Enjoyment of Music by Non-Participants in School Music

Dissertation

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore musical enjoyment of adolescents who had decided not to join middle school elective beginning music classes. Through a series of phenomenological interviews, participants described their experience with enjoyment of music, including what activities and conditions led to musical enjoyment, as well as how they felt during an enjoyable musical experience. The interviews were analyzed through a descriptive phenomenological framework that included developing textural (what) and structural (how) descriptions of the experience of musical enjoyment. Findings indicated that non-music students enjoyed a variety of musical activities, including listening to music, singing along to music, dancing to music, creating music, sharing music with friends, attending live concerts, and musical games or informal music learning. Their enjoyment was also predicated on the conditions that music matched their pre-established preferences, that music elicited situationally-preferred emotions, that music evoked fond memories, and that music focused their attention on the task or object they intended. During musical enjoyment, participants experienced their situationally-preferred emotions, a sense of focus, a feeling of ownership or relatedness toward the music, and a desire to continue participation in the musical activity that resulted in enjoyment. Implications for music education are discussed, including curricular changes to address the way that students not enrolled in music classes engage with and enjoy music.

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Vita

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Fields of Study

Major Field: Music

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Because of the elective nature of many secondary school music programs, music educators are in a constant cycle of recruitment and retention (Cole, 2010; Hamann & Gillespie, 2019). Under continuously mounting pressures from limited budgets, scheduling, and standardized testing requirements, teachers are often placed in a position of needing to advocate for their programs, frequently by demonstrating that many students want to enroll (Abril & Gault, 2006, 2008; Gillespie, 1994). However, one of the problems facing music education is the low percentage of students who choose to enroll in school music electives (D. A. Williams, 2007, 2011). Enjoyment of music is often cited by music students as one of the strongest factors influencing their decision to begin or continue in music (Duke, Flowers, & Wolfe, 1997; Rife, Shnek, Lauby, & Lapidus, 2001), but the specific topic of musical enjoyment is part of a body of research that is only recently emerging (Koops, 2012, 2017; Koops & Kuebel, 2018). Several researchers have studied other factors that are associated with enrollment in school music, including prior academic achievement (Kinney, 2008, 2010, 2019), socioeconomic status (SES) (Elpus & Abril, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2006; Gillespie & Hamann, 1998; Kinney, 2010), and family or environmental influences (J. Davidson, Faulkner, & McPherson, 2009; Hallam, 2002; Kinney, 2010, 2019).

Non-participants in school music electives are often discussed as a single conglomerate group that can be statistically compared to students who have decided to enroll. Various characterizations of non-participants include those individuals who are musically uninterested (Gates, 1991), lower academically achieving (Catterall, Chapleau, & Iwanaga, 1999; Kinney, 2008; Koh, 2011), or generally unmusical (Justus, 2001; Ruddock, 2012). However, non-participants in school music make up between 66% and 82% of a student population (Hawkinson, 2015; Kinney, 2008; D. B. Williams, 2012). Furthermore, many of the assumptions regarding non-participant students are based on studies that primarily focus on those students who are enrolled in music, with non-participant students used as a comparison group. Notably, the non-participants of school music are often not specifically investigated except as juxtaposition to music students.

In certain cases, researchers seem to have examined the characteristics of current music students in an attempt to find other students with those same characteristics, with the hope that they are also "musically gifted" (Gillespie, 1994, p. 80). The assumption that music is only for the talented few is echoed by both students and parents (J. Davidson et al., 2009; Legette, 1998), despite the assertion by NAfME that the purpose of music education is to teach all students to create, perform, and respond to music (NAfME, 2014, 2016). Perhaps students' predicted lack of success in music and an assumed lack of natural ability may influence their decisions to ever attempt music study at all (Lamont & Maton, 2008).

