ensemble	0.9%

Vince (2005b) combined quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to

investigate music enrolment trends in Ontario. Using quantitative data obtained from the

Ontario Ministry of Education, Vince converted music enrolment data to percentages of

total enrolment and discovered, that while Grade 9 music enrolment increased as a

percentage of school population from 1998 to 2002, the other grades indicated a decrease

in music enrolment over the period from 1993 to 2002 (Grade 9 enrolment data prior to

1998 is unavailable due to changes in recording procedures). In addition to the absence

of Grade 9 enrolment data for the first 5 years of the study, statistical analysis of data was

complicated further by the ambiguity of the use of the *repertoire credit*, which is

sometimes awarded to students for participation in music ensembles. The changes made

in the government reporting procedures during the time of this research also made data analysis more difficult. Despite these challenges, Vince's data paint a clear picture that many Ontario students are enrolling in music courses as a means to obtain the one mandatory arts credit, with no plans to continue participating in music at school in the years that follow.

Vince's (2005b) quantitative findings are also enriched with qualitative research. Interviews with eight Ontario secondary school music teachers, representing eight Ontario school boards, revealed results similar to the quantitative data analysis: music enrolment was declining at the Grade 10, 11 and 12 levels. As a result, the interviewees also reported combining different grades into multilevel classes in order to sustain their music programs. The participants also confirmed the variability in how different Ontario schools and school boards employ the repertoire credit.

Following the change in the Ontario secondary school system from a five-year program to a four-year program in 1998, many of the teachers who participated in Vince's (2005b) study reported difficulty in covering the curriculum requirements under this condensed system. Furthermore, many non-musical elements of the new music curriculum introduced that same year were described by participants as "extraneous," a factor which contributed to feelings of frustration or apathy in its implementation (pp. 199-200). This problem was further compounded by the lack of musical preparation and experience exhibited by the Grade 9 students entering the high school programs, indicating a disturbing decline in the quality and quantity of elementary music programs in Ontario (pp. 198-199), similar to the findings reported in other studies (Coalition for Music Education in Canada, 2005; Beatty, 2001a/b).

In all likelihood, if elementary music programs in Ontario are disappearing as the literature suggests, music programs at the secondary level are undergoing a similar crisis. In order to gain a better understanding of the state of music education across the province, it seemed crucial to obtain feedback from as many music educators as possible, and with as much depth as possible. The study was designed, therefore, to incorporate a balance between large-scale data collection representing teachers from a wide variety of geographic locations and small-scale data collection using in-depth personal interviews.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology used in this study, beginning with an examination of ontological and epistemological considerations. The emergence of the mixed methods approach from the preceding "paradigm wars" of qualitative and quantitative research methods is also discussed. This study is descriptive research insofar as its purpose is to solicit a representation of current education practices in Ontario from the people who are directly involved. Mertler and Charles (2005) explain, "descriptive research […] is done to depict people, situations, events and conditions as they currently exist. Descriptive research is nonexperimental and can be either qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of the two" (p. 31).

In this study, the large-scale distribution of surveys (providing quantitative and qualitative data) was followed by a second phase of research in which interviews (qualitative data) were used to enrich and further develop the survey findings. This sequential use of different methods (in this case, an online survey followed by interviews) is commonly found in research that endeavors to survey a large number of participants, while still incorporating the more in-depth contributions of a smaller sample, in order to provide a more comprehensive overview of the topic (McMillan, 2004, p. 288-9). Since the objective of this study is to produce an accurate depiction of how music teachers in Ontario English public school boards perceive the current state of secondary school music education in Ontario, surveying a large number of teachers and providing a smaller sample of those same teachers with the opportunity to express their insights and observations in a more personal way provided an effective means by which to obtain a

holistic understanding of the current music education climate in Ontario, from the perspective of practicing music educators. For these reasons, I decided to employ an embedded, qualitative-dominant mixed-methods design, employing the sequential use of two methods of data collection (an online survey and follow-up telephone interviews).

This chapter then outlines the measures undertaken to gain ethical consent from both the University of Western Ontario and the 31 English Public school boards in Ontario. This is followed by a summary of the pilot study used to test and refine the survey instrument, as suggested by McMillan (2004). This chapter concludes with a description of the methods employed in Phase I (online surveys) and Phase II (follow-up telephone interviews), as well as a discussion of the data analysis procedures used in this study.

Questions of Ontology and Epistemology: The Paradigm Wars

The practice of conceptualizing approaches to research as *paradigms* became prevalent after the publication of Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in 1962 (Hartas, 2010a; Newby, 2010; Scott, 2000). According to Johnson and Christensen (2004), educational research predominantly represented a "quantitative paradigm" until the early 1980s (p. 30). The "paradigm wars" (Guba, 1990) of that time divided the research community into two polarized groups. On one side were those from the positivist perspective, within which quantitative data was gathered through experimental research in order to determine a singular reality in the findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Phillips & Burbules, 2000). On the other side were those from the interpretivist perspective, for whom qualitative data was gathered with the understanding

that there are multiple perspectives or realities in the findings (Heshusius & Ballard, 1996; Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010).

In quantitative research, the role of the researcher is to remain as objective as possible, while collecting scientific data in order to test a theory or hypothesis (Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Lichtman, 2010). In most cases, quantitative researchers use a "hypothetic-deductive method" (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 10), meaning that the researcher reviews the literature in order to formulate a hypothesis before designing a specific method of collecting numerical data in order to test the hypothesis. Data collection is followed by statistical analysis of the data, from which the researcher can use deductive reasoning to either accept or reject the initial hypothesis. Quantitative studies often use surveys or tests in order to measure or test a few variables using a large, randomly-selected group of participants, or "sample" (Drew, Hardman & Hosp, 2008; Krathwohl, 2009; Lichtman, 2010). The goal of traditional quantitative research is to produce statistical findings that can be generalized to a larger population than the sample (Hartas, 2010a; Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

Qualitative research is primarily concerned with understanding and interpreting social interactions (Lichtman, 2010). Unlike the "top-down" system of quantitative research in which the researcher tests a pre-determined hypothesis, qualitative researchers employ a "bottom-up" approach in which the researcher seeks to describe, explore and discover behaviour in a natural context (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Qualitative researchers often collect data through interviews and observations, and use inductive reasoning to produce a rich or "thick" description of the phenomenon being studied (Gibson, 2010; Merriam, 2009). Unlike the typical large random samples used in

quantitative research, the detail and depth of qualitative research often requires a smaller,
non-random group of participants (Krathwohl, 2009; Lichtman, 2010). In many cases,
the findings of qualitative research are subjective, particularistic and/or narrative in
nature, culminating in the generation of a new theory or hypothesis (Cohen, Manion &
Morrison, 2011; Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

In the current literature, both paradigms (quantitiative and qualitative) are now
recognized as legitimate frameworks from which to conduct educational research (Cohen,
Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Hartas, 2010a; Lodico et al., 2010). In addition, a third
paradigm is also emerging, known as mixed methods. (Cohen et al., 2011; Johnson et al.,
2007; Newby, 2010). This paradigm is becoming more and more prevalent in the
literature, combining quantitative and qualitative methods within a pragmatist
perspective. A summary of the three paradigms and some of their differing ontological
and epistemological assumptions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Hartas, 2010b; Johnson
et al., 2007; Newby, 2010) is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Summary of Research Paradigms

Paradigm	Ontology	Epistomology	Theoretical Framework(s)
Quantitative	Singular reality	Objectivism (distance)	Positivism Post-positivism Empiricism
Qualitative	Multiple realities	Subjectivism (closeness)	Interpretivism Constructivism Postmodernism
Mixed Methods	Singular reality and/or Multiple realities	Practicality (guided by the research question/s)	Pragmatism

Mixed Methods

Mixed methods research has precipitated much discussion, perturbation and examination in recent years (see for example, Creswell, 2011; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2013; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Newby, 2010). According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), the evolution of mixed methods research occurred in four distinct periods spanning the latter half of the 20th century. The *formative period*, beginning in the 1950s, saw the initial emergence of studies that combined qualitative and quantitative methods. The question of whether or not these different forms of data could be amalgamated became the focus of the *paradigm debate period* in the 1970s and 1980s. Although the controversy continued in the years that followed, the *procedural development period* was characterized by a focus on classifying and developing mixed methods research designs. In the last decade, the *advocacy as a separate design period*, mixed methods research has evolved into a legitimate and practical approach to research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Teddlie & Sammons, 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011). This acceptance of mixed methods research was made evident with the arrival of the *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* in 2007.

Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007) suggest that mixed methods research designs exist along a "qualitative-quantitative continuum" (p. 123), as shown in Figure 2.
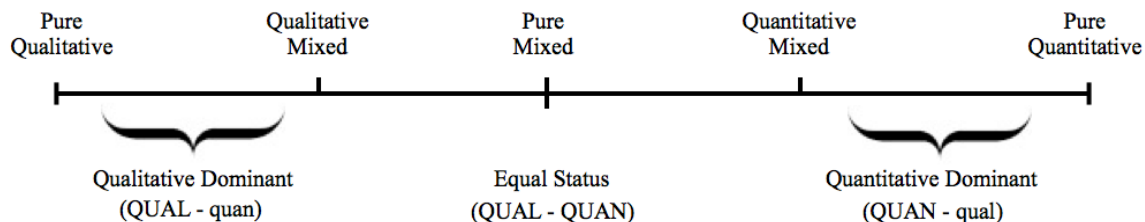
Figure 2. Qualitative-quantitative continuum representing "the three major research paradigms, including subtypes of mixed methods research" (p. 124). Adapted from "Toward a Definition of Mixed Methods Research" by R. B. Johnson, A. J. Onwuegbuzie, and L. A. Turner, 2007, *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1*(2), p. 124. Copyright 2007 by SAGE Publications.

I chose to utilize a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods approach (symbolized as QUAL-quan) in which descriptive quantitative data play a supplemental and supportive role within an otherwise qualitative study. According to Johnson et al. (2007):

> Qualitative dominant mixed methods research is the type of mixed research
>
> in which one relies on a qualitative, constructivist-poststructuralist-critical
>
> view of the research process, while concurrently recognizing that the addition
>
> of quantitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research
>
> projects. (p.124)

In keeping with the qualitative dominant mixed methods design, quantitative data were framed within the context of qualitative data. This embedded design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2013) allowed for the incorporation of the teachers' perceptions of enrolment trends in their schools (quantitative data) with their explanations of why, from their perspectives, those trends might have been occurring (qualitative data).

Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) explain that there are both advantages and disadvantages of employing an embedded research design. For example, they warn that

it can be difficult to integrate the data from the two methods, and that the researcher has a responsibility to explain the purpose of collecting data using the "primary" and "secondary" methods in the study (p. 70). The embedded design, however, is also particularly beneficial when "a single data set is not sufficient, [when] different questions need to be answered, and [when] each type of question requires different types of data" (p. 67). The embedded design, also known as a "nested design" (Schutz, Nichols, & Rodgers, 2009; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2013) is also a valuable tool in effectively managing time and resources while conducting a study of this magnitude.

The design of this study is sequential in nature, as it used the survey responses from Phase One of the study to inform the interviews in Phase Two of the study (see Figure 3).

```
┌──────────────┐         ┌──────────────┐         ┌──────────────┐
│    QUAL      │         │    QUAL      │         │   Interpret  │
│  (surveys)   │  ──→    │ (interviews) │  ──→    │    QUAL      │
│ ┌─────────┐  │         │              │         │    (quan)    │
│ │  quan   │  │         │              │         │              │
│ └─────────┘  │         │              │         │              │
└──────────────┘         └──────────────┘         └──────────────┘
```
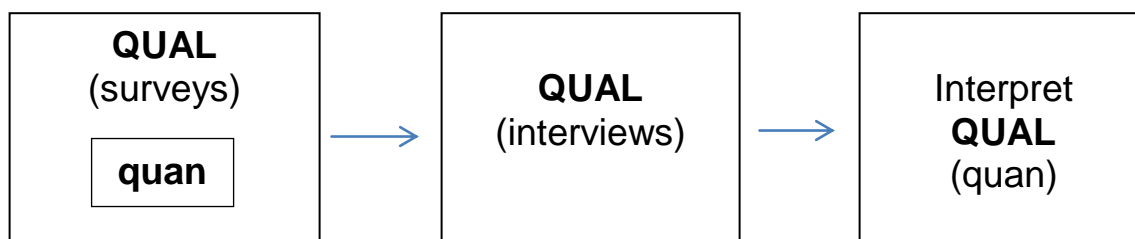
Figure 3. Schematic of the sequential, embedded, qualitative dominant design of this study. Adapted from *An Applied Reference Guide to Research Designs: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods,* by W. A. Edmonds and T. D. Kennedy, 2013. Copyright 2013 by SAGE Publications.

In this sequential mixed methods research design, the incorporation of quantitative data, though largely demographic in nature, enhances the qualitative data. The role of the quantitative data gleaned from the survey is to "enhance [the] description of [the] results [and] the identification of salient themes" (p. 33). According to Newby (2010), "the task

of the qualitative researcher is not to look at how people behave as an outsider but to understand how individuals see the world" (p.119). In order to better understand how Ontario music teachers see their world, this study was designed using a sequential, qualitative-dominant, embedded mixed methods approach.

Ethics

Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010) outline three areas that need to be considered in order to protect the rights of research participants: informed consent, protection from harm, and confidentiality (p. 18). To address these ethical issues, approval to conduct the pilot study was received from the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Board (a sub-board of the University of Western Ontario [Western] Non-Medical Research Ethics Board) on September 26, 2011 (see Appendix A) and for the full study on November 21, 2011 (see Appendix B). Before fieldwork commenced, all participants were provided with a Letter of Information (see Appendix C) containing a detailed description of the study. In accordance with the general principles of the Tri-Council Policy Statement, *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (2010), the Letter of Information informed potential participants that there were no known risks associated with participation in this study, that participation in the study was completely voluntary, and that all responses would be kept entirely confidential. It was explained that this study did not utilize partial disclosure or deception in its methodology and participants were also advised of their right to withdraw from the study or refuse to participate at any time without penalty.

In order to protect the confidentiality of the participants, only the researcher had access to data collected. SurveyMonkey hosted the online survey and safeguarded the

data collected. SurveyMonkey is certified by TRUSTe under its Privacy Seal program, and the survey responses are private and password-protected. After five years, I will request cancellation of my SurveyMonkey account, and as a result, SurveyMonkey will permanently delete all of the data. All participating teachers were assigned random alpha-numeric codes for identification purposes, and any direct or indirect identifying information was removed from their responses in order to ensure participant confidentiality.

After receipt of ethics approval from Western, an application for ethical approval to conduct this study was sent (either by mail or electronically, depending on the preference of the school board) to all 31 Ontario English Public school boards in the province of Ontario. It should be noted that the ethics procedures and protocols of the school boards were quite varied: some boards had their own specific paperwork which needed to be completed by the researcher and/or representatives from Western before their ethics committees would review the research applications. Other school boards required the submission of the thesis proposal (as submitted to Western) either in summary or in its entirety for their evaluation. Several school boards required only the approval of their Directors of Education in order for a study to be carried out in their boards.

Twenty of the 31 school boards granted ethical approval for their teachers to participate in this study. The remaining 11 school boards did not participate in this study for the following reasons:

- 5 school boards did not respond to multiple attempts by phone and email to follow-up on the research applications;

- 1 school board declined to participate without providing an explanation for the decision;

- 3 school boards declined to participate due to a plethora of research studies already occurring in their schools;

- 1 school board declined to participate, indicating that this study was "not aligned with [the school board's] strategic directions;" and

- 1 school board declined to participate, citing concern that music education is currently a controversial issue in their schools.[13]

Of the 20 school boards from whom ethical approval was received, seven required additional approval from each school principal in order for the music teacher(s) at his/her school to participate. Two school boards required minor changes that did not affect the nature of the study. In most cases, a representative from the school board contacted teachers/principals in order to invite them to participate in this study. I had no direct contact with the participants who completed the online survey, unless they initiated electronic communication in order to volunteer to participate in the follow-up telephone interview. The use of this approach allowed the participants to complete the online survey anonymously.

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[13] A representative from this school board expressed concern that this study would represent only the views of the teachers, without including the opposing perspective of the school board. In his opinion, this research was therefore biased, and so the board declined to allow the teachers to participate unless the members of the school board could also participate. Since interviewing board members was outside the parameters of this study, it was therefore decided that this school board could not be included.

Pilot Study

After receiving ethics approval from the university and the school board, the

survey was pilot-tested with one Ontario English Catholic[14] school board in October

2011. As practicing music educators at the secondary school level, English Catholic

school board teachers are ideally situated within the context of the population being

studied. The music curriculum and the school system in which they teach are reasonably

comparable to the curriculum and school system of their English public school board

colleagues.

According to McMillan (2004), the pilot test should consist of 15-20 participants

who are asked to review and comment on a draft of the letter of transmittal and the

survey (p. 196). All secondary school music teachers from one English Catholic school

board received the Letter of Information within the body of an email, which also

contained a link to the online survey. These participants were asked to read the Letter of

Information, and if they wished to participate in the research, to follow the directions in

completing the online survey. There were 9 participants in the pilot study for this

research. The final question of the survey asked the respondents to provide their

reactions to both the process and the actual survey questions, thus contributing to the

validity of the survey instrument.

Creswell (2002) outlines several types of validity that researchers must take into

consideration. Content validity, for example, is most commonly achieved through the

use of experts or judges who evaluate the "objectives of the instrument, the content areas,

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[14] Please see the "Definition of Terms" section of Chapter 1 for more information about the Ontario English Catholic school boards.

and the level of difficulty of the questions" (p. 184). Construct validity, in contrast, is a determination of the significance or meaning of the scores acquired through using the instrument (p. 184). The pilot study addressed the issue of content validity, as the participants functioned as "experts" by judging the instrument and providing written feedback to the researcher. Construct validity was addressed in the full study through the feedback obtained from participants regarding the development of the theory.

In addition to validity, several factors were considered in order to evaluate the reliability of the survey instrument. Creswell (2002) cautions that researchers should be aware of three factors that may result in unreliable data: ambiguous or unclear questions on instruments; varied, non-standardized procedures in the administration of tests; and fatigued or nervous participants (p. 180). In order to address the first of these factors, the pilot-test survey included a comment box, encouraging participants to comment on the clarity of the questions asked. Furthermore, the very nature of an Internet-based survey ensures a certain degree of standardization in terms of the administration of the test, as participants received the link to the online survey in their school-administered email inboxes. Finally, given that participants were able to complete the survey at their leisure, educators were able to access the questionnaire at whatever time and place was most convenient, minimizing the potential for fatigue or nervousness.

Mertens (2005) suggests that pilot study respondents should also be encouraged to draw the researcher's attention to ambiguities or additional response options that ought to be included in the questionnaire (p. 183). These issues were addressed with the text box at the end of the survey, within which participants were encouraged to discuss any aspects of the survey that required modification. The feedback received from the pilot

study participants was then used to further refine the survey instrument in terms of its

content, clarity and length, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Comparison of Pilot and Final Version of Survey Questions

Question	Pilot Study Survey	Final Survey
Q1	How many courses are you teaching this school year?	How many classes are you teaching this school year?
Q3	The extra-curricular activities currently available in your school include: concert band, jazz band, choir, jazz/glee choir, guitar ensemble, orchestra, Other: _____ Other: _____	The extra-curricular activities currently available in your school include: concert band, jazz band, choir, jazz/glee choir, guitar ensemble, orchestra, other (please specify): (text box: 5 lines)
Q4	In the last 5 years, student enrolment in your school's Grade 9 music courses has:	In the last 5 years, the number of Grade 9 students enrolled in music courses at your school has:
Q6	In the last 5 years, student enrolment in your school's Grade 11/12 music courses has:	In the last 5 years, the number of senior students (Grade 11, 12, or 5th year) enrolled in music courses has:

Note. For a more detailed comparison, please see the pilot study survey (Appendix D) and the final version of the survey (Appendix E).