Participation in musical activity is clearly a complex phenomenon that is a fertile area for research. A qualitative approach to investigate the experiences of students who

choose not to participate in school music can lead to nuanced responses that reflect the individuality and complexity of music participation and non-participation. Students often refer to enjoyment when describing what motivates them to participate in music ensembles (Cavitt, 2008; Koutz, 1987) or to engage with music at all (P. S. Campbell, Connell, & Beegle, 2007; Duke et al., 1997; Rife et al., 2001). Additionally, when listing reasons why they might choose not to participate in school music, students often cite a lack of interest, or a predicted lack of enjoyment (Hawkinson, 2015; Howell, 2010), which may indicate a schism between the individual's preference or culture and the specific music offerings of the school itself. Exploring the phenomenon of enjoyment could help to deepen educators' understanding of the ways students who do not participate in school music do, in fact, enjoy music. Many studies have verified listeners' and performers' enjoyment of music (Boal-Palheiros & Hargreaves, 2001; C. L. Bowles, 1998; Cassie, 2011; Custodero, 2002; DeVries, 2010). However, those studies have not sought to explicate *how* those students enjoy music, *what* they enjoy about music, and the various ways that they engage in music in their lives. By exploring the construct of musical enjoyment, music educators might be better equipped to tailor music programs to suit students' musical needs.

Models and Measures of Musical Enjoyment

While enjoyment has been cited as a contributing factor to music participation, it has been studied primarily as an outcome related to other topics in music education, including music appreciation (Crickmore, 1968; Lewis, Tamborini, & Weber, 2014), music engagement (Godwin, 2015b, 2015a; Koops & Keppen, 2015), musical preference

(S. Davidson, 2018; LeBlanc, Colman, McCrary, Sherrill, & Malin, 1988; LeBlanc, Jin, Stamou, & McCrary, 1999; Leblanc, Sims, Siivola, & Obert, 1996; S. Thompson, 2007), and emotional responses to music (Madsen, 1997a, 1997b; Madsen & Coggiola, 2001; van den Tol & Giner-Sorolla, 2017). Because one of the goals of this study was to co-construct with student participants what enjoyment of music means to them, how they enjoy music, and how that enjoyment manifests, those extant perspectives informed the interview protocol but did not limit it.

Few studies focused on the phenomenon of musical enjoyment itself, instead often using enjoyment to validate a different conclusion. For example, W. Anderson (2016) measured music listening enjoyment and sensitivity using a Likert scale to evaluate the effectiveness of mindful listening exercises. Margulis (2010) used a Likert scale to measure whether adult respondents' listening enjoyment was influenced by program notes. In a similar study with children, Margulis, Kisida, and Greene (2015) found that program notes increased attention and comprehension, but did not increase audience members' enjoyment of the performance. Although those studies incorporated enjoyment of music, none of them explored what constitutes the experience of musical enjoyment.

Instead, when enjoyment was addressed in extant literature, it was most often on a 5- or 7-point Likert scale including questions such as "How much did you enjoy the activity?" or "How much would you like to hear that music again?" (W. Anderson, 2016; Baskaran, 2013; Crickmore, 2017; Gao, Zhang, & Podlog, 2014; George, Stickle, Rachid, & Wopnford, 2007; Lin, 2005; Margulis, 2010). However, those single questions within a

broader study do not necessarily allow for in-depth exploration of the experience of musical enjoyment.

School Music Participants and Non-Participants

For the purposes of this study, participants in music were operationally defined as students who had enrolled in an elective school music class offered at the secondary level. Non-participants in music were operationally defined as any students who decided not to enroll in elective music courses offered at their school.

In this document, beyond the review of literature, non-participants in music classes are referred to as 'non-music students' to avoid confusion between music participants or non-participants and participants in the study. Likewise, participants in music classes are referred to as 'music students.'

Gates (1991) identified six levels of music participant: professional, apprentice, amateur, hobbyist, recreationalist, and dabbler. Additionally, he identified two levels of non-participant: audience members and the musically uninterested. According to Gates, those non-participants did not view the benefits of participating to outweigh the time commitment, energy, or cost. As a result, they were less likely to be musically engaged at all. Gates (1991) asserted that students who are not in music classes are perhaps uninterested in being engaged in musical activities. However, the non-music students in this study will not be assumed to be unmusical or uninterested in music, despite the nomenclature.

Need for the Study

The mission of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) is "to advance music education by promoting the understanding and making of music by all" (NAfME, 2016). Even when the organization was still known as the Music Supervisors National Conference nearly 100 years ago, the sentiment was that music should be available for every child. In 1922, Karl Gehrkens, then the president of the Music Supervisors National Conference (MSNC), coined the slogan, "Music for Every Child; Every Child *for* Music" (Munkittrick, 2013). A decade later, he continued to refine the complex issue, explaining that every child *for* music meant that every child should love music and desire to participate in music both in school and as a part of their daily lives (Gehrkens, 1933). Despite that goal, Gehrkens (1933) lamented that there were "droves of blasé youngsters in our junior high schools who tolerate the music period only…but drop it as soon as possible" (p. 31).

That problem of low music enrollment and seemingly low interest in school music offerings has continued to the present. Hoffer (1980) reported that there were approximately 77% of students who were not enrolled in music programs, which indicated a decline in music enrollment between 1970 and 1980. According to D. A. Williams (2007, 2011), the percentage of students not enrolled in music classes was as high as 85% in 1989 and 88% in 2005, indicating a further decline.

Many researchers and philosophers have outlined the challenges that face music education both today and since its conception. Some have attributed challenges to the outside obstacles to music education, such as No Child Left Behind (Elpus, 2014; Gerber

& Gerrity, 2007), lack of funding (Hedgecoth, 2017; B. A. Williams, 2016), or a shortage of teachers (Choate, 1968; Madsen & Hancock, 2002). Others have turned a critical eye inward toward the music education profession, suggesting that the current model of music education is the largest problem facing music education (Bledsoe, 2015; Kratus, 2007; D. A. Williams, 2007, 2011). According to one extensive review of literature, nearly all studies prior to 1991 that focused on enrollment and participation trends and the related factors were conducted through survey and structured questionnaire (Gates, 1991).

Since then, there have been many studies that examined the demographic factors that are associated with participation or nonparticipation in music, such as socioeconomic status and prior academic achievement (Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Fitzpatrick, 2006; Kinney, 2008, 2010, 2019; Klinedinst, 1991). While those studies gave insight into important demographic advantages or barriers that may influence music participation, they do not address the individual decision-making process that occurs for each student. Gates (1991) suggested that allowing students to give "open-ended verbalizations about music participation" (p. 19) might provide additional insight into those students' decision-making process to supplement predictions based on their demographic profiles. An underlying assumption in many music participation studies is that by studying the participant population, we can automatically learn about the non-participant population. Additionally, there is an implication that the pre-existing characteristics of the current participants are the formula for musical success, and teachers should seek out other students with those same characteristics.

In conducting my own literature search of music and education databases, I found very few studies that directly investigated non-participant students in school music or enjoyment of music. The few studies that did address musical enjoyment focused on preschool-age children (Koops, 2017; Koops & Kuebel, 2018) or on music appreciation courses (e.g., Crickmore, 1968, 2017; Price & Swanson, 1990). Many studies were related to the differences between the musical capabilities of musicians and non-musicians. However, few addressed the perspective and opinions of non-musicians related to their experience of musical enjoyment.

Another recurring topic in the literature search included factors that contributed to non-music majors participating in collegiate ensembles, and the value those students placed on music (e.g., Bowles, Dobbs, & Jensen, 2014; Buchanan, 1998; Moder, 2013; M. J. Stewart, 2007). Those non-music majors had enjoyed their secondary school experiences in music ensembles enough to continue to perform music beyond their major. However, no studies investigated beginning-age students who had made the decision not to begin music classes at all.