The first question in the pilot survey inquired as to the number of *courses* taught

by the participant, rather than the number of *classes.* In many Ontario schools, a

combination of courses (for example, combined grade levels or even subject areas)

sometimes occurs within one class. Therefore, it was suggested that the question use the

term music "class" in order to ascertain the number of scheduled school periods taught by

the teacher.

The third question in the pilot survey listed a number of common extra-curricular activities that a school might offer in its music program, with the option for the participant to provide up to two additional activities. In order to allow the teacher to add more than two activities, and perhaps offer a more detailed description of those activities, the pilot study participants recommended that a text box be added to allow the respondents more freedom in their responses.

The fourth, fifth and sixth questions were originally formulated to ask about the enrolment trends of the courses at each grade level. The question was changed to reflect the number of students in each grade taking music courses due to the widespread practice of students taking courses at a grade level different from the grade in which they are officially registered. The pilot study respondents also explained that many students elect to take a fifth year of high school, thus leaving them out of questions six and seven which inquired about enrolment trends at the Grade 11 and 12 levels. It was, therefore, decided that those questions would be combined in the final version of the survey to include a reference to "senior students" whether they were in Grade 11, Grade 12 or their fifth year.

Phase One: Surveys

The first phase of this study constituted a "one-shot survey design," the most common type of descriptive survey research (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 198-9). The purpose of this approach was to gather information from a large number of participants about a particular issue at a specific point in time. It is, therefore, an ideal design for this study, which aims to survey as many high school music teachers in the English Public school boards as possible, during the second half of the 2011-2012 school year, in order to examine their perceptions of music education in Ontario.

The use of an electronic survey is undoubtedly the most effective method of data collection for this type of study. In addition to the obvious advantages of a reduction in the researcher's time and cost, easy access for the participants, and a quick response time, McMillan (2004) also notes that this approach is especially appropriate for "targeted professional groups…[when the survey instrument is] short and simple, and when a password can be used to assure anonymity" (p. 199). In addition, because all Ontario public school teachers are assigned their own email addresses by their respective school boards, and given access to computers and the Internet within their workplaces, the threat of bias that might normally be incurred by limiting the coverage of a study to only those participants with computer access was thus eliminated.

The participants for this study were currently practicing secondary school music teachers in Ontario English Public school boards. Although a complete representation of publicly-funded secondary school music education in Ontario would include the French Public, French Catholic, and English Catholic school boards, for practical and logistical reasons the target population of this study was music teachers in the English Public school boards only. Two factors contributed to this decision: language and resources.

The inclusion of the French Public and French Catholic school boards in this study would present some difficulty in terms of the language differences between me and the respondents. Mertens (2005) outlines several potential problems that may occur when a research instrument is translated into another language, including awkward wording, incomprehensibility, and even misunderstandings resulting from sociolinguistic and cultural differences (p. 183-5). In an effort to avoid such complications, this study

was conducted only in English, and was not distributed to music teachers currently employed by Ontario's French school boards.

The second factor contributing to the decision to include only English public school board secondary school music teachers in this study was the matter of available resources. As Lodico et al. (2010) explain, surveying every member of an "ideal population" for a research study is simply not realistic. Surveying every secondary school music teacher in the province of Ontario would have required inordinate time, money, and other resources that were beyond the scope of this study. The decision was made, therefore, to include a "realistic population" (p. 213) consisting of only those secondary school teachers who teach music within the English Public School Board system. Of the 909 publicly-funded secondary schools in Ontario, 605 secondary schools are in the English Public system. Therefore, 66.6% of the publicly-funded secondary schools were represented in the realistic population for this research.

In order to qualify for this study, participants were required to have at least one music course (indicated by an AM_ course code) in their 2011-2012 school year teaching assignments. The participants received an email message which included a Letter of Information (See Appendix F), informing them of the purpose of the study, the timeframe during which the study would occur, and a hyperlink to the online questionnaire. Completion of the questionnaire indicated the teacher's consent to participate in the study. To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the participants, the names of the teachers who completed the survey were not known to me. In some cases, the participants provided their school name to allow for the identification of multiple responses from the same school. This information, however, is known only to me and was not revealed to

anyone else. Each teacher, school, and board was assigned a random alpha-numeric code for identification purposes, and all identifying references were removed.

After each school board granted ethical approval, the survey was sent electronically to teachers in that board as a hyperlink within the body of an email. In most cases, the email message was sent directly from a school board representative to the secondary level music teachers. In some cases, the secondary level school principals received the email from their school board and were asked to forward it to their music teachers. In the cases where the principals were responsible for delivering the survey to their music teacher(s), I contacted each principal to confirm the number of teachers who received it. This information was used to calculate an accurate response rate for each participating school board. Due to the variation of ethics protocols in the 20 participating school boards, the email messages containing the Letter of Information and the link to the online survey were sent out at various times during the second semester of the 2011-2012 school year. Some participants received the email message as early as January, while others did not receive the email message until May.

Survey Design

In order to provide a context for the teachers' responses, demographic data were collected in the first section of the web-based survey. The first "page" of the survey contained six subject fields within which the participant was asked to provide the following background information:

- school (optional);
- school board;
- years of experience teaching music at his/her current school;

- years of experience teaching music in any secondary school;

- number of music teachers at the school this year;

- number of music classes taught by the participant in the current school year.

The second section of the survey contained questions about the curricular and extra-curricular programs offered at each school. The ambiguity and inconsistency of music course codes in Ontario[15] make it difficult to determine which music courses and activities are available in each school through analysis of government data. Therefore, data pertaining to the music programs were procured directly from the teachers in the online questionnaire. The format of these questions allowed the participant to "click" on the desired response(s) chosen from a list of 4-6 pre-determined responses (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Survey Questions as they appear on the SurveyMonkey website.

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[15] Please see Chapter 1 for a more detailed discussion of Ontario's course codes.

Where appropriate, the survey questions also included an option labelled *prefer not to respond*. Each question was followed by a text box, so that the participant had the opportunity to provide additional responses or comments, thus enriching the data both in terms of depth and detail. These questions inquired about the music courses and ensembles available to the students, other musical opportunities available at the school, and the teacher's perceptions of enrolment trends in the school music program (both curricular and extra-curricular).

The final section of the questionnaire asked teachers to use a text box to comment on possible changes that they would like to see in their school music programs (both curricular and extra-curricular), and what factors were perceived by the teachers as either facilitating or impeding the incorporation of these changes. Upon completing this final section of the survey, participants were asked if they would be willing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview with the researcher. If they indicated "yes," they were asked to contact the researcher electronically to schedule a telephone interview.

In order to maintain the confidentiality of the potential interview participants, they were not asked to provide their contact information within the survey, but rather my email address was provided so they could contact me directly. This method ensured that SurveyMonkey would not have any record of the participants' contact information. Upon completion of the survey, the participants submitted their responses by "clicking" on a "done" button at the end of the questionnaire.

Phase Two: Telephone Interviews

Although the survey instrument was used to provide a general overview of music education practices in Ontario Public schools, survey data were also supplemented and

enhanced with follow-up telephone interviews. After the participants contacted the

researcher by email to indicate their willingness to participate in a follow-up interview,

they were sent a Letter of Information (Appendix G) before a convenient date and time

was established for the telephone interview to take place. It should be noted that

although 85 teachers indicated their willingness to participate in the follow-up telephone

interview by indicating "yes" to the interview invitation on the survey, only 22 teachers

contacted me directly by email. I was unable to establish a mutually convenient date and

time for an interview to take place with 4 teachers. The remaining 18 teachers were

interviewed.

The interviews followed an "interview guide approach," in which "the interviewer

enters the interview session with a plan to explore a specific topic and to ask specific

open-ended questions of the interviewee" (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p. 183). Each

interview began with the question, "In general, what are your thoughts on music

education in Ontario?" in order to allow the participant to respond without being directed

towards any specific issue. Best and Kahn (2006) explain that employing this approach

allows the interview to remain conversational while still maintaining a systematic and

comprehensive process of data collection. Corbin and Strauss (2008) suggest that using

an unstructured interview format such as this allows the researcher to have an open

agenda, allowing the "free flow of information" in order to generate data-dense responses

(p. 27).

Using each participant's online questionnaire responses as a guide, the telephone

interview was also used to allow the interviewee to elaborate on his/her survey responses

in greater depth. These questions were introduced as, "In your survey, you indicated

_____. Could you tell me more about that?" Interviews were recorded (with

participant consent) using a Panasonic RR-US571 mp3 recording device. I then

transcribed each interview and submitted the transcript electronically to the interviewees

for their approval.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2012) warn that "there can be no single 'correct'

transcription; rather the issue becomes whether, to what extent and how a transcription is

useful for the research" (p. 426). The extent to which the transcriptions were useful in

this research relied on the participants' involvement through reviewing and reflecting on

their own responses. In order to ensure that the transcriptions were an accurate

representation of the participants' experiences, respondents were given the opportunity to

accept, reject, or revise the transcriptions of their interviews. In addition, an early draft

of Chapter 4 was sent electronically to the interview participants for their approval.

Through the utilization of this "respondent validation" (Cohen et al., p. 181), the validity

of the interview data were strengthened.

Data Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Quantitative Data. Although the quantitative data played a secondary role within

the qualitative-dominant design of this study, statistical analysis of the quantitative

responses to the online survey questions was used to supplement the qualitative data.

Demographic data, such as school population and the participants' years of teaching

experience were entered into a spreadsheet exactly as they appeared on the survey. The

survey questions regarding enrolment trends[16] required a multiple-choice response, and, for ease of tabulation and comparison, the four possible responses were converted into numerical data for analysis as follows: *Increased* = 1, *Decreased* = 2, *Not Changed* = 3, and *I don't know/I prefer not to respond* = 4. Each course and extra-curricular activity reported by a participant was represented numerically in the spreadsheet as *yes* = 1 or *no* = 2. Analysis of the quantitative data was performed using the *Data Analysis* function of the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet program.

Qualitative Data. The use of computer software in the analysis of qualitative data is becoming more and more prevalent in educational research literature (Merriam, 2009; Quartaroli, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Although Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) can be an effective tool, it is important to note that the researcher remains responsible for the analysis of the data, while the role of the software program is to assist in the sorting, searching, manipulating and retrieving of data sets (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 2009). After considering the cost, attributes and availability of various CAQDAS programs, I chose to purchase the ATLAS.ti7 software for use in this study.

Following the method suggested by Pomerantz (2004), all of the survey responses and interview transcripts were converted to narrow width MS Word files with line breaks, and then imported into the ATLAS.ti7 project file, known as a "hermeneutic unit"

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[16] The survey questions regarding enrolment trends were presented in the questionnaire as, "In the last 5 years, the number of [Grade 9s/Grade 10s/Senior students] has: Increased, Decreased, Not Changed, I don't know/I prefer not to respond." For the complete survey, please refer to Appendix E.

(Friese, 2012, p.7). I was then able to review and analyze data in these hermeneutic units using ATLAS.ti7 software with a grounded theory approach.

Data Analysis: Theory Generation

Since its emergence in the 1960s (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), grounded theory has developed into one of the most commonly used qualitative research approaches (Newby, 2010; Strauss and Corbin, 1998; Thomas, 2007). Given that the aim of this study was to understand teachers' perceptions of the current state of music education in Ontario, grounded theory was a particularly effective approach in achieving that goal. Newby (2010) explains:

> The [grounded theory] approach takes its name from the fact that the theory that is generated is *grounded* in real world data. In other words, it is not a generalisation or idealisation of reality. It is not what should be, might be or could be under certain circumstances. It is what is. (p. 487)

To discover "what is" in school music education practices, I analyzed the qualitative data using the three stages of grounded theory, *open coding*, *axial coding* and *selective coding*, in order to generate themes (or *codes*).

In *open coding*, the first stage of grounded theory, the text of the qualitative data is used to conceptualize, define and develop categories (and eventually, subcategories). Each category is grouped according to its properties (the characteristics of a category) and its dimensions (the location of a property along a continuum), allowing for the identification of emerging patterns (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 117). I used the process of open coding to reduce the large quantity of data to smaller categories of data, which I then analyzed through the process of axial coding.

Axial coding, the second phase of grounded theory, involves relating categories "to their subcategories to form more precise and complete explanations about phenomena" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 124). The process of axial coding added depth and structure to the various categories that were established in the first phase of open coding. The goal of axial coding is to "systematically develop and relate categories" (Strauss & Corbin, p. 142).

After the interrelationships were identified between a central (or "core") category and various other open coding categories, I developed a *coding paradigm*, which is essentially a diagram portraying these interrelationships (Creswell, 2002). In addition to the core category, the coding paradigm includes various conditions, such as causal conditions (events that influence phenomena), intervening conditions (events that are often unexpected, and that alter the impact of causal conditions), and conditions based on context (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). According to Creswell, the coding paradigm may also include strategies that result from the core phenomenon and the consequences that occur when those strategies are employed. The coding paradigm generated from the data in this study is discussed in Chapter 5.

The third and final phase of the grounded theory approach is selective coding. In this phase, I integrated the major categories in order to create a larger theoretical scheme, or theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Through this process, my role as researcher transitioned from a position of description to one of conceptualization. The next step was to refine and validate the theory for internal consistency and logic. As Strauss and Corbin explain, "a theory that is grounded in data should be recognizable to participants" (p. 161). To this end, the teachers who participated in the telephone interviews were

contacted by email and given the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the theory.

Summary

This descriptive research employs a qualitative-dominant mixed methods approach with an embedded design in order to present the current state of music education in Ontario from the perspective of secondary school music teachers. A grounded theory approach guided the analysis and interpretation of data gleaned from online surveys and telephone interviews. In the grounded theory process, data is continuously revisited and re-evaluated as the theory emerges and evolves (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Newby, 2010). At each stage of the study, past stages were reflected upon and future stages were influenced; however, there was a linear progression in which the stages of the study occurred, as outlined in Figure 5.
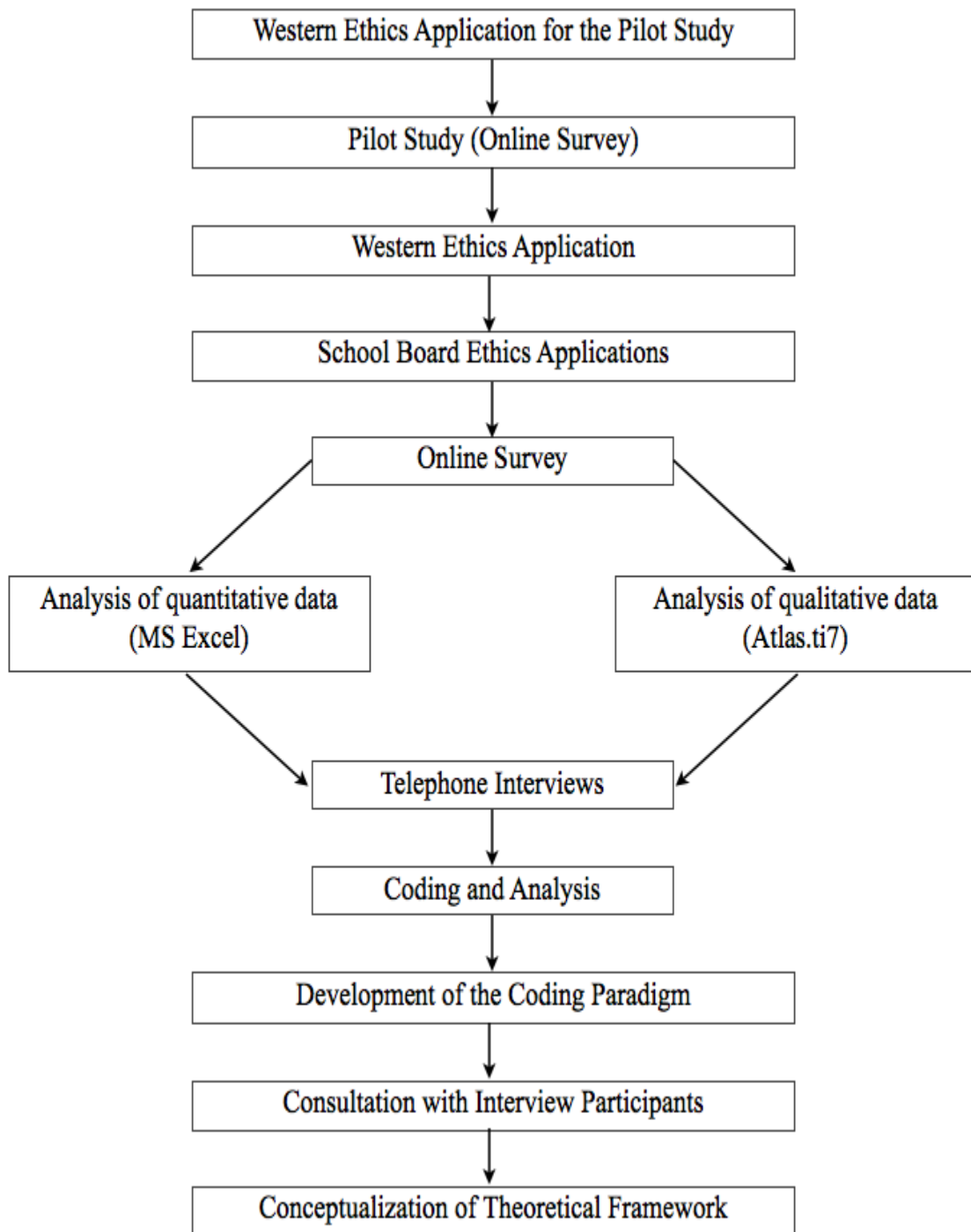
Figure 5. Graphic representation of the stages of this study.

This study began with a pilot study for the purpose of refining the survey instrument. Following ethics approval from Western and the participating school boards, a hyperlink to the online survey was sent electronically to secondary music teachers. Data obtained from the survey responses and the follow-up interview transcripts are presented in Chapter 4. These findings were then analyzed and coded using a grounded theory approach. The resulting theoretical framework, developed in consultation with participating teachers, is presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4

Findings

As discussed in Chapter 3, this is a predominantly qualitative study, with some

quantitative data embedded within it in order to enrich the qualitative responses. It is not

the objective of this research to utilize a statistical sample to produce results that can be

generalized to the entire population. As Corbin and Strauss (2008) explain,

"generalization is not the purpose of qualitative research" (p. 319). Rather, data are

intended to produce a representation of the way in which practising secondary level

music educators perceive the current state of music education in this province.

Quantitative data are provided in order to give context to the qualitative data as part of a

thick description of the findings. The quantitative data are derived from teachers' own

reporting of their perceptions of enrolment trends, as attempting to derive meaning from

the enrolment data recorded by the Government of Ontario is made problematic by the

inconsistency in course labels between schools and school boards.[17] By presenting the

data in this way, readers are encouraged to make informed decisions concerning the

relevance of the findings to their own situations. In a qualitative study, it is the

researcher's obligation to provide a thorough description of the research context in order

to allow readers to decide for themselves the extent to which the findings apply to their

own circumstances (Merriam, 2009). It is considered that the most detailed description

possible of the survey respondents will aid the reader in contextualising the perceptions

of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire and/or participated in an interview.

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[17] Further discussion of the inconsistency in Ontario secondary school music credit system can be found in Chapters 1 and 2.

This chapter is divided into three parts: the limitations for participation, the findings of the online survey (Phase 1), and the interview (Phase 2) responses. Following a brief description of the limitations for participation, the questionnaire findings (Phase 1) are presented as they occurred in the seven sections of the online survey:

1. Demographics;

2. Course offerings;

3. Grade 9 enrolment trends;

4. Grade 10 enrolment trends;

5. Senior enrolment trends;

6. Extra-curricular music program;

7. Open-ended question.

Data from section one are primarily quantitative in nature as all the questions (other than the school name) require a numeric response. Sections two through six contain both quantitative and qualitative data: teachers were given the opportunity to express which enrolment trends were occurring in their curricular and extra-curricular music programs in addition to *why* they believe certain enrolment trends may be occurring. The final section of the survey inquired as to respondents' perceptions of the future direction(s) of music education in their schools and is, therefore, entirely qualitative in nature.