Bledsoe (2015) interviewed three adult musicians who did not participate in traditional school music ensembles. His findings included the perception by those individuals that the school music programs "didn't have anything for people like [them]" (p. 20), i.e., those not interested in traditional large ensemble music learning. Bledsoe suggested that teachers should investigate students who are not in traditional music programs, including who those students are, how they may currently make music, and whether their musical goals align with the course offerings of the music program.

Enjoyment or predicted enjoyment of musical activities has consistently been found to be an important factor in students' decisions to continue in music participation (Duke et al., 1997; Gouzouasis, Henrey, & Belliveau, 2008; Hawkinson, 2015; McEwan, 2006; North, Hargreaves, & O'Neill, 2000; Rife et al., 2001; J. Sloboda, 2001). It is surprising, therefore, that more studies have not investigated the phenomenon of musical enjoyment itself. Koops (2017) suggested that the reasons enjoyment has not been more thoroughly studied in music education could be the emphasis on portraying music as a "serious musical endeavor with clear goals and achieved outcomes" in order to justify music's place in the curriculum (p. 362). However, many researchers have suggested that rigor and enjoyment are not mutually exclusive, and in fact finding an optimal balance may promote intrinsic motivation to excel (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Custodero, 2002; S. Davidson, 2018; Godwin, 2015b; Hopkins, 2008; Koops, 2017; Koops & Keppen, 2015; Koops & Kuebel, 2018). Therefore, perhaps music educators and advocates should consider embracing enjoyment as an important part of the experience of music classes.

For students not enrolled in school ensembles, the traditional approach to promoting enjoyment of music has typically been through music appreciation classes that focus on elements of music, genre, form, classical composers, and historical periods of music (e.g., Gunn, 1939; Hallstrom, 1947). The trend of 'teaching' non-musicians to enjoy music through informed listening has continued through contemporary music education (e.g., Forney & Machlis, 2015).

Historically, there has been an assumption that musicians and non-musicians enjoy music differently; Fuller-Maitland (1926) went as far as to say, "It is not difficult to

understand the enjoyment that *musical* people receive from *good* music but it is very hard to account for the vogue of certain compositions with the *unmusical*" (p. 105). This statement is indicative of a problematic attitude toward individuals who are musically untrained as preferring inferior music or lacking the refinement to make sound musical judgement. Although the quote is nearly a century old, the sentiment is one I have heard echoed even as I was engaged in conducting the present study. However, studies have indicated that all people, musicians and non-musicians alike, may experience similar aesthetic responses to music (Madsen, Byrnes, Capperella-Sheldon, & Brittin, 1993), despite attending to different aspects of the music as they listen (Geringer & Madsen, 1995; Kinney, 2004).

Hawkinson (2015) conducted a mixed-methods study of factors and barriers associated with nonparticipation in school music. She found that factors such as race or ethnicity, socioeconomic status, attitudes toward school music, and schedule conflicts were predictors for nonparticipation in school music. At the same time, she found that nonparticipants expressed a desire for student-centered music pedagogy and occasionally considered themselves to be musicians, despite not participating in school music. The recent findings of Hawkinson (2015) suggest that non-music students are not actually nonmusical, they simply are not involved in the course offerings at school.

Therefore, instead of attempting to teach students 'how to' enjoy music, it might be more informative to explore how students already enjoy music and what aspects of music they enjoy. To that end, the purpose of this study will be to explore the phenomenon of musical enjoyment, and to describe and interpret the essence of musical

enjoyment as it is experienced by 'non-music' students – those who elected not to enroll in beginning music ensemble classes.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore the phenomenon of musical enjoyment for 'non-music' students. In-depth interviews uncovered participants' descriptions of their experience of musical enjoyment, including the preconditions that led to the experience and the thoughts and feelings that occurred during the experience. A guiding philosophy for the study was that non-music students are not automatically nonmusical, and that their experiences of musical enjoyment are valid and meaningful for them.

Previous findings indicated that fourth, fifth, and sixth grade are the most common years for beginning instrumental instruction in the United States (Hartley, 1996; Hartley & Porter, 2009; Smith, Mick, & Alexander, 2018). However, the school district involved in this study required music instruction through sixth grade, with seventh grade as the first opportunity students had to voluntarily enroll in a beginning music ensemble elective. Therefore, the participants in this study included seventh- and eighth-grade students who elected not to enroll in music classes.

Research questions guiding the study were:

a) How do non-music students describe their experience of musical enjoyment?

b) What musical experiences lead to enjoyment of music for non-music students?

Based on a synthesis of the structures that make up these students' lived experience of musical enjoyment, readers may find that the experiences of the participants in this study resonate with their own or their students' experiences. While the

design of this study will not support generalization to a broader population, findings may help to illuminate certain aspects of music that are enjoyed by students who are not enrolled in music and may inform recruiting practices for teachers.

Methodological Overview

This phenomenological study involved interviews with students age 12-13 who elected not to join beginning music ensembles or electives. Over a series of interviews, participants described their musical experiences that precipitated feelings of enjoyment for them. Students' descriptions were analyzed for commonalities to determine what aspects of the experience that were invariant and crucial for the experience to occur. While phenomenology does not result in statistically generalizable results, it does illustrate the "essence" of the experience, which synthesizes what is experienced and what conditions precipitate the experience. Based on rich description of the participants and their experience of musical enjoyment, readers may be able to transfer the findings of this study to similar situations.

Participants. Moustakas (1994) argued that there should be "no in-advance criteria for selecting research participants" (p. 107), except that the participants have all experienced the phenomenon, they are interested in understanding it, and are willing to be interviewed. As a result, I did not select participants seeking certain modes of musical enjoyment with which I hoped participants engage, nor did I seek to satisfy any statistical requirement for generalization about varying activities that could lead to differing forms of musical enjoyment (Polkinghorne, 1989). The purpose of phenomenology is to describe the structures of an experience, not to generalize, control, or predict the

phenomenon (van Manen, 1990). At the same time, every perspective added new and unique meaning, allowing for deeper insight into and understanding of the phenomenon. Giorgi (1985b) suggested that the greater number of participants that are included in a study, the greater the variety of perspectives that can be explored.

With this in mind, I employed an "emergent sampling design" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 201) where new participants were added to fill in gaps or uncover contrasting perspectives. The primary criterion for participant selection was non-music students who have experienced the phenomenon of musical enjoyment yet had opted out of music instruction at the first opportunity offered by their school district. In this study, those beginning-age students were 12-13 years old. I engaged in discussion with gatekeepers within the school (e.g., study hall teachers) to identify additional participants for the study (Groenewald, 2004).

One of the criteria frequently cited to determine the number of participants in a qualitative study is data saturation (Kuzel, 1999; Morse, 1995; O'Reilly & Parker, 2013; Seidman, 2013). Despite being hailed as "the gold standard for purposive sampling" (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006, p. 60), the threshold for reaching saturation has not been well-defined in a way that is standardized across the profession. Guest, et al. (2006) operationalized data saturation as "the point in data collection and analysis when new information produces little or no change to the codebook" (p. 65). However, the contrasting viewpoint is that new data will always add something new, albeit with diminishing returns (Mason, 2010).

For phenomenological research, a variety of suggestions have been outlined for determining an appropriate sample size. Starks and Trinidad (2007) suggested that phenomenological research typically uses between 1 and 10 participants. Similarly, Boyd (2001) recommended between 2 and 10 participants. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested between 5 and 25, while Thomas and Pollio (2002) suggested that sufficient data would be collected from 6 to 12 participants.