This chapter concludes with a presentation of the interview findings (Phase 2). In most cases, the interview questions were designed to follow up on each participant's survey responses. Interviewees were encouraged to express their observations on music education in their schools and in Ontario overall.

Limitations for Participation

At the time of this study, of the 909 secondary schools in Ontario, 605 were located within the 31 Ontario English Public school boards that qualified to participate in this study (Government of Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2012); however, to ensure that this number accurately represented the number of schools offering music, I examined the curricular offerings in each of these 605 secondary schools. In most cases, electronic versions of the course calendars were available on the school or school board websites. I used these course calendars to ascertain whether at least one music course (indicated by an "AM_" course code) was being offered by each school. If this information was unavailable online, I contacted those schools by phone to inquire about their course offerings.   One hundred and thirteen schools did not offer any music courses and, therefore, did not meet the parameters of this study. In most cases, these schools without music programs were identified as adult education centres, E-learning centres, technological skills centres, or alternative schools. Each of the remaining 492 Ontario English Public high schools offered at least one music course, thereby qualifying for participation in this research.

Of the 31 school boards (492 schools), 20 school boards granted ethical approval, which left 381 schools that met the requirements of this research. Seven of the school boards granting ethical approval also required approval from individual school principals before the music teacher(s) in that school could be invited to participate; 47 principals declined. Therefore, in the end, the link to the online survey was sent to the music teachers in 334 schools representing 67.9% of the 492 Ontario English public secondary

schools offering music courses. Please refer to Figure 6 for a schematic representation of the process through which the participating schools were determined.

There are 909 secondary schools in Ontario.

304 schools were in the English Catholic, French or French Catholic School boards.

113 schools did not offer at least one music course.

111 schools did not receive approval from the school board.

47 schools did not receive approval from the principal.

Therefore 334 schools were contacted to participate in this study.
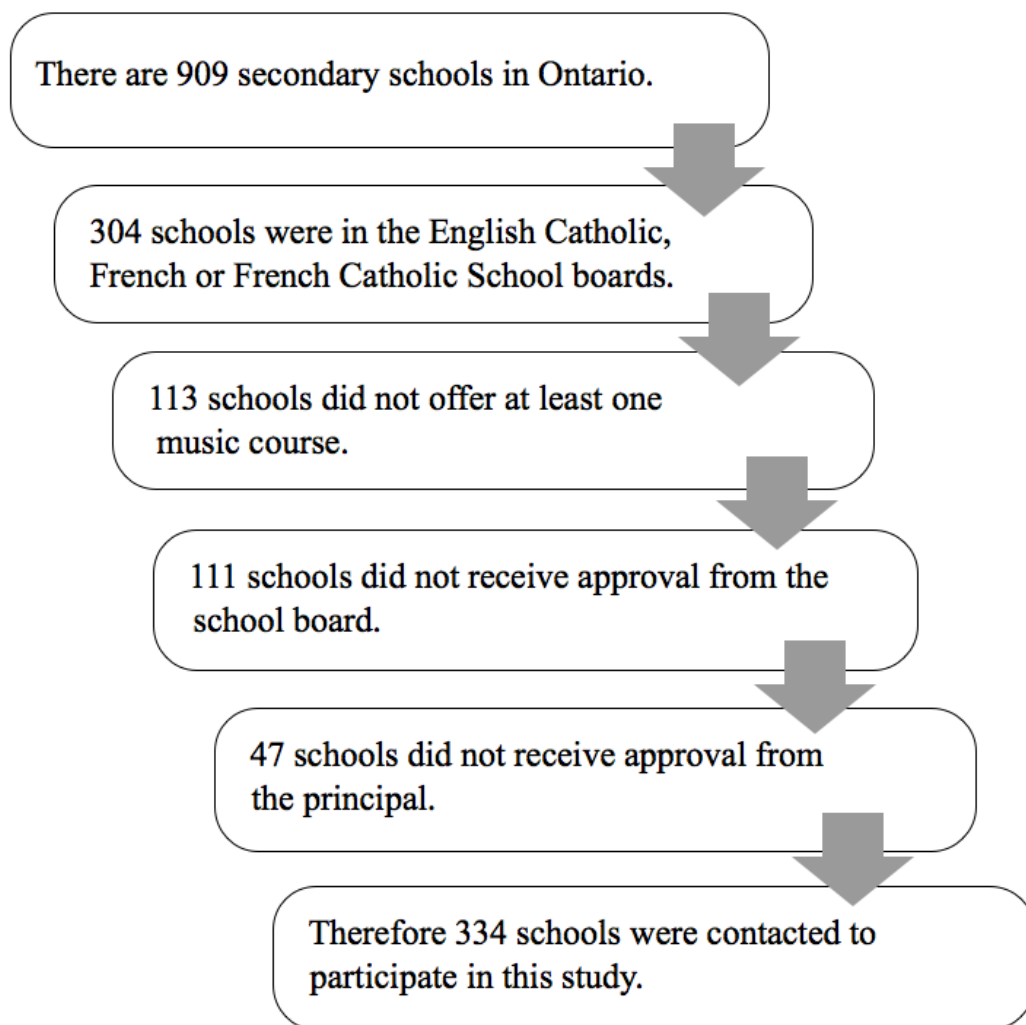
Figure 6. Schematic representation of the process followed to determine participating schools.

In total, 162 surveys were submitted by Ontario music teachers. One survey was not included in the data, as it was completed by an elementary teacher and, therefore, did not meet the inclusion criteria for this study. There were 10 incomplete surveys

submitted in which the participants provided only their demographic information. Online surveys hosted by the SurveyMonkey website present the demographic information as *page 1* and the participant is required to select *page 2* in order to access the rest of the questionnaire. This format may have been misleading for those participants who only completed the first "page" of the survey. The 10 incomplete surveys were not included in data analysis. Therefore, 151 questionnaires were included in the final data set, representing the responses from each of the 20 school boards that granted ethical approval for this study.

Survey Findings

The online survey (Appendix E) was divided into seven sections: demographics, course offerings, Grade 9 enrolment trends, Grade 10 enrolment trends, senior enrolment trends, extra-curricular music program, and the open-ended question.

Section 1: Demographics. The first section of the online questionnaire was designed to gather basic demographic information about the teachers and the music programs in their schools. The first "page" of the survey appeared as follows:

- School:

- Years' experience teaching music at current school:

- Years' experience teaching music at any secondary school:

- How many music classes are you teaching this school year?

- How many music teachers are at your school this year?

- Approximate number of students enrolled in music courses at your school this school year:

- Approximate number of students involved in extra-curricular music activities in your school this school year:

The Participants. The 151 respondents had from 1 to 35 years of teaching experience, with an average of 13.9 years (SD=8.53). All of the participants had at least one music course (designated as "AM_") in their 2011-2012 teaching assignments. During the 2011-2012 school year, the participants reported teaching from 1 to 8 music courses. Four of these teachers explained that they were teaching their full course load of 6 courses during the school day in addition to teaching for-credit courses outside of school hours. The participants had from 1 to 29 years of experience in their current school, with an average of 9.4 years (SD=7.31). The median was 7 years, and the mode was 1 year, indicating that many of the participants (17 teachers) had only been at their current school for one year. More detailed demographic results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Demographics of Survey Participants (n=151)

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Experience in Secondary Schools			
	Under 5 years	28	18.5%
	6-10 years	36	23.8%
	11-15 years	27	17.9%
	16-20 years	16	10.6%
	21-25 years	28	18.5%
	26-30 years	14	9.3%
	Over 30 years	2	1.3%
Experience in Current School			
	Under 5 years	58	38.4%
	6-10 years	38	25.2%
	11-15 years	21	13.9%
	16-20 years	18	11.9%
	21-25 years	10	6.6%
	26-30 years	6	4.0%
	Over 30 years	0	0%
2011-2012 Music Teaching Assignment			
	1 course	6	4.0%
	2 courses	13	8.6%
	3 courses	8	5.3%
	4 courses	21	13.9%
	5 courses	24	15.9%
	6 courses	75	49.7%
	7+ courses	4	2.6%

Multiple online surveys were submitted from 15 schools, representing a total of 32 teachers. For data pertaining to the teachers (i.e. years of experience, number of music classes, and the open-ended question), all of the surveys were included (n=151). For data pertaining to the schools (i.e. enrolment trends, school population etc.), only the first teacher from each school to submit his/her survey was included in the findings. After eliminating the survey responses from redundant schools, there were 134 completed surveys (n=134).

Given that 492 English Public secondary schools offered music courses in the 2011-2012 school year (Government of Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2012), final data represent 27.2% of these schools. Of the 334 schools that were invited to participate (with permission granted from the school board and/or principal), the participants represent 134 schools, a response rate of 40.1%.

The Schools. The participating schools represent a wide range of school sizes, from schools with fewer than 300 students, to others exceeding 2200 students. School population data were unavailable for 13 schools: 8 participants did not provide the school name on the survey; 5 schools did not consist of Grades 9 through 12 (some were junior high schools and some were newly opened schools). The school populations of the remaining 121 schools were acquired from the Ministry of Education website, indicating an average school population of 1141 students (SD=405.75). Most of the participating schools (78.6%) were mid-sized with student populations from 500 to 1500 students. The median school population was 1114, and the mode was 1320. Almost half (43%) of the participating schools employed two music teachers in the 2011-2012 school year. Table 5 provides more detailed demographic information on the participating schools.

Table 5

Demographics of Participating Schools (n=134)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
School Population[a]		
Under 500	6	5.0%
501-1000	40	33.1%
1001-1500	55	45.5%
1501-2000	18	14.9%
Over 2000	2	1.7%
Music Teachers in School		
1 music teacher	38	28.4%
2 music teachers	53	39.6%
3 music teachers	26	19.4%
4 music teachers	10	7.5%
5 or more music teachers	7	5.2%

[a]School population data are only available from 121 of the participating schools (n=121).

There was a wide range in the response rates within individual school boards. In one school board, only 11% of the teachers who received the survey decided to participate. In another board, there was an 88% response rate. Nonetheless, teachers from all 20 school boards responded. Teachers who received the survey from their principals had an average response rate of 68.3%, compared to the 35.4% response rate from teachers who received the survey directly from their school board. Given the direct contact that teachers have with their principals on a daily basis, and the more distanced relationship between teachers and their school boards, there might have been a greater incentive to complete the survey when it was received directly from the principal. The issue of principal influence over music teachers will be discussed further in the interview section of this chapter. More details concerning the response rate data are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

School Board Response Rates (n=20)

Survey Distribution	Board Code	Percentage
From Principal		
	D	70.8%
	E	60.0%
	J	55.6%
	M	87.5%
	N	33.3%
	S	85.0%
	T	85.7%
	Mean	**68.3%**
From School Board	A	62.5%
	B	75.0%
	C	20.0%
	F	45.5%
	G	36.8%
	H	28.6%
	I	23.9%
	K	42.9%
	L	18.8%
	O	11.1%
	P	16.7%
	Q	52.9%
	R	25.0%
	Mean	**35.4%**

Section 2: Course offerings. The second section of the online questionnaire

pertained to the curricular music programs at the participating schools. The first question

appeared as follows:

- The music courses currently available in your school include:

  - ☐ Vocal

  - ☐ Instrumental (winds)

  - ☐ Instrumental (strings)

  - ☐ Guitar

  - ☐ Keyboard

  - ☐ Other: _____

In addition to the traditional instrumental and vocal programs that one might

expect to find in Ontario music classrooms, there were also music courses offered in

various other specialty areas such as jazz, steel pan, percussion, musical theatre, rock

music, and special education. There was a noteworthy representation of the "Music and

Computers" course (Ontario course code "AMM"), which was offered in 12% of the

participating schools. This new course, introduced by the Ministry of Education in 2010,

includes topics such as recording, mixing, and composing music. The most common

course was wind (instrumental) music, which was reportedly offered at 97% of the

participating schools. For a more detailed representation of the course offerings, please

refer to Table 7.

Table 7

Music Course Offerings in Participating Schools (n=134)

Course	Frequency	Percentage
Wind	130	97.0
Guitar	92	68.7
Vocal	90	67.2
Strings	28	20.9
Keyboard	28	20.9
Music Theatre	20	14.9
Music & Computers	16	11.9
Percussion	16	11.9
Jazz	8	6.0
Steel Pans	6	4.5
Rock Music	2	1.5
Special Education	2	1.5

Section 3: Grade 9 enrolment trends. The next question regarding curricular music programs enquired about the Grade 9 enrolment trends at the participating schools. It appeared in the survey as follows:

- In the last 5 years, the number of Grade 9 students enrolled in music courses at your school has:

  - ☐ Increased

  - ☐ Decreased

  - ☐ Not Changed

  - ☐ I don't know / I prefer not to respond

- Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why enrolment has increased/decreased.

Of the 134 schools represented in the survey responses, 67 participants (50%)
reported a decrease in the number of Grade 9 students enrolled in music courses in their
schools in the last 5 years. The teachers suggested a number of factors which may have
contributed to this decrease, but the most common reasons given were an overall decline
in the school population (mentioned in 25 surveys) and various difficulties in the feeder
school music programs (mentioned in 23 surveys). The former may suggest that the
percentage of students in the school taking music may be staying relatively constant, but,
as the school population decreases, so too does the enrolment in music courses. This
issue will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

A variety of concerns were raised by the participants regarding music programs at
the elementary level, from disappearing programs to non-specialist music teachers. A
sample of their comments follow:

- "An elementary feeder school teacher was away for one year and we had a drastic
  drop in enrolment. We believe it was due to the fact that students did not have the
  same exposure and instruction in their [elementary] music studies as previous
  years." (Teacher Z15)

- "Fewer of our feeder schools offer instruction in music (especially instrumental)
  than 5 years ago." (Teacher Z28)

- "There are no established music programs/teachers at our elementary schools.
  Only private instructors who come into the schools." (Teacher Z37)

- "The elementary music programs are virtually non-existent and the ones that do
  exist have teachers teaching [band] who have never played a wind instrument."
  (Teacher Z41)

- "No music programs currently offering instrumental music at the elementary level feed into our school." (Teacher Z85)

- "Our feeder school music instructors have changed every year, and with no continuity and lack of access to students, the numbers have dropped." (Teacher Z115)

- "Within our board there is no apparent effort to ensure elementary arts programs including music are delivered to all students. For example, in many schools, the arts are pushed aside to make room for extra literacy practice so that provincial test scores are good, or they are not taught because there are no teachers who are qualified or even comfortable teaching them." (Teacher Z120)

- "Elementary teachers that retire are being replaced by non-specialists. Elementary music seems to be given sessions of 40 minutes per week of recorder and vocal music. Music students are turned off by their experience in music before they get to the secondary level." (Teacher Z136)

These concerns regarding music education practices in elementary schools will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

Interestingly, the survey responses that reported an increase (19.4%) or no change (20.1%) in their Grade 9 enrolment over the last 5 years had similar influencing factors as their colleagues with declining enrolment. In 5 of the schools with increasing enrolment numbers, the overall student populations in their schools were also increasing. The participants indicated this through comments such as "the overall Grade 9 enrolment at the school [has] increased" (Teacher Z127) and "[the] number of students entering Grade 9 has increased" (Teacher Z118). The music teachers in 11 secondary schools suggested

that the greatest contributing factor to their programs either staying the same or increasing in enrolment was the positive influence of their feeder schools music programs. The following teachers' comments illustrate the positive impact of their feeder school music programs on the grade 9 enrolment trends were as follows:

- "We have some fairly good feeder schools which helps keep our enrolment [in Grade 9 music courses] consistent. We expect with changes in elementary staffing that this will directly impact and decrease our student enrolment next year." (Teacher Z23)

- "This [Grade 9 enrolment] fluctuates and is highly dependent on the Grade 8 [music] teachers and [music] programs at middle schools." (Teacher Z60)

- "Music is mandatory in Grade 7 and 8." (Teacher Z103)

- "[There is a] better music teacher at the middle school where most of our students come from." (Teacher Z110)

Section 4: Grade 10 enrolment trends. In order to compare the Grade 9 enrolment trends to the years that follow, it was important to consider the enrolment trends at the Grade 10 level. To that end, the question in the fourth section of the survey appeared as follows:

- In the last 5 years, the number of Grade 10 students enrolled in music courses at your school has:

  ☐ Increased

  ☐ Decreased

  ☐ Not Changed

  ☐ I don't know / I prefer not to respond

- Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why enrolment has increased/decreased.

Similar to the Grade 9 results, 39% of teachers also reported that their music enrolment was decreasing at the Grade 10 level. However, almost half of the participants (47%) reported that their Grade 10 enrolment numbers have been staying the same (24.6%) or increasing (22.4%) over the last 5 years, both of which surpass the percentages of the Grade 9 students in the same categories, indicating good retention in Grade 10 in some schools. For a more detailed comparison of the Grade 9 and 10 enrolment trends in music courses reported by teachers, please see Figure 7.
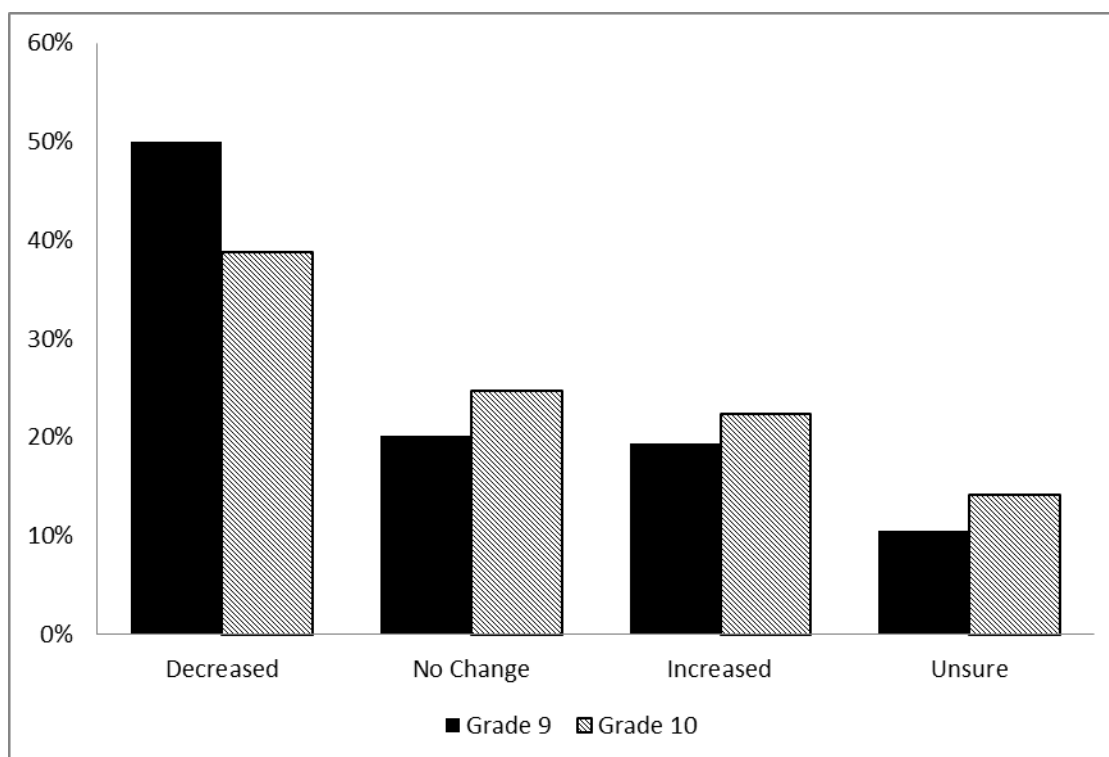
Figure 7. Graph representing the enrolment trends at the Grade 9 and 10 levels, as reported by participants (n=134).

In those schools where the teachers reported that there is a decrease in the number of Grade 10 students enrolling in music courses, the issue of decreasing school populations was again raised. Eleven teachers (7.3%) explained that as the school population decreased, the number of Grade 10 students enrolling in music courses also decreased. In addition, there is also a "trickle-down" effect when the Grade 9 enrolment decreases which often contributes to a similar declining pattern in the Grade 10 and senior grades in the years that follow. Beyond these factors, the teachers suggested that the most common contributing factor to a decrease in Grade 10 enrolment was conflicts arising from scheduling issues. For example, 7 teachers reported that there were scheduling conflicts at the Grade 10 level, such that the only Grade 10 music course was offered in the student timetable at the same time as another course of which there was

only one section. To exacerbate the issue, many Ontario schools now offer "specialty"

programs such as the International Baccalaureate Program, French Immersion Programs,

or the Specialty High Skills Major Programs. The academic demands of these programs

often make it difficult or impossible for Grade 10 students to participate in such programs

and also have room in their course timetable for a music course.

Section 5: Senior enrolment trends. The final question about the curricular

music programs in the participating schools appeared as follows:

- In the last 5 years, the number of senior students (Grade 11, 12 or 5th year)

  enrolled in music courses at your school has:

  - ☐ Increased

  - ☐ Decreased

  - ☐ Not Changed

  - ☐ I don't know / I prefer not to respond

- Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why enrolment has increased/decreased.

At the senior level, more than half of the teachers (50.8%) reported that the

number of students enrolled in music has either stayed the same or increased over the last

5 years. The reasons given for this phenomenon included:

- a "culture" or "sense of belonging" in the music department (6 schools);

- new music courses being offered at the senior level (4 schools);

- an improved music program at their feeder schools (3 schools);

- music courses occurring outside of school hours, for example, during the lunch break, before school or after school (2 schools); and

- a connection with the wider community (2 schools).

For a more detailed representation of the enrolment trends occurring at the senior level in Ontario secondary music programs, please refer to Figure 8.
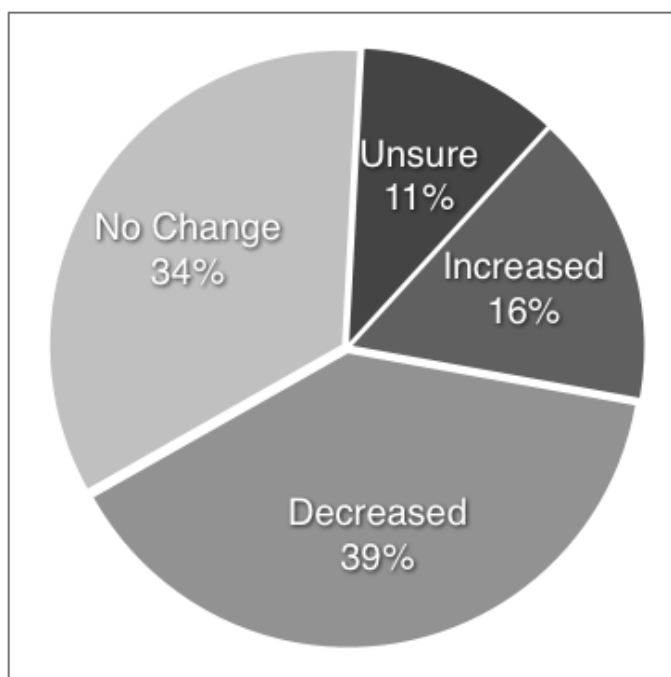
Figure 8. Graph representing the senior level (Grade 11, 12 and 5th year) music enrolment trends over the last 5 years, as reported by participants (n=134).

In schools that reported a decrease in the number of senior students enrolling in music courses, the reasons given were similar to those offered in reference to Grades 9 and 10: Declining school populations (10 schools); scheduling conflicts with other courses and programs within the school (26 schools); and the "trickle down" effect from the feeder school music programs (3 schools).

Section 6: Extra-curricular music program. There are many extra-curricular

(or "co-curricular") music activities available in Ontario high schools. Not surprisingly,

the most common extra-curricular music activities include concert band (85.1%), jazz

band (72.4%), choir (58.2%), glee/jazz choir (39.6%), and orchestra (14.9%). For a more

detailed account of the percentages of schools that offer various extra-curricular

activities, please see Table 8.

Table 8

Extra-curricular music activities in participating schools (n=134)

Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Concert Band	114	85.1%
Jazz Band	97	72.4%
Choir	78	58.2%
Glee/Jazz Choir	53	39.6%
Orchestra	20	14.9%
Guitar Ensemble	17	12.7%
Chamber (wind)	14	10.4%
String Ensemble	13	9.7%
Pit Band/Musical	11	8.2%
Rock Band	9	6.7%
Percussion Ensemble	6	4.5%
Chamber Choir	6	4.5%
Open Mic/Coffee House	4	3.0%
Drumline	4	3.0%
Other	4	3.0%
Steel Pans	3	2.2%
Flute Choir	3	2.2%
Marching Band	2	1.5%
Song-writing/Composition	2	1.5%

Several extra-curricular activities were combined under the category "other" due

to their small representation in the surveys. These activities included a school radio

station, a ukulele ensemble, a barbershop quartet, and a Celtic music ensemble. It should

be noted that several teachers indicated that their schools also have music student councils. Since some teachers regarded a school music student council as an extra-curricular music activity and some did not, this category was not included in the data.

In 83% of the participating schools, teachers reported that student involvement in extra-curricular activities has either increased (45%) or remained consistent (38%) over the last 5 years. The most common reason given for increasing student involvement in extra-curricular activities was the addition of new ensembles or groups (15 schools). Some participants also suggested that changes in music teaching staff (2 schools) and participation in music festivals and trips (5 schools) may have been contributing factors in the increasing number of students in their extra-curricular music ensembles. For more details about the survey responses regarding students' involvement in extra-curricular activities, please see Figure 9.
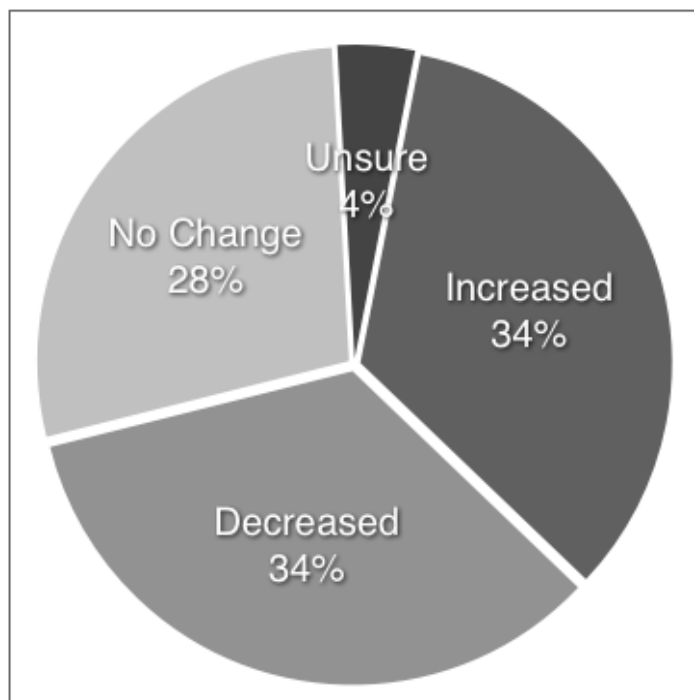
Figure 9. Graph representing the involvement trends in extra-curricular music activities over the last 5 years as reported by participants (n=134).

Section 7: Open-ended question. The final section of the online survey read as follows: "What changes, if any, would you like to see in your music program (curricular or extra-curricular)? What factors would facilitate or impede the implementation of these changes?" Although 18 teachers left this section blank, 133 participants (88.1%) provided insightful information in response to these questions. Some of the responses were unique to the particular situations at individual schools, however, there were some commonalities in the responses as well. The most common themes that emerged in response to the open-ended question included:

- funding (34 teachers);
- music education at the elementary level (33 teachers);
- school board and/or school administration (28 teachers);

- repertoire credits (17 teachers); and

- alternative music programs (8 teachers).

Funding.   Many teachers described the issue of funding as a substantial obstacle impeding positive change in their music programs. In addition to the obvious costs such as instrument purchasing and repairs, the acquisition of new repertoire, and the purchasing and maintenance of technological equipment (sound systems, recording equipment, composition software, etc.), there are the additional costs such as participating in music festivals (entry fees, bussing, and travel) and improvements to and maintenance of the music room and/or auditorium. The issue of funding was particularly poignant during the last school year, as the Ontario Ministry of Education released *Fees for Learning Materials and Activities Guideline* in 2011. This document prohibits schools from requiring fees from students to supplement their curricular program during the school day. This document explicitly mentions "musical instruments" as being "ineligible for fee charges" (p. 3). According to the participants, it is not unusual for music programs to require a course fee for participation in music courses in Ontario. Under the new Ministry of Education guidelines, these fees are no longer permitted, thus exacerbating financial challenges. Other funding challenges were also expressed by the participants, such as:

- "The school owns LOTS of outdated and broken instruments. [I'd like to] sell the unusable instruments to raise money and buy new, usable ones." (Teacher Z16)

- "I would like to see more money spent on the [music] program for instruments, music and the facility. […]. The factors that impede implementation [of positive changes in the music program are] money, money, money. We do very well at

raising funds at the local level, but we need much more for instruments, equipment, auditorium upkeep, trips, master classes, etc." (Teacher Z47)

Music education at the elementary level. Of the 151 teachers who participated in the online survey, 33 teachers, representing 32 schools, responded to the open-ended question with concerns about declining music programs at the elementary level in Ontario. For example, Teacher Z18 explains:

"I feel [that] poor music education in the elementary schools in our area has contributed to the decline in [high school music enrolment] numbers. In our area, there are no music specialists in the elementary schools and [music] is usually taught by the [non-specialist] classroom teacher."

In addition to non-specialists teaching music at the elementary level, the issue of *cross-panel teaching*, in which a music educator would teach at both the elementary and secondary levels, was also a common theme in the answers to the open-ended question. According to Teacher Z85:

"[The] biggest change [I'd like to see in my music program] would be the implementation of programming at the elementary level which would transition to high school. Students currently entering [Grade] 9 are entering with very limited to no skills in the Arts, specifically Instrumental Music. Implementing the ability to 'cross panel teach' would potentially open a door for this programming to happen."

Several participants expressed concern that the number of music teachers at the elementary schools with a baccalaureate music degree is declining. In an effort to revive these struggling elementary level music programs, some high school teachers reported

that they have initiated music education programs after school for elementary students.

This phenomenon is reported by many teachers as happening in the community context,

but the participants explained that they are unable to have similar programs within the

school context due to restrictions from the elementary school teachers' union (EFTO) and

the secondary school teachers' union (OSSTF).

School board and/or school administration. In addition to struggling with union

regulations, 28 teachers, representing 27 schools, answered the open-ended question by

expressing their perception that music education is not valued and/or supported by their

administration and/or their school board. The recent focus by school boards (and

therefore school administrations) on literacy, numeracy and physical education, has left

music teachers feeling discouraged about the lack of support they perceive for their

programs. One teacher laments:

> "I would like an administration and board that recognize the importance and value
>
> of music in our schools – it should not be the 'chopping block' area of the
>
> curriculum when cuts have to be made." (Teacher Z36)

Further, teachers report a shift in power in recent years. More major decisions are now

being made at the board level, which are then enforced by the administrative level,

leaving teachers themselves, with very little influence or authority within their own

classrooms. Participants also report a decrease in the number of school boards that have

a designated music consultant. In many cases, the teachers report that there is not even

an arts consultant at the board level. One teacher explains:

> "There needs to be better communication and support from the board office. We
>
> need an arts consultant who can help arrange curriculum in-services for teachers

[…] I have been with this board since 1991 and I can only remember one

initiative that has come down from the board to support music in our schools.

That was the hiring of a [music] consultant for a six month period." (Teacher

Z120)

In the absence of support for music education at the board level, even those teachers who

report feeling supported by their school administration express frustration that their

principals have the role of "middle management." School administrators are expected to

follow the directives from the school board without having the authority to make

decisions based on the unique needs of their particular school.

Repertoire Credits. One of the most perplexing issues in secondary level music

education in Ontario is the use of the "repertoire credit," or the practice of granting a

course credit for participation in a music ensemble outside of school hours. Participants

report that some school boards allow the use of this credit, while other boards do not.

Within those school boards that do recognize the repertoire credit, some school principals

allow its use and some do not. Teacher Z115 explains:

"I would like [to offer] an AMR (Repertoire) music course, though I have been

told that this is not possible in my current school. No other explanation is

forthcoming."

Teacher Z52 offers a similar comment:

"I would like to see our school get band for credit [AMR] courses so that we can

compete with other schools around us who all seem to offer it. It's a big sore spot

for parents and students who enrol here and are aware that other schools offer it."

The survey responses indicate that, in some schools, a non-repertoire credit (such as AMH) is granted for participation in a school ensemble outside of school hours. In other schools, a repertoire credit is granted to students who participate in a music course within the regular school day timetable. There were 17 teachers (representing 16 schools) who expressed that they would like to see a repertoire credit being offered in their schools for participation in music ensembles outside of the regular school day. According to Teacher Z107:

> "I would like a repertoire music course to give students an incentive to a) stay in music and b) attend rehearsals."

In two of these cases, the teachers explained that their school had repertoire credits in the past, but the policy was changed in response to union objections.

Alternative music programs. The final theme that emerged from the survey responses to the open-ended question was the issue of alternative music programs.   This issue was addressed by 8 teachers from 8 different schools.   Traditionally, school music programs have focused on vocal music, wind instruments, string instruments, and percussion. In recent years, several music programs have expanded to include keyboard and guitar programs. In response to the open-ended question, two teachers expressed an interest in offering a non-performance based music course, in which senior students could learn about music without having prior musical experience. Another teacher suggested that music courses need to become more relevant by incorporating rock music and other contemporary styles. Three teachers reported that they would like to offer more technology-based music courses, incorporating mixing, sequencing and other electronic means of music-making into their music programs. Two teachers expressed an interest in

offering world music courses, in order to make the music program more relevant to the diverse student populations at their schools. The participants report that the main impediments to the implementation of such "alternative" programs is lack of support from the administration, lack of funding and a "backlash from traditionalists" (Teacher Z131) both within the school and in the surrounding community.

Interview Findings

Demographics of interview participants. The 18 interview participants had from 2 to 28 years of secondary level music teaching experience and represented 11 school boards. They reported having from 1 to 26 years of music teaching experience in their current secondary school, with a 2011-2012 teaching assignment of one to six music courses. For a more detailed account of the demographic results of the interview participants, please refer to Table 9.

Table 9

Demographics of Interview Participants (n=18)

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Experience in Secondary Schools			
	Under 5 years	2	11.1%
	6-10 years	4	22.2%
	11-15 years	3	16.7%
	16-20 years	5	27.8%
	21-25 years	2	11.1%
	26-30 years	2	11.1%
Experience in Current School			
	Under 5 years	6	33.3%
	6-10 years	4	22.2%
	11-15 years	3	16.7%
	16-20 years	2	11.1%
	21-25 years	2	11.1%
	26-30 years	1	5.6%
2011-2012 Music Teaching Assignment			
	1 course	2	11.1%
	2 courses	2	11.1%
	3 courses	0	0.0%
	4 courses	3	16.7%
	5 courses	3	16.7%
	6 courses	8	44.4%

Coding and analysis of themes. The coding and analysis of concepts or *themes* is a process by which the researcher is required to build a "conceptual pyramid" with a solid foundation of basic-level concepts that will eventually support the higher-level concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 2008, p. 52). This process, as introduced in Chapter 3, consists of three stages: *open coding, axial coding* and *selective coding.*

In the 3rd edition of *Basics of Qualitative Research* (2008), Strauss and Corbin explain that the separation made between open coding and axial coding in previous editions of this book were meant to be for explanatory purposes only, as the two processes occur simultaneously in practice (pp. 188-189). Therefore, it is important to

note that my initial analysis of the data included procedures that continuously alternated between open coding (identifying and developing concepts) and axial coding (relating those concepts to each other). I began this process by reviewing the data in order to generate preliminary basic-level concepts such as "non-specialist music teachers in feeder schools" and "funding for the music program." This is a fluid process within which the concepts and codes constantly evolve and overlap. There were, however, some distinct patterns and codes that emerged early in this process (see Figure 10). For example, the following data was grouped into the code, *repertoire credit offerings*:

- "we have a rep course at our school that runs after school" (Teacher Z60);

- "band as a credit would help" (Teacher Z4);

- "whether or not you're allowed to give rep credits" (Teacher Z10);

- "I have a concert band for credit, and a jazz band that's not for credit" (Teacher Z43);

- "I would try to make the repertoire credit part of the day schedule" (Teacher Z44);

- "They're always talking about cutting the repertoire credit" (Teacher Z148);

- "every school [in the board] has the repertoire credit" (Teacher Z149).
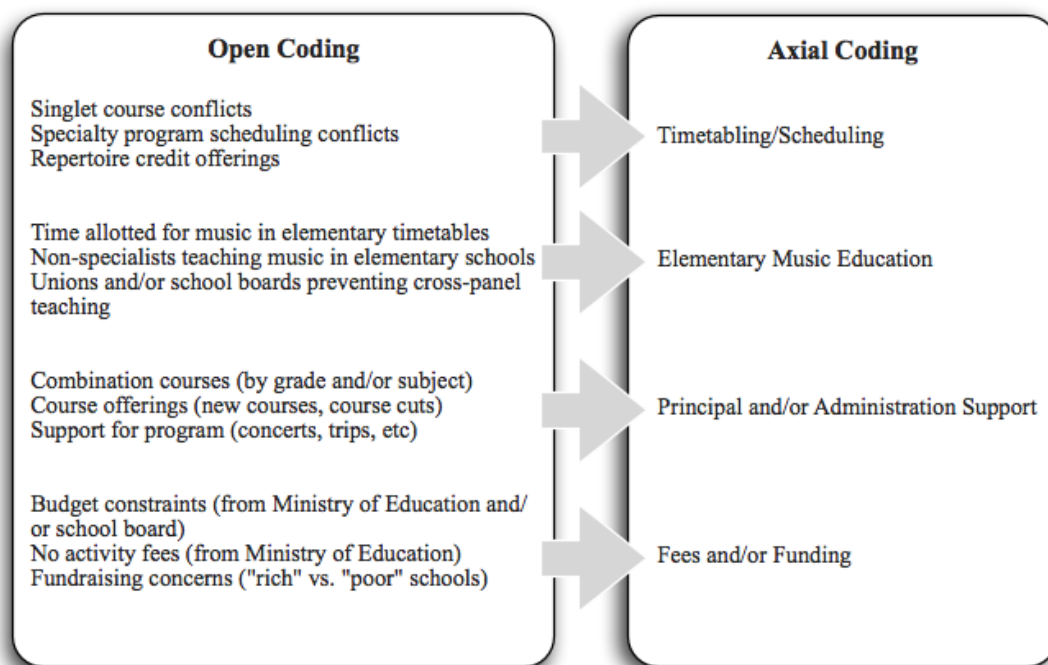
Figure 10. Graphic representation of the concepts (codes) that emerged from the processes of open and axial coding.[18]

Not surprisingly, the interview responses often mirrored and expanded those themes that arose in the open-ended question from the online survey. Furthermore, there are striking parallels between the interview responses and the findings from earlier research by Vince (2005b) and Beatty (2001 a/b).

There were 18 interviews conducted during the second semester of the 2011-2012 school year. The secondary teachers were initially asked to express their thoughts on music education in this province in general. The participants expressed shared concerns in the following areas:

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[18] The term "singlet" was used by some participants to refer to courses for which only one section was available in the timetable. When two singlet courses were offered in the same time slot (forcing students to choose one or the other), participants referred to this phenomenon as "singlet course conflicts."