In an effort to more adequately identify the concept of saturation, Guest, et al. (2006) analyzed their own coding process and determined that after the first 6 of 60 interviews, 73% of the total codes used had been identified, and by 12 interviews, 92% of the total codes had been identified. Additionally, the codes that were important in the early stages of analysis continued to be important throughout the later stages of analysis, indicating that "the full range of thematic discovery occurred almost completely within the first twelve interviews (Guest et al., 2006, p. 66). Those findings support the sampling recommendations cited in research methods texts (e.g., Boyd, 2001; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Starks & Trinidad, 2007; Thomas & Pollio, 2002).

Based on those findings, the target number of participants interviewed in this study was between 6-12 students, with the possibility of adding participants after the first round of interviews if initial analyses suggest there were additional perspectives that were missing or required further enrichment. In total, eight participants were interviewed, and preliminary analysis suggested that data saturation had been adequately reached. That conclusion was reached when no new codes or themes were emerging from analysis of the data, and existing codes could be applied to new data that was collected.

Data Generation. The in-depth interview is one of the most common modes of data collection in phenomenological research (Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989). Seidman (2013) recommended that phenomenological interviews be conducted in a three-part sequence: to establish the context of the participants' lived experience, to allow participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within that context, and to reflect on the meaning that the experience holds for them. Based on Seidman's model, interview questions in the first round established participants' description of enjoyable experiences, their enjoyment of music, and some activities they enjoyed related to music. The second round of interviews explored the details of participants' experiences with enjoyment of music by asking them to reconstruct individual experiences with music, despite not enrolling in classes at school. The third round of interviews gave participants an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of musical enjoyment in their lives and to clarify the feelings that they associated with enjoyment of music. Multiple interviews allowed me to build rapport with the participants and gave them ample time to reflect and fill in details in later interviews (O'Reilly & Dogra, 2017). After preliminary analyses were conducted, I presented the emergent themes to the participants to verify whether those themes matched their experiences. Participants generally agreed that the analysis matched their experiences, and qualified or clarified as needed.

Throughout the interview process, I documented my own presuppositions, hunches, and preliminary analyses to ensure they remain suspended (Moustakas, 1994; Giorgi, 1985a) and did not influence participant responses (Polkinghorne, 1989). One of the goals of this study was to explore students' experiences of musical enjoyment in their

own words, not to impose my own experiences of musical enjoyment or my assumptions of how non-music students enjoy music. Therefore, during the interviews, I took steps to engage in "joint meaning-making" with the participants (Westcott & Littleton, 2005, p. 144). To co-construct the description of their experience, I offered open-ended questions, avoided the temptation to interrupt the children interviewees, and placed value on their specific terminology by utilizing their own words in follow-up questions (Westcott & Littleton, 2005). My role in this type of interviewing was to become the student of the interviewees, without interrupting or imposing my presuppositions (Roulston, 2010).

Additionally, I took into consideration that I am a music educator asking students who did not enroll in music classes to discuss music, which may have influenced some of the participants to respond in ways they expected me to want to hear. Although I did not tell participants I was a music educator, the staff at the research site were aware and may have shared that information. In an effort to ameliorate the power imbalance, I attempted to take on the "least-adult role" (Mandell, 1988) and reassure them that I was most interested in their perceptions and experiences. I dressed informally, often in a hoodie or athletic apparel. I also asked the participants to call me by my first name, and actively avoided any scenario that would inadvertently place me in a position of authority. Nevertheless, the participants in this study did acknowledge my adult role, often by asking if they were allowed to use their phone to share music or if they could play songs that were not school appropriate. Those interactions are explored further in Chapter 5.

Data Analysis. The first step in the data analysis was to reorient myself to the phenomenon of musical enjoyment. To accomplish that, I reviewed my own

presuppositions about musical enjoyment before reading the complete descriptions of the experience by the participants. While reading participants' descriptions, I would occasionally notice recurring ideas. During this reading, however, I made a point not to document my hunches, so I could read the entire description before interpreting the results. Even so, I had to work to suspend my intuition from the beginning to connect the dots as I read each transcript as if I had no knowledge of other participants' descriptions. Through that process, I attempted to read participants' descriptions of the phenomenon as they experienced it, without allowing my interpretation to influence the description (Giorgi, 2012, 2014). The purpose of this first step was to get a sense of each participant's holistic experience with musical enjoyment, and to attempt to see (or hear or feel) the experience as they did.