- timetabling/scheduling (17 teachers);

- elementary music education (16 teachers);

- principal and/or administration support (15 teachers); and

- fees and/or funding (14 teachers).

Timetabling/scheduling. The issue of timetabling and scheduling of courses is an

area of frustration for most of the interviewed teachers. In smaller schools, especially if

the overall school population is declining, it is becoming increasingly difficult for music

courses to meet the minimum required class size as determined by the school

administration. According to Teacher Z60:

> "The other thing was the point about courses being cancelled – they are often
>
> cancelled if they are too small, even though any that have been left open, almost
>
> always fill up [to the minimum number of 20 students]. We might have a music
>
> course sitting at 18 students [...that] is recommended to be cancelled."

In cases where the overall number of students in the school is decreasing every year, it

becomes more and more difficult for music teachers to meet that minimum class size in

their music courses. This creates a challenge for the music department, even in schools

where the percentage of students in the school who wish to enrol in music classes may

remain constant.

Scheduling problems with music courses are further exacerbated when other

courses are being offered in the same time slot of which there is only one section

available. One teacher explains:

> "…a lot of it depends on timetabling. I wrote in my survey too, that it goes both
>
> ways – I'll get kids who come up to me and say, "Oh, Mr. X, I really wanted to

take band this year, but I couldn't get it in my timetable" and then I'll get kids in

my band class who were placed there because they couldn't get into a course that

they wanted to get into. They don't want to be there, and that brings it down for

everybody, too." (Teacher Z28)

In addition to scheduling conflicts with other courses, several teachers also mentioned

scheduling difficulties with specialty programs, such as the International Baccalaureate

program, or a French Immersion program.

When courses run the risk of being cancelled, the solution is often to combine

different courses to meet the minimum number of students required by the school

administration. Some of the teachers reported combining two or more different grade

levels or even different courses (vocal and instrumental, for example) in order to avoid

the cancellation of their courses:

"…getting the numbers up is difficult in a small school, and it's worth having a 9

to 12 split… it is also difficult for me and the students. […] If it was an all Grade

9 class or an all Grade 10 class, then they would get much more out of it. So, I

guess, we're trying to make the best out of our situation. And there's not

necessarily a simple solution without having greater numbers or […] the

opportunity to offer more open courses in the timetable." (Teacher Z127)

As this teacher describes, it is often difficult both for the teacher and the students to be

productive in a multi-level or multi-disciplinary class. In an instrumental music course,

the pedagogical demands of teaching several different instruments simultaneously are

challenging enough, but when those students range from beginners to experienced senior

students, those challenges are multiplied exponentially. Furthermore, the teachers

explain that the varied musical backgrounds and experience of incoming Grade 9 students is complicating the matter even more.

Elementary music education. Of the 18 teachers that were interviewed, 16 participants expressed concern regarding the current state of elementary music education practices in Ontario. The teachers reported that they have observed a trend occurring in their feeder schools in which there is less time allotted to music education, fewer music specialists teaching music at the elementary level, and an alarming increase in the number of elementary schools that offer no music education at all. According to two teachers, from two different school boards:

- "for the most part, elementary programs are non-existent in this area" (Teacher Z26).

- "…especially at the K to 6 level, music has been axed to the bone, to the point where most kids at the K to 6 level don't actually have any regular interaction with music education, a lot of them don't even take it by the time they hit high school." (Teacher Z42)

In the elementary schools where music education still survives, the interviewees explained that they have observed a trend in which retiring music teachers are being replaced with "generalist" or non-specialist music teachers.

In those few elementary schools that do employ music specialists, the interviewees report that the amount of time in the school day allotted to music education has decreased substantially in the last few years. One participant explains:

"…in one feeder school, [the students] had 40 minutes [of music instruction], once a week, for half a year." (Teacher Z 130).

In a different board, another interviewee gives a similar account, in which she describes the difficulties facing the music teacher at one of her feeder schools:

"…in the last 5 years [the schedule has changed such that] he'll see [the students for music instruction] once every week for 40 minutes." (Teacher Z60)

This teacher went on to illustrate the further challenges of this already sparse schedule, explaining that the elementary students "spend 15 minutes setting up, 15 minutes playing, and 15 minutes packing up." Therefore, these students are receiving approximately 15 minutes of music education each week. In most cases, the teachers reported that decisions regarding music instruction at the feeder schools are at the discretion of the elementary principals.

Principal/administration support. The significant influence of the school administration on the success of the music program in their schools was raised by 15 interviewees. In some cases, administrative support was credited by teachers as contributing to their success in the music department. For example, Teacher Z34 maintains:

"I've had nothing but basically 100% support from any principal that I've ever worked with."

In other cases, teachers reported feelings of frustration regarding the lack of support received from their administration. In the words of one music educator:

"In the light of very real potential cutbacks in the entire education system in Ontario, it really comes down to individual principals, unfortunately, within the school systems, to either help sustain their music programs or not." (Teacher Z10).

Another participant, representing a different school board, expresses a similar sentiment

stating:

> "It's all principal-driven. So, if a principal sees value in having a music program,
>
> they'll have a music program" (Teacher Z44).

> The influence of school administration, and of the school principal in particular,

intersects with many other areas that were raised in the interviews, such as scheduling

and funding. According to one of the participants:

> "So, if your principal doesn't understand, or doesn't want to understand, or isn't
>
> capable of understanding, or all three – you've got yourself a real problem. A
>
> HUGE problem. You've got a timetabling problem, you have a financial
>
> problem, you have an elbow-room problem, you have a problem getting trips
>
> approved, you have a problem. Every time an issue comes up, you don't have a
>
> friend, you have a problem." (Teacher Z149)

 Despite the best efforts of principals in many schools to provide support for music

programs, often, accessing sufficient funds is not in their control.

> ***Fees and/or funding.*** Financial decisions at the school board and provincial

levels have also greatly impacted secondary school music programs in recent years, and

frequently arose in the interviews. In the words of one participant:

> "Most decisions in education are based on funding one way or another. That's
>
> what it comes down to – who's getting the money and what are they getting, and
>
> what is it for, and what good is it doing our kids." (Teacher Z 149)

The theme of funding was reported by teachers as a major area of frustration. One

teacher explained that in the current economic climate in Ontario, he understood "being

told we're going to have to do more with less" (Teacher Z26); however, he observed

thousands of dollars being invested into other departments in his school for various

building improvements, while his music program struggled. In regard to funding, he

explains:

> "It's a lot of fighting, a lot of different priorities that are pulling a lot of different
>
> ways. When it comes down to delivering a program, [music is] the subject area
>
> that always seems to be the lowest priority in many ways, whether it's funding,
>
> whether it's scheduling, whether it's timetabling, it's always further down. That's
>
> the way I think a lot of [music teachers] are feeling. It's just so low on the
>
> priority list." (Teacher Z 26)

Many of the interviewees explained that the principal has a certain amount of authority in

terms of deciding the budgets that each department in the school will receive. In some

cases, teachers reported feeling supported by their administrations, such as Teacher Z60,

who explained:

> "…in terms of support, like new courses and finances, we've been fully
>
> supported…I have no complaints there. I've bought everything I needed to buy in
>
> terms of my courses, and every new course we've asked for, they [the
>
> administration] have offered it and let it trial just to see if kids were interested."

Not surprisingly, teachers who reported that their music programs were struggling also

reported a lack of financial support from their administrations. In one example, teacher

Z42 reported:

> "We spent so long tearing [the music department] down, and so long axing
>
> budgets out of music programs, that we don't have the money to do what we used

to do because we've been cut so badly…last year, the operating budget for the

music department was $200."

Although I did not specifically ask for details about school music program budgets, some

teachers did provide this information. Budgets varied greatly from year to year, and

school to school, depending on the administration. The funding and financial issues

raised by the participants also went beyond the school administration level, such as the

recent legislation from the Ministry of Education prohibiting teachers from charging fees

for participation in music courses. Some of the responses regarding the elimination of

course fees were as follows:

- "If we collect a rental fee from everyone, that is a nominal fee, like $20 for a year

  […] it allows us to refurbish or replace instruments and gives everyone an

  opportunity to play better instruments. […] If you cannot charge a music student

  for an instrument that you have in the room, then we won't be able to buy new

  instruments." (Teacher Z62)

- "The Ministry of Education says that we are not allowed to charge fees, so as long

  as that happens, then no, we're not going to have any money." (Teacher Z42)

- "So, taking the fees away? I agree with it, but again, it's creating a two-tier

  system where kids who can afford to buy instruments have a choice of what they

  play, and kids who can't [afford it] are stuck with whatever [instruments are]

  available in the school." (Teacher Z43)

- "Next year [the Ministry of Education] has cut course fees. […] because

  something like music needs so much equipment and it's so costly. And even just

  the repair of your instruments can eat up your budget, because the kids are hard

on the instruments. Now what are we supposed to do? Now I can't even help to cover it. And how do I cover the cost of the theatre? With the course fee. So next year we can't perform there because I'm not able to cover the cost." (Teacher Z148)

- "Fees. The whole thing about fees, right? […] It's completely watering down the [musical theatre program]…there's less money, there's less resources…and everybody's wondering why you can't offer the same thing while dialing all of the money back." (Teacher Z149)

Conclusion

The overlapping processes of open coding, axial coding and selective coding continue to occur throughout the research journey (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As this journey progresses, however, the lower-level concepts begin to evolve into higher-level concepts. Strauss and Corbin explain, "the more one moves up the conceptual ladder, the broader and more explanatory the concepts become, yet as they move toward greater abstraction, concepts, while perhaps gaining in explanatory power, begin to lose some of their specificity" (p.52). The concepts examined in this chapter as they emerged from the questionnaire and interview data were lower-level concepts in the early stages of the coding process. Chapter 5 will discuss the development of higher-level concepts as they emerged in the final stages of data analysis (selective coding) and the generation of a theory.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the current state of music education in

Ontario as perceived by currently practising secondary school music educators in the

English public school board system. The literature review (presented in Chapter 2), an

ongoing and diverse process in grounded theory research, provided a contextual

framework for the study. This chapter progresses from the open and axial coding stages

of data collection and analysis (discussed in Chapters 3 and 4) to the third stage of

selective coding. Within this final stage of the grounded theory approach, the core

variable is identified and the theory is developed and refined through the lens of the

research questions. This chapter concludes with a reflection on the limitations of this

study and suggestions for future research.

The Core Variable

Identification of a *core variable* or "central category" is the first step in selective

coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 104). In order to qualify as a core variable, a category

must appear consistently and frequently in the data, while also being logical and abstract

in its relationship to the data (Strauss, 1987). It was important during this study,

therefore, to identify themes that repeatedly arose in the data, and to consider how these

themes might relate to each other and to an overarching and abstract concept. By

engaging with the survey and interview data in this manner, I determined one

predominant theme that permeated the teachers' diverse responses: the control (or lack of

control) perceived by music teachers in the management of their music programs. The

core variable, therefore, was *empowerment*.

The degree to which employees are directly involved in decision-making processes regarding the work they do is labelled "employee empowerment" in both the business and education literature (Conaty &Charan, 2009; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Kanter, 1984; Mullins, 2010). According to this literature, the concept of empowerment exists along a continuum. At one end of the empowerment spectrum are those employees with a high level of involvement in making work-related decisions, and therefore, a high degree of empowerment. At the other end of the empowerment spectrum are those employees with a low level of involvement in work-related decisions, and therefore a low level of empowerment (which may also be expressed as "disempowerment").

Within the social-structural approach to employee empowerment, discussed in detail in Chapter 2, management of organizations is most effective when the employees actually doing the work are also entrusted with the power to make work-related decisions. This democratic model of business management is based on decades of research supporting the notion that thriving, successful organizations are those that empower their employees to contribute and collaborate in the workplace (Kanter, 1977, 1993, 2009; Mullins, 2010; Smith, 2012). Empowered employees collaborate with various levels of the organization, contribute their ideas to the organization and self-organize their roles and responsibilities within their division of the organization.

While engaging in the open and axial coding of data, terms such as *power* and *control* appeared frequently in the teachers' responses. The various themes that arose concerning teachers' experiences in the workplace (such as timetabling/scheduling and fees/funding) were all related to the overarching issues of whether or not teachers were empowered to collaborate with school administrators and the school board (higher levels

of the educational organization), contribute their ideas to their school administration and school board, and self-organize their roles and responsibilities within their music programs. Therefore, the core variable of *empowerment* (or more specifically, music teacher empowerment) was established, allowing the research to progress to the final steps in the selective coding process.

Selective Coding

In the grounded theory research process, Corbin and Strauss (2008) liken the researcher to a detective, discovering data and concepts as the investigation progresses. The research process, they explain, is "driven by its own power" in a circular process until the concepts have been clarified and no new data are appearing (pp. 143-145). At this point, the research has reached *saturation*, a point at which the cycle of gathering and comparing data is concluded.

This study began with a preliminary data collection phase using online surveys. The survey responses initiated the cycle of data analysis and collection that occurred through the second phase of follow-up telephone interviews. Not only did each participant's survey responses inform the direction of his or her interview, but each interview also informed the direction of the interviews that followed. Although 22 participants contacted me directly via email to express interest in being interviewed, there was some difficulty in scheduling a mutually convenient time in which to interview 4 of them. However, as the other 18 interviews transpired, it became evident through the emerging redundancy in the participants' responses that saturation of data had occurred. Having reached saturation, I then progressed to the final stage of grounded theory

research: selective coding. For a graphic representation of the processes leading to the selective coding phase of this study, please refer to Figure 11.
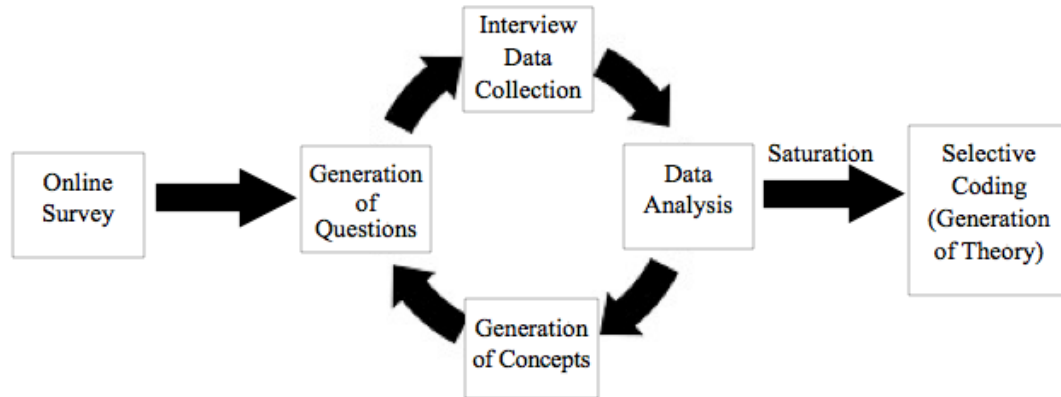
Figure 11. Graphic representation of the processes leading to the selective coding phase of this study.

The Research Questions

In the selective coding phase of this study, concepts that emerged from the data were constantly compared with concepts that arose from the ongoing review of literature. A variety of subject areas were included in the literature review in order to explore the original research questions:

1. How do practicing music educators in Ontario English public secondary schools describe the state of music education in their schools with respect to:

   a. Enrolment patterns in music?

   b. Musical activities offered (curricular and extra-curricular)?

2. What factors are identified by practicing music educators as facilitating positive change in music education in the province?

3. What factors are identified by practicing music educators as impeding positive change in music education in the province?

4. Can teachers identify solutions to these problems?

Music Programs and Enrolment Trends

The first research question explored the state of music education in Ontario with respect to enrolment patterns and activities offered in English public school music programs. The responses encompassed the entire music program of each school, including both the curricular and the extra-curricular musical opportunities available to students. For the purpose of this study, *curricular* music refers to the music courses offered during school hours, and excludes music ensembles that rehearse outside of the regular school day even in cases where a course credit is offered for participation in such ensembles. Therefore, in this discussion the term *extra-curricular* applies to music ensembles that occur outside of school hours and is synonymous with the term *co-curricular*. For more clarification of these phrases, please refer to the *Definition of Terms* section of Chapter 1.

Curricular music programs. Practicing music educators, both in surveys and interviews, reported that, from their perspective, curricular music enrolment at every grade level has been decreasing during the last five years. This observation, when considered collectively with previous research, suggests a continuous decrease of enrolment in music courses has been occurring in Ontario schools for at least two decades (Beatty, 2001b; Vince, 2005a/b). One of the most alarming trends reported by half of the participants was decreasing enrolment in music at the Grade 9 level, despite the mandatory Grade 9 Arts credit. As this course is a prerequisite for music study in many

music courses at the senior level,[19] it follows that enrolment in the senior grades will continue to decrease in subsequent years.

Despite the worrisome pattern of decreasing enrolment in music courses, the participants reported an increase in the variety of music courses offered during the last five years. In some cases, teachers explained that these recent additions to the course calendar were an effort to combat declining enrolment in their music departments. In many of these new music courses, technology emerged as a central element, most obviously demonstrated by the prevalence of schools offering the *Music and Computers* (course code AMM) course. In addition, teachers described the significant role of technology in a variety of other music courses, including songwriting/arranging, rock/popular music, recording and sequencing techniques, and musical theatre (lighting and sound production).

Extra-curricular music programs. Unlike the decline noted in curricular music programs, 83% of participants reported that student participation in extra-curricular music programs remained consistent or increased in the last 5 years. Participants explained that the issue of scheduling and timetable conflicts that prevent students from enrolling in curricular music has less impact on student participation in extra-curricular music programs. Although many students have commitments outside of school hours, such as part-time employment or school clubs and teams, the issue of single-section

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[19] According to the Ontario Ministry of Education (Government of Ontario, 2010), students enrolling in the following senior level music courses require a prerequisite music credit at the Grade 9 or 10 level: AMU 3M (Grade 11 University/College Preparation), AMU 4M (Grade 12 University/College Preparation), and AMU 4E (Grade 12 Workplace Preparation). The only senior level music course without any prerequisites is AMU 3O (Grade 11 Open).

course offerings and other timetabling obstacles do not preclude students from involvement in extra-curricular music activities. Teachers are also relieved of policies and pressures from the Ministry of Education, the local school board and the principal in the extra-curricular context; in short, music educators are far more empowered to design and implement extra-curricular activities than curricular music programs.

Factors Affecting Positive Change: Professional Capital

The second and third research questions concerned the factors perceived by teachers as facilitating and/or impeding positive change in music education in Ontario. Not surprisingly, similar factors appeared in the data as either facilitating or impeding the perceived success of music programs in the teachers' individual schools, and in music education practices occurring across the province. Therefore, both questions have been combined in this section of the discussion. Each factor is discussed in this chapter from both perspectives (how it might facilitate or impede positive change). For example, in both the survey and interview data, participants identified elementary music education, funding, and administrative support as key factors influencing (positively or negatively) the effectiveness of their music programs.

Participants who reported positive changes occurring in their music programs at the time of the study also described their workplace experiences as being both collaborative and supportive. The factors they identified as facilitating or impeding positive changes in their music programs are representative of the concept of *professional capital* (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012), as introduced in Chapter 2. In order to determine the degree to which a school system invests in an educator's professional capital, there

are five areas to consider: capability, commitment, career, culture and contexts/conditions.

Capability. The first component of professional capital, *capability*, concerns the education and preparation of educators. The participants who reported positive changes occurring in their music programs were adequately trained in the specific area in which they were teaching. For example, one participant had an extensive background in guitar performance and pedagogy. In addition to studying his instrument at the postsecondary level, this teacher spent several years as a professional performer before entering the public education system. At his school, the music program is largely technology based, incorporating guitar performance with the mixing, recording and arranging of contemporary styles of music. This particular teacher has "the skills and qualities that lead to accomplishment" in this particular type of music program (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 55). His capability is aligned with his teaching assignment, leading to a thriving music program at his school.

Following his departure from the school, a new music teacher was hired. She had an impressive education, having studied vocal and choral music extensively. She was passionate about teaching, organized in her course planning and forged strong relationships with her students and colleagues. Participant Z26 explained, "She's got lots of skills, she's very talented [...], but she doesn't know how to play guitar." Her capability did not align with her teaching assignment. The school administration was adamant that the music program should maintain its previous focus of mixing and recording contemporary music, in order to make use of the expensive equipment purchased by the school for the recording studio the previous teacher had constructed in

the music room. Despite her best efforts, the education system was not investing in her

professional capital. Consequently, music enrolment began to decline, and today the

music program is nearly extinct.

Commitment. The concept of *commitment*, the second component of

professional capital, is "an emotional state as well as a moral value" (Hargreaves &

Fullan, p. 61). When employees feel committed to their work, and to the organization in

which they work, the result is a sense of purpose and direction. Those teachers for whom

positive change was occurring in their music programs at the time of this study, reported

feeling committed to their students, their schools and their music programs. Participants

suggested that their commitment is sustained in various ways, including:

- Employment security (confidence in not being "bumped"[20] to another school);

- Supportive leadership (at the department, school, and board level); and

- Connection with colleagues (within the school, the board, and the province).

Data analysis revealed one issue concerning commitment that participants raised

repeatedly: the frustration of being moved from school to school. One participant, now in

the early years of her teaching career, reported being moved three times, to three different

schools, in one year. When she completed the online survey, she was teaching at school

A. At the time of her follow-up interview, she had been moved to school B, resulting in a

commute time of almost an hour. When I sent her the grounded theory model for her

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[20] The issue of "bumping" came up in several surveys and interviews. When the decision is made by the school board to move a teacher from one school to another (often without their input), it is referred to as "bumping." This often occurs as a result of union regulations (pertaining to issues such as seniority), and occasionally involves a chain reaction (for example, Teacher A bumps Teacher B who in turn bumps Teacher C), resulting in a rearrangement of numerous teachers in the school board.

feedback, she was at school C. This constant movement from school to school made it difficult for her to build relationships with her colleagues and her students. She also had very little motivation to invest her time in developing a music program, or in planning concerts or a musical, as she had no assurance she would still be at the school when those events were scheduled to take place. As the education system did not invest in her professional capital, her level of commitment to her school and her music program was depleted.

Career. The third component of professional capital is the stage of an educator's *career*. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) addresses three stages of a teaching career: the first years, the middle years and the final years. The participants in this study represented each of these groups, with some of the teachers being in their first teaching assignment, while others reported having taught music for 30 years or more.

Among those participants in the early stage of their teaching career (with 0 to 7 years of experience), many reported that support from their colleagues and/or administration contributed greatly to positive changes occurring in their music programs. In that they have the least amount of seniority, those teachers in their early years of teaching are the most likely to be bumped from school to school. As a result, it may be more challenging for teachers in their early years to establish a commitment to their school, when they are insecure regarding the possibility that they might be moved to another school at any time, and with very little warning.

In the middle years (participants with 8 to 23 years of experience), Hargreaves and Fullan describe teachers as being "confident but not complacent, open but not innocent, [and] questioning without being cranky" (p. 71). The participants in this stage

of their careers reported having a plethora of ideas and recommendations for positive change in music education programs. These teachers have had enough experience to fully understand the education system and to conceptualize possible ways to improve it. The factors they put forward as facilitating or impeding the incorporation of these changes included funding, support from the school administration and school board, and opportunities to collaborate with music educators from surrounding schools. In many cases, participants expressed frustration stemming from their efforts to share their ideas for improving their music programs and their schools. Despite attempts to connect with their administration and their school boards, participants often reported that they were not heard and that these efforts were futile.

For those participants in the later years (23 years of experience or more) of their music education careers, the survey and interview responses were noticeably more candid in keeping with the suggestion made by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) that teachers in this career stage are more outspoken than their colleagues (p. 65). For example, teachers with more than 23 years of experience used stronger language than their younger colleagues, such as "music killer" (Participant Z62) and "bonehead administrators" (Z130). Many of the factors they perceived as having the potential to facilitate or impede positive change in music education practices in Ontario were systemic and required attention from the school board and Ministry of Education levels. In particular, consistency across the province regarding the incorporation of the repertoire credit and the semester system (half-year courses) was raised by the participants as an area in which the higher levels of the education system could positively impact music education programs in Ontario high schools. Having witnessed a notable decline in support for

music education during the past few decades, teachers in the later years of their careers were most concerned with the future careers of those teachers in their early years.

Culture. A collaborative *culture*, the fourth component of professional capital, emerged as a common theme in the participants' surveys and interviews regarding positive change in music education programs. Teachers reported collaborations occurring in a variety of ways and at a variety of levels, including:

- Music teachers collaborating in a professional development context, such as at the annual Ontario Music Educators' Association (OMEA) conference (Participant Z120);

- Secondary schools collaborating with each other, combining the people and resources of their music programs to benefit everyone (Participant Z119);

- Schools collaborating with various groups and businesses in their communities to create a more diverse and connected music education experience (Participant Z86);

- High schools collaborating with elementary schools to create an integrated music education program (Participant Z149); and

- Teachers, administrators and school boards collaborating to create new and innovative music opportunities in the school and community context (Participant Z131).

It was apparent from the teachers' responses that collaboration plays a key role in those music programs currently experiencing positive change.

Participants also expressed disappointment regarding a lack of collaboration in their music programs. For example, one participant from a rural and geographically

isolated region of the province explained that, as the only music teacher at his high school, it would be beneficial for him to engage in professional development (PD) opportunities with music educators from other schools. This request has been denied by both his school administration and school board despite repeated attempts from several music teachers to initiate a music PD session. The lack of investment in the professional capital of these teachers from the "powers above" denied them the opportunity to build a culture of collaboration.

Context/Conditions. The fifth and final component of professional capital is the *context* or *conditions* within which the teacher works. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) suggest that in order for educators to "teach like a pro" they require certain conditions at work, such as autonomy and respect (p. 83). In schools where participants reported a high degree of positive change occurring, the facilitating factors that emerged over and over again in the data reinforced the principle of teachers feeling empowered within a system that regarded them as professionals. These conditions, in which professional capital abounds, are aligned with Kanter's (1984) concept of the *integrative* organization, which thrives through the use of an employee-focused, horizontal organizational structure.

Unfortunately, in most cases, participants reported that their experiences were far more akin to the vertical, hierarchical structure of a *segmentalist* organization. The most common factors that teachers discussed as impediments to positive change were within the control of the guidance department (such as scheduling and timetabling), the principal (such as funding and course offerings), and the school board (such as the repertoire credit and semester system). In essence, the context of their professional capital was

compromised by a locus of control in the levels above them in the organizational hierarchy.

Factors Affecting Positive Change: Empowerment

The educational hierarchy: Power above. The conceptualization of an education system as a corporate entity with clearly differentiated hierarchical levels was prominently represented in the participants' descriptions of music education practices in Ontario public schools. Teachers' accounts of the trends they have observed in their schools are adumbrative of the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm explored in Chapter 2. This marketization of the public school system has been made evident in recent decades through a shift in power and control from the teachers at the bottom of the organizational hierarchy to the Ministry of Education and local school boards situated within the executive level at the top of the pyramid (see Figure 12).
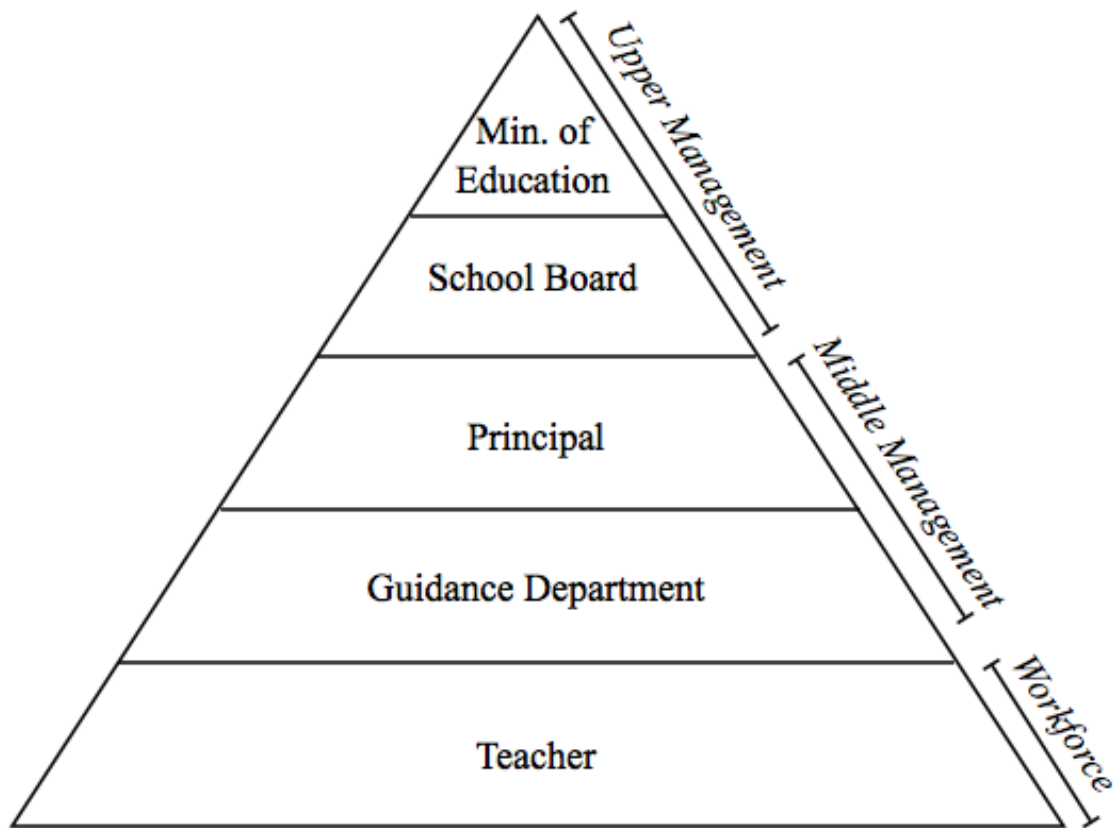
Figure 12. Teachers' perceptions of the hierarchy of the Ontario education system.

School administrators, and principals, in particular, assume the role of "lower

middle management" (Participant Z149) in this "business model where all the boxes must

be checked and everything must be the most cost-efficient" (Participant Z136).

Teachers' survey and interview responses suggest that their efforts to initiate positive

changes in their music programs are often impeded by the decisions made by those who

occupy the higher levels of the organizational pyramid. In contrast to the flat,

decentralized organizational model lauded in the business management literature (see

Chapter 2), the participants' description of their experience in Ontario's education system

corresponds to Kanter's portrayal of the *segmentalist* business models of the past (Kanter,

1984). According to one teacher, "I think that education itself is taking steps backwards right now" (Participant Z149).

The participants describe the ideas and decisions in Ontario's education system as being, in typical segmentalist fashion, unidirectional, essentially only moving from the top (upper management level) to the bottom (workforce level) of the pyramid. Each level of the education pyramid is separate from the others; each has the responsibility to interpret the orders that come from above in order to impose them on the levels below. Teachers explain that in recent years "a lot of changes [have been] made provincially" (Participant Z43) and that the school boards "only react to what comes down from up top [from the Ministry of Education]" (Participant Z120). After school boards receive their "new orders from the government" (Participant Z125), they in turn "push the administration around" (Z136) and finally the administrators (principals, vice-principals and the guidance department) are compelled to discern how these "new orders" will be implemented in their schools, by their teachers. In this model, described by one participant as "the corporate agenda" in Ontario schools, new policies originate at the Ministry of Education, but they are interpreted differently as they pass through every level of the educational hierarchy, and, therefore, may become altered at each level (see Figure 13).
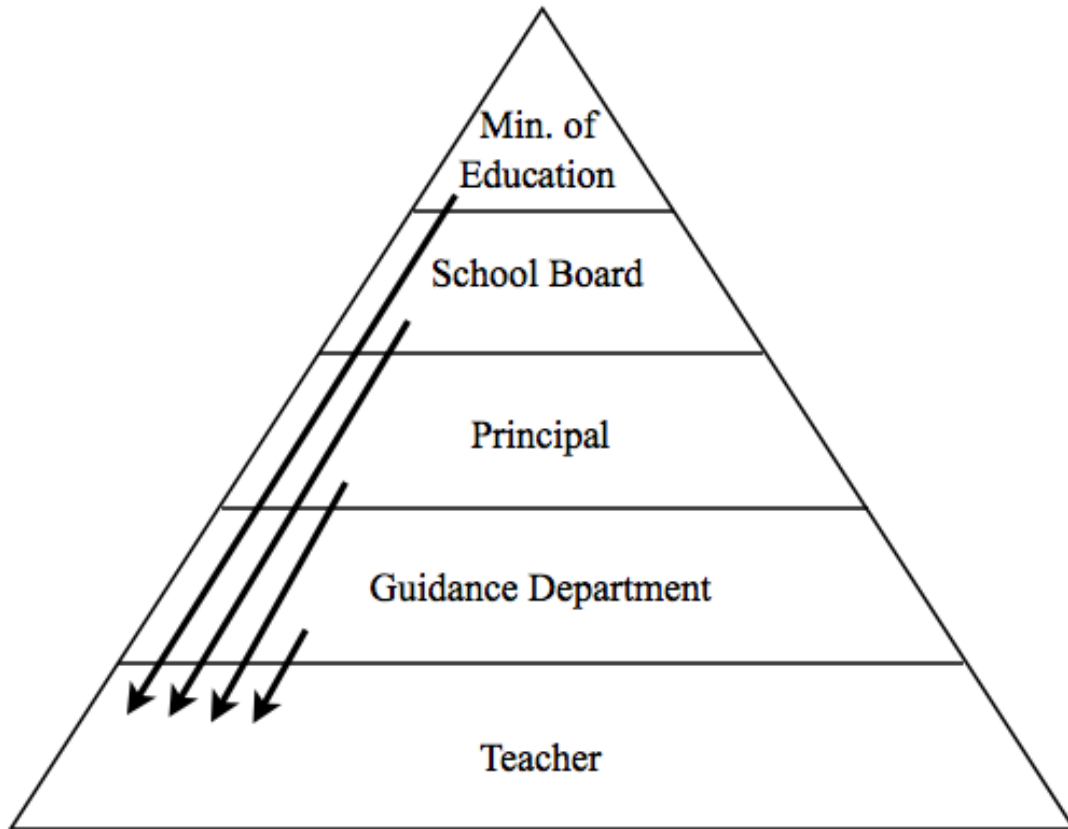
Figure 13. The top-down, segmentalist approach to decision-making in Ontario's education system, as described by participants.

These reinterpretations through several levels of the pyramid may explain why participants in some schools (or school boards) reported high levels of empowerment and professional capital, while teachers in other schools (or school boards) did not.

Throughout the research process, the categories and concepts that emerged from the analysis of data in this study repeatedly related to issues of power and control within the various levels of Ontario's education system. Participants expressed frustration with multiple issues they perceived as beyond their control, such as scheduling/timetabling, course offerings, and fees/funding. Teachers' responses indicated that the decision-making authority in these areas is often situated within the upper levels of the education

system, including local school boards and the Ministry of Education. As one participant explained, "they seem to make all these decisions, but not ask the teachers about what they think" (Participant Z148). Participants frequently described experiences in which major educational changes were designed and implemented, profoundly impacting their classrooms and music programs, without any consultation with the music educators themselves. Teachers with more than 5 years of teaching experience consistently expressed witnessing a trend occurring in recent decades in which decision-making power has shifted away from the teachers and principals to the higher levels of the educational structure. In short, teachers reported feeling less empowered to assess their own programs and implement changes based on their individual and unique circumstances. This was the first factor put forward by teachers as impeding positive change in the music education practices of Ontario's public schools.

The elementary crisis: Power below. The second factor identified by the participants as either contributing to the success of their music program, or impeding its success, was the quality of music instruction at the elementary (or *feeder*) schools. The significance of this issue to the participating teachers was evident from the prevalence of their references to elementary music education in various parts of the survey and the interview data, despite the fact that none of the survey questions pertained to elementary music education. As a researcher, this was the most unanticipated finding to transpire from the data analysis: when high school teachers were asked what changes they would

like to see in their music programs, over 25% of the responses[21] specifically referenced the elementary (or "feeder school") music programs.

Two teachers, from two different school boards, reported that, to the best of their knowledge, music is not taught as a regular part of the school day in any elementary schools in their boards. Participants explained that, in some cases, private music teachers come into the elementary schools to provide parent-paid, individual music lessons on a specific instrument. Other teachers described elementary schools with music teachers but no instruments in the same school board as elementary schools with music rooms housing unused instruments but having no music teachers. In many cases, the time allotted for music education in elementary schools was simply reduced (or eliminated) from the students' schedules in order to allocate more school hours to the development of literacy and numeracy.

As elementary music programs disappear across the province, high school music teachers are increasingly faced with the challenge of attempting to teach music to Grade 9 students who have not received music instruction (as explicitly mandated by the Ontario Ministry of Education) in Grades 1 through 8. In some cases, music education experiences for students attending different elementary schools in the same community are vastly diverse, resulting in Grade 9 music classes comprised of students with two or more years' experience playing an instrument, and students with no prior music instruction whatsoever. Participants reported that this situation is frustrating for both the teacher and the students: those students without the benefit of a feeder school music

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[21] As discussed in Chapter 4, there were 133 participants who responded to the survey question, "What changes, if any, would you like to see in your music program (curricular or extra-curricular)?" Elementary or feeder school music education programs were included in 34 (25.6%) of those responses.

program are forced to struggle to catch up in Grade 9. Furthermore, those students (and parents) who are aware of this situation and do not wish to be at a distinct disadvantage, often elect to enrol in a non-music course – drama, dance, visual arts – to meet the mandatory Grade 9 Arts credit requirement.