Following that, I engaged in horizonalization, which is a process that involves analyzing each individual perspective for common themes. By compiling a variety of perspectives that make up the horizon, I began to notice which aspects of the experience were consistent across multiple experiences and which were incidental to singular experiences (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1990). As themes began to emerge, I clustered them into textural descriptions (the *what* of the phenomenon), which included participants' thoughts, feelings, examples, and specific situations (Moustakas, 1994).

Concurrently with textural descriptions, I analyzed for the structural description (or the *how*) of the phenomenon for each participant, which included what activities and preconditions allowed for the experience of musical enjoyment. I cross-referenced the individual textural and structural descriptions, which allowed the essence of the

experience to emerge from the data. Polkinghorne (1989) described this process of comparing the general structures with the specific data as zigzagging and suggested that it can occur many times before the final essence is determined.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions of terms were used:

Music student: Students who decided to enroll in elective music classes at the secondary level.

Non-music student: Students who decided not to enroll or continue in elective music classes at the secondary level.

Phenomenological objectivity: An orientation toward or awareness of a particular object (van Manen, 1990).

Phenomenological subjectivity: A person's unique perception and experience of a phenomenon in the world (Creswell & Poth, 2018)

Horizonalization: The process of gathering many subjective perspectives, each perspective adding new meaning and contributing to the revelation of the "horizon" of the experience. This term is derived from the common understanding of the location of a horizon, despite the many skyline features that may be present (Moustakas, 1994).

Bracketing: An acknowledgement that the researcher's preconceptions continue to exist but can be set aside (as text within brackets might be) (Husserl, 1913/2014).

Phenomenological epoché: The state of mind resulting from the act of suspension of judgement and presuppositions (Husserl, 1913/2014)

Self-efficacy: "Perceived self-efficacy is concerned with judgements of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations" (Bandura, 1982, p. 122), i.e., how successful do students predict they will be in a school music setting.

Informal music learning: Music learning that occurs "largely in the absence of adult supervision or guidance" (Green, 2005, p. 1), typically through aural learning, experimentation, imitation, and improvisation.

Musical play: Activities related to music that are viewed as games or play scenarios. Those activities generally require low cost, time, or skill (Gates, 1991).

Ownership: A sense that the music 'belongs' to the participant, either through listening or performing. (Vestad, 2014).

Agency: The opportunity to exert power, control, or authority over a situation, specifically music participation. (Koops, 2012)

Chapter Organization

Chapter 2 consists of a review of literature that synthesizes research related to enjoyment through psychological, philosophical, and educational models, as well as research specifically related to musical enjoyment. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological choices that guided the study, including a review of the philosophical background of phenomenology and the main approaches to conducting phenomenological research from which the present approach was derived. Chapter 4 presents the structural and textural descriptions of participants' experience of musical enjoyment, which included the activities that led to enjoyment of music, the preconditions for a musical experience to be

perceived as enjoyable by the participants, and the emotional and attentional responses to musical enjoyment. Chapter 5 is a discussion of the findings, including practical implications for music education and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2. Review of Literature

The subsequent review of literature addresses research in three broad categories related to musical enjoyment. The first category of literature includes existing general models of the construct of enjoyment drawn from psychology, philosophy, and education. The second area covers literature specifically related to enjoyment of music. The third includes the various ways that enjoyment has been measured or discussed in extant research. Those areas of research served as a framework for the present study on the enjoyment of music by non-participants of school music.