   Solutions identified by music educators: Power within. Although the reported crisis of elementary music programs disappearing in Ontario public schools has proven to be a major impediment for teachers trying to initiate positive change in their secondary school music programs, the participants described some creative solutions to this problem as it currently affects their schools. For example, several participants found ways to connect with their feeder schools directly through workshops (Participant Z16), joint rehearsals and/or concerts (Participant Z 24), and student mentorship music programs (Participant Z136). Teachers from six schools reported that some forward-thinking principals had implemented a mandatory music credit in Grade 7, Grade 8 and even Grade 9. Three of those teachers (representing three different school boards) work in Grade 7 to 12 schools in which Grade 7 and 8 music courses are mandatory. In each of these schools, teachers reported that enrolment in music courses in Grades 9 through12 has been stable or increasing in the last five years. Findings such as these suggest that the secondary school music programs in Ontario thrive when they are built on the foundation of a quality elementary music program (taught by a specialist music teacher), and supported by the various levels in the organizational pyramid. The addition of the feeder school music program to the base of the model (as represented in Figure 14) indicates the professional capital of music educators is not only dependent on support from the powers

above (guidance department, principal, school board and government), but also on the

powers below (the feeder school music program).
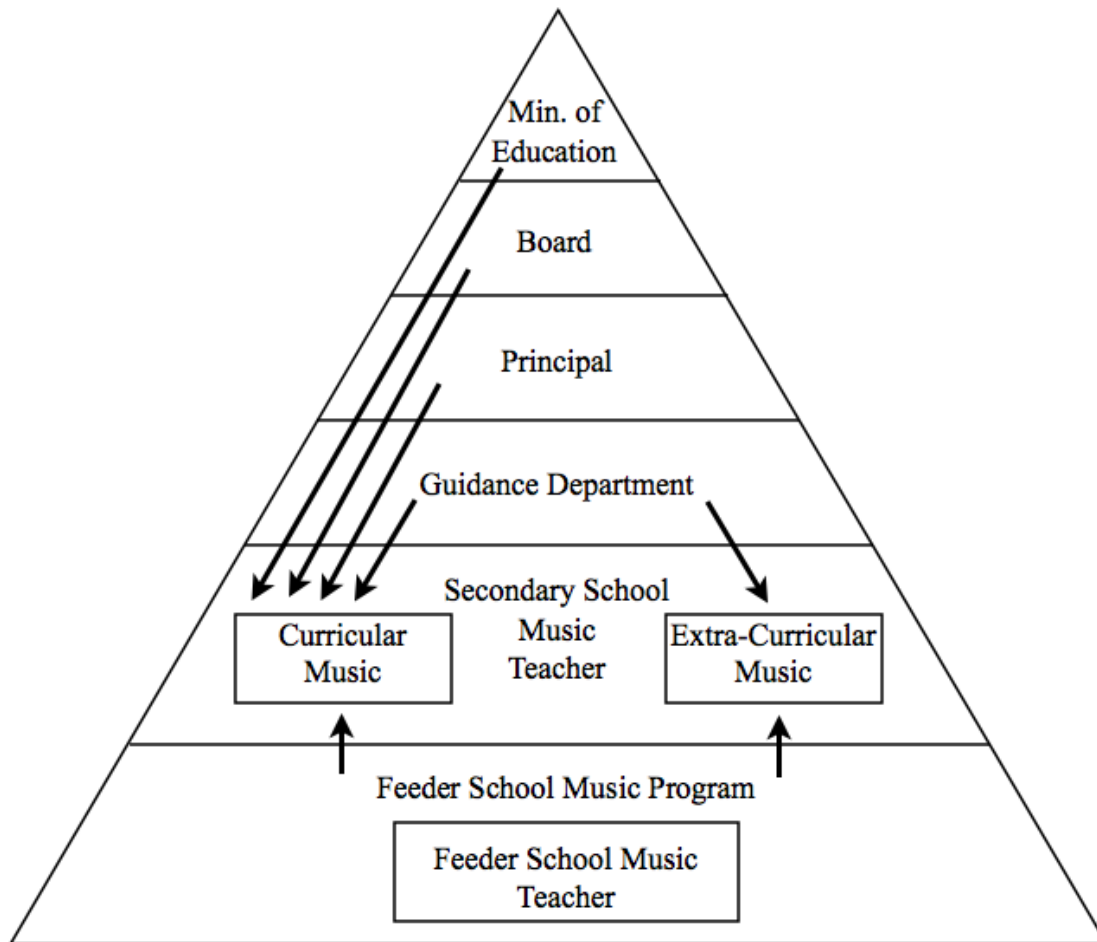
Figure 14. Graphic representation of the teachers' perceptions of factors supporting the professional capital of music educators in Ontario.

One potential solution to the problems facing music educators in Ontario may

require a reconceptualization of the current music education organizational structure. For

example, there is one music education system represented in this study that fosters

employee empowerment, invests in professional capital, is integrative in nature and is

built on the solid foundation of a high quality feeder school music program. Two

participants, colleagues at the same Ontario high school, described their unique music

program in which four schools (one secondary school and three elementary schools) have

an integrated music program. Each of the four teachers divides his or her time between

the high school and one of the elementary schools (see Figure 15).
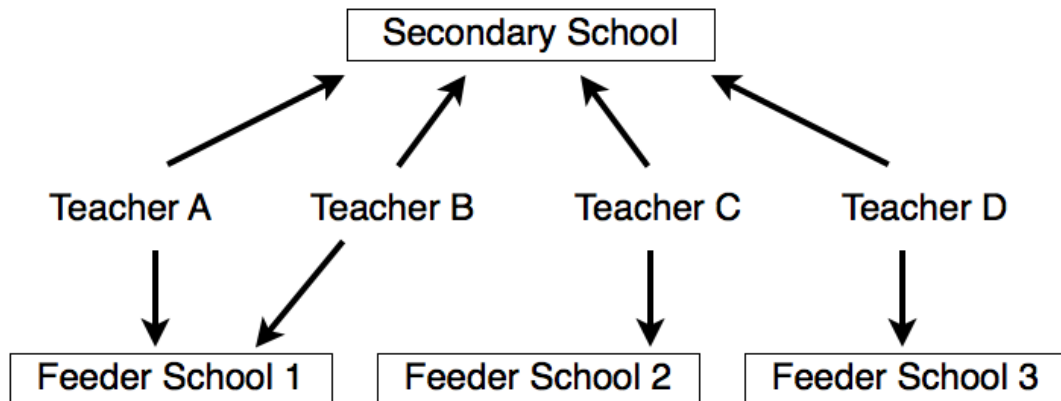
Figure 15. Graphic representation of an integrative music program in Ontario.

The teachers explained that their program has distributed leadership, in which each

teacher has jurisdiction over a particular area (such as the Grade 7 to 12 strings program),

balanced with collaboration among the entire music department to ensure that all students

(at the elementary and the secondary levels) are experiencing consistency in their music

education. According to Participant Z149:

"Our [secondary] school is doing really well compared to most other

schools…We have a huge advantage. It's the one thing that keeps us afloat. We

have our fingers in the [elementary] school system…the board is against it, and

the union[22] is against it…we each run our own little department within the [music] department. We [the music teachers] timetable for [the high school] and for the elementary schools to make sure that it works…it really is one continuous program."

The high school music enrolment in this program has also remained consistent over the last 5 years. The music teachers are empowered (they were the only participants in this study who reported doing their own scheduling/timetabling) and working within an educational system with a high investment in their professional capital. The teachers in this integrative program are capable and committed to their music program, within a context of collaboration and autonomy.

A second solution to the problems discussed in this study was presented by a participant who experiences workplace collaboration and autonomy in a unique way. This music educator has a music program predominantly funded by corporate and community sponsorship, and is not dependent on funding from the higher levels of the educational hierarchy. Financial support for the music program is provided mainly by local businesses and individuals. As a result, when the Ministry of Education instituted a new policy in 2012 banning schools from charging students fees for participation in music courses, this school (unlike many others) was unaffected. The professional capital experienced by the music department is substantial at this school, largely due to the empowerment of the teachers. Through collaboration with the wider community, music educators at this school have created a music program that is self-sufficient and self-

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[22] Teachers in the Ontario English Public school system are represented by two unions: the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) representing teachers of Grades 1 through 8, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) representing teachers of Grades 9 through 12.

governing. Although the issue of private funding for public education in this country requires further study, this has been a very positive arrangement for this particular school.

Examples such as these, in which the participants reported a high degree of empowerment and professional capital occurring through (a) an integrated elementary/secondary school music program, and (b) a music program supported by financial sponsorship, demonstrate how the "powers above" and the "powers below" music educators (as represented in the theoretical model) enact positive change in education systems. In both cases, the participants reported that the success of their music programs was closely associated with the locus of control being concentrated at the teachers' level of the organizational pyramid. In the words of Participant Z149, "we control our own destiny." Unlike the preponderance of participants who reported an increasing loss of control over their music programs, these two atypical examples of thriving music programs represent an integrated, decentralized organizational model of education management. Through music teacher empowerment, their unique music programs represent a new model of music education in Ontario.

Return to the literature: Four key factors

In order to conceptualize a new model for music education in this province, it is essential to first consider the key issues raised by the participants. Four key factors affecting music education in Ontario secondary schools emerged from the constant comparison of the literature and the coding/analysis of data:

- Degree of INTEGRATION in the organizational structure
- Degree of music teacher PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY
- Degree of music teacher PROFESSIONAL CAPITAL

- Degree of EFFECTUATION in the feeder school music program(s)

Each factor exists as a continuum, representing the degree to which the music teacher's experience of that factor is high or low.

Integration. The degree to which the organizational structure of an education system is *integrative* (Kanter, 1984) has a substantial impact on high school music programs. When the degree of integration is low, the employees at various levels of the organization hierarchy work in isolation and competition with each other. Conversely, education systems with a high degree of integration operate in a decentralized manner, within which employees at all levels are empowered to participate in decision-making and problem-solving processes in the organization. Music teachers in this study mentioned several areas that have been negatively affected by low integration in their schools and/or school boards, such as timetabling/scheduling issues, funding concerns, and the inconsistent use of the repertoire credit.

The shift away from an integrated education system toward a more segmentalist paradigm is reflected in the feelings of marginalization reported by Ontario music teachers in earlier studies. Willingham and Cutler (2005), for example, discuss the replacement of Music Department Heads in many secondary schools with Arts Department Heads. This trend has also been mirrored at the school board level, with many participants raising the issue of school boards eliminating Music Consultant positions. In both cases, the music teachers were left without representation (or a voice) at the higher levels of power. They were disconnected (or segmented) from administrative levels of their schools and school boards, where important decisions were being made.

Professional Autonomy. The degree to which the music teachers experienced professional autonomy (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Kanter, 2009) varied greatly in the participants' responses. For example, music teachers with a low degree of professional autonomy described not being empowered to make their own decisions regarding fund-raising for the music program and music course offerings, and their programs suffered as a result. In music programs with a high degree of professional autonomy – and in extra-curricular music programs in particular – the participants reported being empowered to institute creative solutions and initiatives to sustain their music programs.

The most significant attack on the professional autonomy of teachers in Ontario in recent decades occurred during the *Common Sense Revolution* of the 1990s. The emphasis on accountability and standardized testing incurred several obstacles for music teachers in particular, which the participants explained are still affecting music education today. For example, Gidney's (1999) observation that the focus on preparing students for standardized tests has diminished the value of any subject outside of the literacy and numeracy subjects being tested was echoed by the participants in this study. Furthermore, the elimination of Grade 13 in 1999 – combined with more mandatory credits in Grades 9 and 10 – forced many students to give up elective courses (such as music) in order to squeeze in the credits required for graduation and/or postsecondary studies. Although the reforms of this era affected every school subject, their impact was experienced most severely in the arts (Vince, 2005b). Unfortunately, the tumultuous nature of the relationship between public school teachers and the provincial government established during the 1990s persists in Ontario today.

Professional Capital. The degree to which an education system invests in the professional capital of the teachers is determined through the examination of capability, commitment, career, culture and contexts/conditions (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012). For example, the level of capability may be represented by the alignment of teacher experience with the courses being taught, such as a teacher with guitar experience teaching a guitar course. Professional capital is high when a music teacher has opportunities to collaborate with other music educators, schools, and the wider community (culture). When a music educator feels insecure regarding his or her employment (commitment), and fears being "bumped" to another school, the degree of professional capital is low.

Surprisingly, although recent research (Carlisle, 2008; Green, 2008; Karlsen & Väkevä, 2012) suggest that alternative music programs (such as the study of contemporary music) are more appealing to students than the more traditional choir, band, and orchestra music programs, this was not reflected in the participants' responses. Some of the thriving music programs in this study were more traditional in nature, while some of the struggling programs were more alternative. As Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) suggest, it was the professional capital (especially capability, commitment and culture) of the music teachers that contributed to the success of their programs. As previously discussed, an alternative school music program is only effective when the teachers' education and experience (or *capability*) are aligned with the genre of music being taught.

Effectuation. The issues pertaining to elementary music education were numerous in this research. The term "effectuation" includes several components of the

status of feeder school music program(s), including whether or not the feeder schools offer any music instruction, whether the feeder school music teachers are music specialists, and the amount of time allocated to music instruction at the feeder schools. The degree of effectuation in the feeder school music programs is based on the implementation and execution of music instruction at the elementary level.

When the degree of effectuation is high in the feeder school music programs, the music teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels are empowered to create a continuous and complimentary music program from Grade 1 to Grade 12. These findings support those reported by Beatty (2001a/b), the Coalition for Music Education (2005; 2010), and Willingham and Cutler (2005). In these studies, and in the experience of the participants of this study, the role of elementary education (and the preparation of elementary music educators) was raised as a key issue. The literature and the data underscore not only the importance of music education at the elementary level, but the decline of elementary music education in the last few decades.

Theoretical Model

The four factors discussed above are interrelated, influencing and overlapping with each other. They are also interdependent, in the sense that when one factor is low, the others are negatively influenced as well. The model in Figure 16 represents the theoretical model generated from the data, incorporating the four interconnected factors affecting music education in Ontario English secondary public schools (integration, professional autonomy, professional capital, and effectuation). The core variable, *empowerment,* is integrated into the entire model as an overarching concept within which the four factors reside.
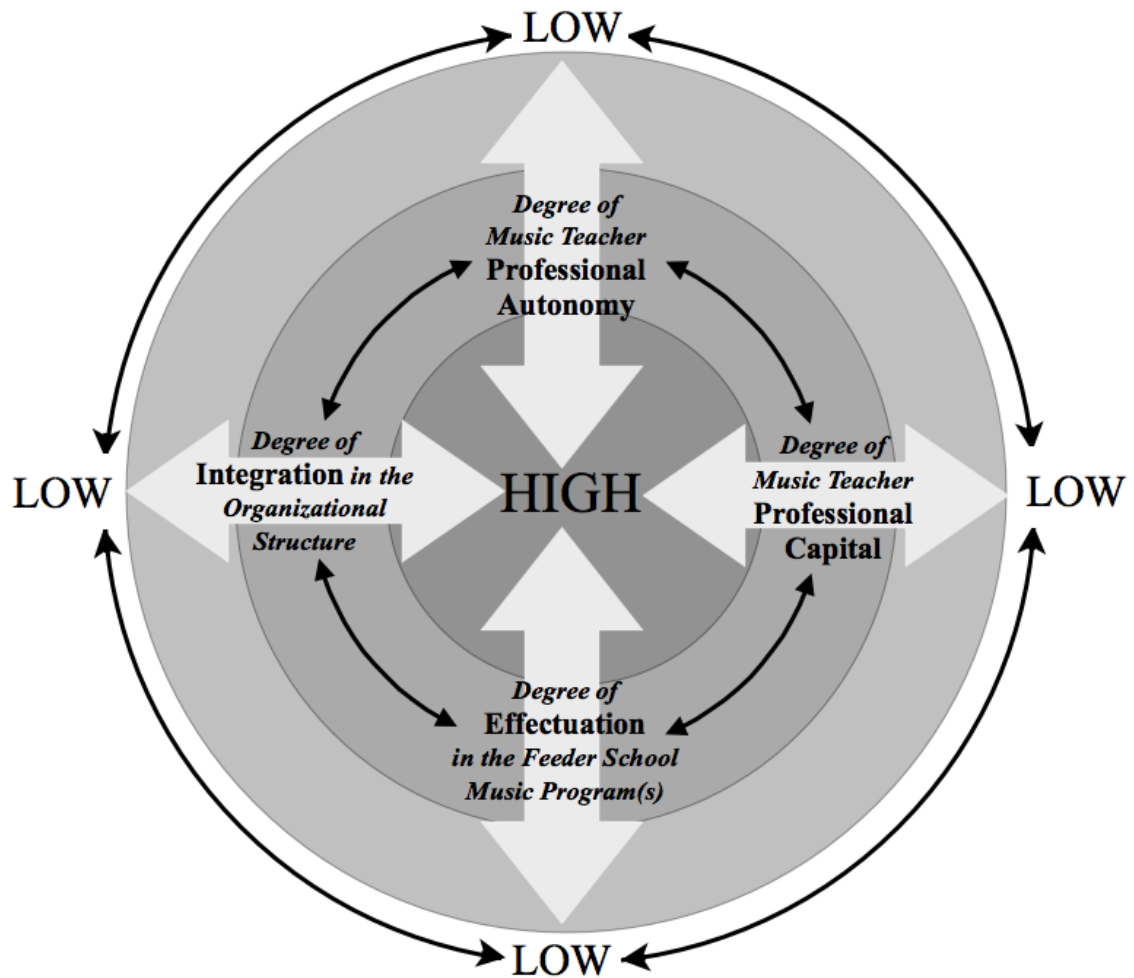
Figure 16. Theoretical model representing the four factors affecting music education in Ontario secondary schools.

The outer perimeter of the model represents a low degree of each of the four factors. In addition, where the four factors are low there is a low degree of the core variable, *empowerment*, which permeates the four factors. In order to affect positive change in music education, each of the four factors must be addressed by all levels of the educational hierarchy in order to progress closer to the centre of the diagram. Because the four factors are interconnected and interdependent, any change in one factor (positive or negative) will have a similar effect on the other factors.

The concentric circles of the model may also be conceptualized as a three-dimensional cone being viewed from above. If a large ring were placed onto the cone, it would slide to the bottom whereas a smaller ring would reside closer to the tip of the cone. If the ring were to represent a specific music program with low degrees of professional capital, professional autonomy, feeder school effectuation and organizational integration, it would be a large ring and would therefore fall to the bottom of the cone. Conversely, when the degrees of these four factors are high, the ring would be smaller in size and would therefore be situated at the top end of the cone. Should the degree of one factor change, the other factors are affected as well. Although the ring could be slightly tilted in one direction, it cannot actually move up or down the cone without all four factors working in tandem.

Please refer to Table 10 for a summary of the ways in which the literature and data coding inform the model. The issues identified in the right hand column of this table provide indicative factors drawn from the data collected in this study and used to identify the four key factors comprising the theoretical model. They might also be used in future application of the model to assess the degree of each variable within other contexts.

Table 10

Summary of the ways in which the literature and data coding inform the model

Factor in Model	Relationship to Literature	Concepts from Data Coding
Degree of **integration** in the organizational structure (power above)	• Ball (2008) • Hargreaves (2008) • Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) • Kanter (2009) • Levy (2010) • Robertson (2005) • Vince (2005b) • Willingham & Cutler (2005)	• fees/funding • timetabling/scheduling • repertoire credits • shift in power towards higher levels of hierarchy • lack of representation (i.e. music consultants) at the school board level • minimum class size
Degree of music teacher **professional autonomy**	• Gidney (1999) • Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) • Kanter (2008) • Wilkinson & Fay (2011)	• fees/funding • timetabling/scheduling • course offerings • thriving extra-curricular music programs • corporate/community sponsorship of music program
Degree of music teacher **professional capital**	• Carlisle (2008) • Green (2008) • Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) • Kennedy (2000)	• alternative music programs (capability) • employment security (commitment) • collaboration in the school and community context (culture)
Degree of **effectuation** of the feeder school music program(s) (power below)	• Beatty (2001a) • Coalition for Music Education in Canada (2005) • Hanley (2000) • Willingham & Cutler (2005)	• specialist music teachers at the elementary level • cross-panel teaching •collaboration between elementary and secondary level music programs • eradication of elementary music programs

Limitations of the Research

Reflecting on the limitations of one's research is a significant part of educational research (Best & Kahn, 2006; Lodico et al., 2010; Mertler & Charles, 2005). With that in mind, there are several matters that warrant some discussion such as researcher bias, the legitimacy of grounded theory, and survey dissemination.

As a music educator myself, I had preconceived ideas regarding the music education system in Ontario before embarking on this research. In the grounded theory approach, the researcher must be cautious of predetermined theoretical ideas, as it is the data that should influence the direction of the research, rather than the researcher's predisposition towards the phenomenon being studied. Furthermore, I do have a professional relationship with some of the participants, in that we are all active members of the wider music education community in the province of Ontario. Although I am not professionally affiliated with any publicly-funded secondary schools or school boards in Ontario, and I, therefore, do not have a current working relationship with any of the participants, some of the participants may be colleagues with whom I have worked in past years. Corbin and Strauss (2008) address the issue of researcher bias, however, explaining that in grounded theory research, having a "common culture" with the participants often allows the researcher to have more insight into the lived experience of the participants. Having experienced being a music teacher in this province, I was able to "put that knowledge to good use" by using it as a comparative case with which to inform the collection and analysis of data (p. 80).

The second potential limitation of this research is the considerable debate and discussion regarding the legitimacy of the grounded theory approach. Thomas (2007),

for example, argues that grounded theorists covet the best of both worlds, combining the

"comfortable feeling that comes from a denial of the arrogance of foundationalism and

essentialism" (p. 130) with "the attractive idea that there is some determinate and

explicable social universe – some ground – waiting to be scrolled out" (p. 133).

Grounded theory, according to Thomas, is simply outdated. Although it served the

purpose of giving legitimacy and credibility to social scientific inquiry in the 1960s, some

may argue that grounded theory is no longer relevant in the current climate of educational

research. Despite these concerns, however, grounded theory is still widely used and

accepted by researchers in education (and in many other fields), as evidenced by its

prominence in current educational research literature (see for example, Cohen et al.,

2011; Hartas, 2010a; Lichtman, 2010).

Some inconsistency occurred in the dissemination of the online surveys,

constituting another limitation in the research process. The initial design of this study

proposed that the survey link would be forwarded to all potential participants directly

from their school boards on the same day. However, the teachers received the link to the

online survey from various sources and at different times. Each Ontario school board has

a unique procedure for obtaining ethical approval to conduct research in its schools. As a

result of this diversity among the school boards in their research ethics protocols, the time

required to obtain ethical approval ranged from one day to six months. Furthermore,

some school boards required additional consent from individual principals before the

music teachers in that school could be invited to participate in the study. Although the

online survey link was sent to all of the principals in each school board on the same day,

some principals did not forward the link to their music teachers until weeks or months

after receiving it. A higher response rate was noted from teachers who received the survey link from their principals than the teachers who received it from their school boards. This suggests that some teachers might have felt compelled to participate if they received the survey link directly from their principals. Despite these concerns, all data were collected during the second semester of the 2011-2012 academic year, and saturation of the data was achieved, indicating that regardless of when and how the participants received the link to the online survey, there was considerable redundancy in their responses.

Suggestions for Further Research

According to Johnson & Christensen (2004) and Pritchard (2010), the investigative process should include some consideration of how the findings of a study might lead to further research. For example, in that the parameters of this study included only teachers in Ontario's English public schools, future research concerning other educational systems in the province - including the Catholic school system, the French school boards and the myriad of private and independent schools – would be a worthwhile endeavour. Similarly, it would be interesting to determine whether music teachers in other Canadian provinces have observed similar trends to those observed by the participants in this study.

Within Ontario, an obvious question emerged from the findings: what is the current state of music education in elementary schools? The secondary teachers in this study reported that music programs at the elementary level are disappearing across the province, while music programs (in those elementary schools fortunate enough to have them) are often taught by non-specialist music teachers. This alarming trend clearly

requires further investigation. Furthermore, are the trends reported by music teachers also occurring in other subject areas? The current focus on literacy and numeracy (in preparation for standardized tests) in Ontario elementary schools may also have a negative impact on the study of other subjects. According to the participants in this study, there appears to be limited time in the school day allocated to subjects not seen as directly related to the literacy/numeracy emphasis at the elementary level. If this is the case, perhaps Grade 9 students are experiencing a deficiency in their prerequisite knowledge in subjects such as science, technology and social studies. Are these subjects, like music, being pushed aside in order to "teach to the test?" If this is the case, then Ontario students are being shortchanged with respect to the education standards contained in the provincial curriculum documents.

Future research is needed to ascertain if the same issues put forward by the teachers in this study are shared by music teachers in other Canadian provinces and around the world. Are other provinces also struggling with a top-down, segmentalist approach to education? What is the current state of music education across Canada, and what role does Ontario play in this larger, country-wide context? Although the music programs described by various curriculum documents are fairly consistent from province to province, the participants in this study suggest that a disconnection exists between Ontario's arts/music curricula and the reality of music education practices in Ontario (especially at the elementary level). This discrepancy merits further investigation.

The final - and arguably the most meaningful - perspective requiring consideration in any educational research is that of the students. The findings of this study suggest that students in some Ontario schools are being negatively affected by the

unfortunate consequences of an education system operating within a hierarchical, segmentalist paradigm. It would be advantageous to conduct further research into the experience of Ontario students, and their perceptions of the education system and their place within it.

Conclusion

This research set out to discover what is currently happening in Ontario public secondary school music programs. Despite the professed support for music education in the curriculum documents, the reality of music education in Ontario, as perceived by secondary level music educators, exemplifies a contrary set of trends. First, music education is disappearing from elementary schools across the province. Second, enrolment in music courses at the secondary level has been declining in Ontario for decades - a trend that is still occurring today, even in the context of declining school enrolment. Third, the decreasing sense of empowerment and professional capital experienced by music teachers appears to be impeding their efforts to initiate positive change in their music programs.

According to those "on the ground" teaching music in Ontario English public high schools, the current system of music education in this province is in need of significant repair. The recommendations of this study are that, in order to affect positive change in music education, provincially, locally and within individual schools, each of the four factors needs to be addressed so that we might progress from low to high degrees of integration, professional autonomy, professional capital and effectuation. Where the degree of the four factors is high there is also a valuable investment in the core variable, empowerment, which permeates the four factors. The findings of this research suggest

that a segmentalist paradigm is equally as ineffective in the education sector as it was in

the business sector. The hierarchical business models of the past are inadequate

frameworks upon which to build an education system for the future. Perhaps the

humanistic ideals central to both Kanter's philosophy of integrative business management

(employee collaboration, distributed leadership, employee empowerment), and

Hargreaves' concept of professional capital, might be a place to start in beginning to

rebuild the broken parts of the music education system in Ontario.

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APPENDIX A

Ethics Approval Notice for Pilot Study

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Western *Education*

USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS - ETHICS APPROVAL NOTICE

Review Number:	1109-1
Principal Investigator:	Ruth Wright
Student Name:	Laura Fitzpatrick
Title:	*Teacher perceptions of music education in Ontario public secondary schools – pilot study*
Expiry Date:	February 29, 2012
Type:	Ph. D. Thesis (Pilot study – Faculty of Music)
Ethics Approval Date:	September 26, 2011
Revision #:	
Documents Reviewed & Approved:	UWO Protocol, Letter of Information

This is to notify you that the Faculty of Education Sub-Research Ethics Board (REB), which operates under the authority of The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects, according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above named research study on the date noted above. The approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the REB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information.

During the course of the research, no deviations from, or changes to, the study or information/consent documents may be initiated without prior written approval from the REB, except for minor administrative aspects. Participants must receive a copy of the signed information/consent documentation. Investigators must promptly report to the Chair of the Faculty Sub-REB any adverse or unexpected experiences or events that are both serious and unexpected, and any new information which may adversely affect the safety of the subjects or the conduct of the study. In the event that any changes require a change in the information/consent documentation and/or recruitment advertisement, newly revised documents must be submitted to the Sub-REB for approval.

Dr. Alan Edmunds (Chair)

2011-2012 Faculty of Education Sub-Research Ethics Board

Dr. Alan Edmunds	Faculty of Education (Chair)
Dr. John Barnett	Faculty of Education
Dr. Jason Brown	Faculty of Education
Dr. Farahnaz Faez	Faculty of Education
Dr. Wayne Martino	Faculty of Education
Dr. George Gadanidis	Faculty of Education
Dr. Elizabeth Nowicki	Faculty of Education
Dr. Immaculate Namukasa	Faculty of Education
Dr. Kari Veblen	Faculty of Music
Dr. Ruth Wright	Faculty of Music
	Faculty of Music
	Faculty of Education, Associate Dean, Graduate Programs & Research *(ex officio)*
Dr. Susan Rodger	Faculty of Education, UWO Non-Medical Research Ethics Board *(ex officio)*

The Faculty of Education   Karen Kueneman, Research Officer

Copy: Office of Research Ethics

APPENDIX B

Ethics Approval Notice

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Western *Education*   USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS - ETHICS APPROVAL NOTICE

Review Number: 1110-6
Principal Investigator: Ruth Wright
Student Name: Laura Fitzpatrick
Title: *Perceptions of Music Education in Ontario Public Secondary Schools*
Expiry Date: November 30, 2012
Type: PhD Thesis (Faculty of Music)
Ethics Approval Date: November 21, 2011.
Revision #:
Documents Reviewed &
Approved: UWO Protocol, Letters of Information & Consent

This is to notify you that the Faculty of Education Sub-Research Ethics Board (REB), which operates under the authority of The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects, according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above named research study on the date noted above. The approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the REB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information.

During the course of the research, no deviations from, or changes to, the study or information/consent documents may be initiated without prior written approval from the REB, except for minor administrative aspects. Participants must receive a copy of the signed information/consent documentation. Investigators must promptly report to the Chair of the Faculty Sub-REB any adverse or unexpected experiences or events that are both serious and unexpected, and any new information which may adversely affect the safety of the subjects or the conduct of the study. In the event that any changes require a change in the information/consent documentation and/or recruitment advertisement, newly revised documents must be submitted to the Sub-REB for approval.

_____

Dr. Alan Edmunds (Chair)

2011-2012 Faculty of Education Sub-Research Ethics Board

Dr. Alan Edmunds	Faculty of Education (Chair)
Dr. John Barnett	Faculty of Education
Dr. Farahnaz Faez	Faculty of Education
Dr. Wayne Martino	Faculty of Education
Dr. George Gadanidis	Faculty of Education
Dr. Elizabeth Nowicki	Faculty of Education
Dr. Immaculate Namukasa	Faculty of Education
Dr. Kari Veblen	Faculty of Music
Dr. Ruth Wright	Faculty of Music
Dr. Kevin Watson	Faculty of Music
Dr. Jason Brown	Faculty of Education, Associate Dean, Research *(ex officio)*
Dr. Goli Rezai-Rashti	Faculty of Education, Associate Dean, Graduate Programs *(ex officio)*
Dr. Susan Rodger	Faculty of Education, UWO Non-Medical Research Ethics Board *(ex officio)*

The Faculty of Education   Karen Kueneman, Research Officer

Copy: Office of Research Ethics

APPENDIX C

Letter of Information for Pilot Study

Dear Music Teacher,

My name is Laura Fitzpatrick and I am a Ph.D. candidate at the Faculty of Music Education at The University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into the current state of secondary level music education in Ontario and would like to invite you to participate in this study if:

- you are a currently practicing secondary school music teacher in the PILOT School Board; and
- you have at least one music course (indicated by an AMU course code) in your 2011-2012 school year teaching assignment.

The purpose of this study is to investigate music teachers' perceptions of current music education practices in Ontario Secondary Schools. The aim of this pilot study is to gain some initial data from music teachers in the PILOT School Board. In addition to questions regarding the music courses and ensembles available to students at PILOT schools, the survey respondents will also have the opportunity to provide feedback to the researcher on the survey instrument itself. Following the completion of the province-wide study proper, an electronic copy of the final research results will be made available to all respondents, including the pilot-test participants.

If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to click on a hyperlink from an email message to an online survey. Completion of the survey should take about 5-10 minutes.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information which could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. All data will be electronically stored on a password-protected computer. The computer and the office are only used by the researcher. The password is only known to the researcher. The material will be deleted after the pilot study has been concluded.

There are no known risks to participating in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time (with no effect on your employment status).

Completion and submission of the survey indicates your consent to participate in the study.

Questions

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics, The University of Western Ontario at _____. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Laura Fitzpatrick at _____ (researcher) or Dr. Ruth Wright at _____ (supervisor).

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Laura Fitzpatrick

If you agree to participate, please access the survey at:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/XXXXXXX

APPENDIX D

Online Survey Questions for Pilot Study

PAGE 1

Thank-you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire. Please read the information letter (attached to the email message you received) explaining the purpose and nature of this study and the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality and safeguard your privacy. If you then wish to proceed to complete and submit the questionnaire, this will be taken as an indication of your informed consent to participate in this study.

PAGE 2

Q1. Demographic Information:

- Years' experience teaching music at current school:

- Years' experience teaching music at any secondary school:

- How many music courses are you teaching this school year?

- How many music teachers are at your school this year?

- Approximate number of students enrolled in music courses at your school this school year:

- Approximate number of students involved in extra-curricular music activities in your school this school year:

PAGE 3

Q2. The music courses currently available in your school include:

Vocal
Instrumental (winds)
Instrumental (strings)
Instrumental (guitar)
Keyboard
Other (please specify)

Q3. The extra-curricular music activities currently available in your school include:

Concert Band
Choir
Jazz Band
Jazz Choir/Glee Choir
Guitar Ensemble
Orchestra
Other (please specify)

Q4. In the last 5 years, student enrolment in your school's Grade 9 music courses has:

Increased
Decreased
Not changed
I don't know/ I prefer not to respond
Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why enrollment has increased/decreased.

Q5. In the last 5 years, student enrollment in your school's Grade 10 music courses has:

Increased
Decreased
Not changed
I don't know/ I prefer not to respond
Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why enrollment has increased/decreased.

Q6. In the last 5 years, student enrollment in your school's Grade 11/12 music courses has:

Increased
Decreased
Not changed
I don't know/ I prefer not to respond
Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why enrollment has increased/decreased.

Q7. In the last 5 years, overall student involvement in the extra-curricular music activities available at your school has:

Increased
Decreased
Not Changed
I don't know/ I prefer not to respond
Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why involvement has increased/decreased.

Q8. What changes, if any, would you like to see in your music program (curricular or extra-curricular)? What factors would facilitate or impede the implementation of these changes?

Q9. Please provide any comments you have in regards to this survey, including - but not limited to - length of the questionnaire, clarity and/or content of the survey questions, additional questions/issues that ought to be included in the questionnaire, etc. Thank-you so much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!

APPENDIX E

Online Survey Questions

PAGE 1

Q1. Demographic Information:

- School:

- Years' experience teaching music at current school:

- Years' experience teaching music at any secondary school:

- How many music classes are you teaching this school year?

- How many music teachers are at your school this year?

- Approximate number of students enrolled in music courses at your school this school year:

- Approximate number of students involved in extra-curricular music activities in your school this school year:

PAGE 2

Q2. The music courses currently available in your school include:

Vocal
Instrumental (winds)
Instrumental (strings)
Instrumental (guitar)
Keyboard
Other (please specify)

Q3. The extra-curricular music activities currently available in your school include:

Concert Band
Choir
Jazz Band
Jazz Choir/Glee Choir
Guitar Ensemble
Orchestra
Other (please specify)

Q4. In the last 5 years, the number of Grade 9 students enrolled in music courses at your school has:

Increased
Decreased
Not changed
I don't know/ I prefer not to respond
Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why enrollment has increased/decreased.

Q5. In the last 5 years, the number of Grade 10 students enrolled in music courses at your school has:

Increased
Decreased
Not changed
I don't know/ I prefer not to respond
Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why enrollment has increased/decreased.

Q6. In the last 5 years, the number of senior students (Grade 11, 12, or 5th year) enrolled in music courses at your school has:
Increased
Decreased
Not changed
I don't know/ I prefer not to respond
Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why enrollment has increased/decreased.

Q7. In the last 5 years, overall student involvement in the extra-curricular music activities available at your school has:

Increased
Decreased
Not Changed
I don't know/ I prefer not to respond
Please explain (if you can) the reason(s) why involvement has increased/decreased.

Q8. What changes, if any, would you like to see in your music program (curricular or extra-curricular)? What factors would facilitate or impede the implementation of these changes?

Q9. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview (approximately 30 minutes in length)?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please contact me at _____ in order to set up a convenient date and time for a telephone interview. By participating in a telephone interview, please understand that the data you provide will no longer be anonymous to the researcher (I will know your name, your school, and your email address). However, any directly or indirectly identifying information will be removed from your responses in order to ensure your confidentiality. Participants who indicate "yes" and contact the researcher will receive a response from the researcher within two weeks.

APPENDIX F

Letter of Information (Phase 1)

Dear Music Teacher,

My name is Laura Fitzpatrick and I am a Ph.D. candidate at the Faculty of Music Education at The University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into the current state of secondary level music education in Ontario and would like to invite you to participate in this study if:

1.   you are a currently practicing secondary school music teacher in the _____ School Board; and

2.   you have at least one music course (indicated by an AM_ course code) in your 2011-2012 school year teaching assignment.

The purpose of this study is to investigate music teachers' perceptions of current music education practices in Ontario secondary schools. Anecdotally, we know that there are some innovative and exciting music programs in Ontario high schools, but there is very little reliable documentation of such programs. The aim of this study is to gain an understanding of the current state of music education from the perspective of music teachers from across the province, in order to provide the entire music education community with an opportunity to examine the current system and to conceptualize and implement new ideas and strategies towards which we might progress in the future. Following the completion of the province-wide study, an electronic copy of the final research results will be made available to all respondents.

If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to click on a hyperlink at the end of this email message to an online survey. The questions in the survey pertain to the curricular and extra-curricular music opportunities available at your school, student enrolment in your school's music program, and what changes you would like to see in your music program. Completion of the survey should take about 5-10 minutes. You are also being asked to consider participating in the second part of the study which will involve a follow-up telephone interview. If you are interested in participating in the telephone interview please contact the researcher using the email address provided at the end of the online survey.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information which could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. All

data will be electronically stored on a flashdrive that will be kept in a locked cabinet together with any printed material. The computer, the cabinet and the office are only used by the researcher. The password is only known to the researcher. The material will be deleted after the study has been concluded.

There are no known risks to participating in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time (with no effect on your employment status).

Questions

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics, The University of Western Ontario at _____. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Laura Fitzpatrick at _____ (researcher) or Dr. Ruth Wright at _____ (supervisor).

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Laura Fitzpatrick

Completion and submission of the survey indicates your consent to participate in the study. If you agree to participate, please access the survey at:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/XXXXXX

APPENDIX G

Letter of Information (Phase 2)

Dear Music Teacher,

My name is Laura Fitzpatrick and I am a Ph.D. candidate at the Faculty of Music Education at The University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into the current state of secondary level music education in Ontario and would like to invite you to participate in this study if:

1.   you are a currently practicing secondary school music teacher in the _____ School Board; and

2.   you have at least one music course (indicated by an AM_ course code) in your 2011-2012 school year teaching assignment.

The purpose of this study is to investigate music teachers' perceptions of current music education practices in Ontario secondary schools. Anecdotally, we know that there are some innovative and exciting music programs in Ontario high schools, but there is very little reliable documentation of such programs. The aim of this study is to gain an understanding of the current state of music education from the perspective of music teachers from across the province, in order to provide the entire music education community with an opportunity to examine the current system and to conceptualize and implement new ideas and strategies towards which we might progress in the future. Following the completion of the province-wide study, an electronic copy of the final research results will be made available to all respondents.

If you agree to participate in this study you will be contacted by email in order to schedule convenient date and time for a follow-up telephone interview. Completion of the interview should take about 30 minutes. Please note that the telephone interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed into written format.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information which could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. All data will be electronically stored on a flashdrive that will be kept in a locked cabinet together with any printed material. The computer, the cabinet and the office are only used by the researcher. The password is only known to the researcher. The material will be deleted after the study has been concluded.

There are no known risks to participating in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time (with no effect on your employment status).

Questions

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics, The University of Western Ontario at _____. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Laura Fitzpatrick at _____ (researcher) or Dr. Ruth Wright at _____ (supervisor).

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Laura Fitzpatrick

Curriculum Vitae

Name:	Laura Fitzpatrick

Post-secondary Education and Degrees:

The University of Western Ontario (Western University)
London, Ontario, Canada
2005-2007 Masters Level Courses (Music, Education, Psychology)

The University of Western Ontario (Western University)
London, Ontario, Canada
2002-2003 B.Ed. Music/English, with distinction

The University of Western Ontario (Western University)
London, Ontario, Canada
1998-2002 B.Mus. Honours Music Education

Honours and Awards:

Don Wright Award
2006

USC Teaching "Award of Excellence"
2007-2008

Related Work Experience in Education

Instructor (Part-time)
The University of Western Ontario
2011

Teaching Assistant (Instructor)
The University of Western Ontario
2006-2010

Occasional Teacher
Thames Valley District School Board
London, Ontario
2006-2009

Teacher
London District Christian Secondary School
London, Ontario
2003-2006

Related Work   Music Director
Experience   First United Church
in Music   Mississauga
2010-present

Music Director
Liberation Choir
Brampton, Ontario
2013-present

Music Director
Addison Women's Choir
Cambridge, Ontario
2009-present

Music Director
The UWO Choir
London, Ontario
2007-2010