Models of Enjoyment

Enjoyment is part of a broader base of literature including well-being and happiness (Haworth, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Siddiquee, Sixsmith, Lawthom, & Haworth, 2016). However, there has not been a consensus on a precise definition of enjoyment in the literature. It has been variously associated with pleasures of the mind and body (Kubovy, 1999), self-actualization (Franklin, 2010; Maslow, 1968), personal expression of potential (Waterman, 1990, 1993, 2008), and as part of an optimal experience or *flow* state (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). Although some background on well-being and happiness will be necessary, a full review of research on those general constructs is outside the scope of

this review. Therefore, an effort has been made to examine just those aspects of well-being and happiness that relate specifically to the construct of enjoyment.

Historical perspectives. In historical philosophy, two main viewpoints on enjoyment emerged. The first was hedonic enjoyment, or the pleasant feelings that accompanied the satisfaction of physical, intellectual, or social needs (Waterman, 1993). The concept of hedonic enjoyment originated in 4th century Greece with the philosopher Aristuppus of Cyrene, who was a student of Socrates (Annas, 1995). Aristuppus and his followers, called Cyrenaics, held that knowledge only consisted of present sensations, and therefore pleasure in the present should be sought as the ultimate form of happiness (Annas, 1995). The notion of examining experiences on a spectrum from pleasant to unpleasant was later developed into the field of hedonic psychology (Kahneman, Deiner, & Schwarz, 1999).

The second traditional viewpoint on enjoyment came from the philosopher Aristotle, who rejected the immediacy of hedonic pleasure in favor of the concept of eudaimonia (Aristotle, trans. 2002)**.** According to Aristotle, eudaimonia is the attainment of excellence through the matching of achievement with potential, which results from virtuous actions. Additionally, he held that eudaimonia was a sum total of virtuous deeds to be evaluated at the end of an individual's life based on the degree to which they fulfilled their potential (Waterman, 2008). Eudaimonic enjoyment, therefore, is the feeling that results from the fulfillment of an individual's potential (Waterman, 1993).

Maslow's (1968) self-actualization theory has similarities with the ancient Greek philosophies, but it bridges the gap between hedonic satisfaction of needs and

eudaimonic fulfillment of potential. Maslow developed a hierarchy of needs that must be met before an individual could experience what he labeled the *peak experience*. The hierarchy included physiological needs (such as hunger, thirst, and warmth), safety needs, love and belongingness needs, and self-esteem needs (Franklin, 2010). The peak experience of the hierarchy, however, is the fulfillment of human potential, which Maslow ultimately labeled *actualization*. The lower levels of that hierarchy of needs reflect the immediacy of hedonic enjoyment, while the peak experience of self-actualization is consistent with Aristotle's description of eudaimonia. Waterman (1990) identified those similarities, and suggested that self-actualization was in fact the combination of sustained intrinsic motivation and matching potential with action.

Flow. An important development in the understanding of the psychology of enjoyment came from a series of studies regarding what became known as the *flow* experience. In fact, some recent perspectives suggest that flow may be the highest form of enjoyment (Haworth, 2017), while others suggest that flow may be only a single part of a larger construct of enjoyment (S. Davidson, 2018). Whether or not flow is indeed the highest form of enjoyment, it is prevalent enough in enjoyment literature to warrant consideration in this chapter.

Csikszenmihalyi (1975) examined chess players', dancers', and rock climbers' accounts of those various activities, and found that when individuals were totally engaged in an activity, they tended to describe similar aspects of the experience. Those aspects included a feeling of immersion in the activity, a distorted sense of the passage of time, a belief that the participant's skills matched the challenges presented, and a feeling of

control over the activity. Csikszentmihalyi chose those activities because he classified them as *autotelic* activities, i.e., those activities having no substantial external reward where the goal is only the activity itself.

Based on the findings of those studies, Csikszentmihalyi (1975) suggested that one of the main prerequisites for the flow experience was the balance between challenge and skill. If an individual had high skill in an area but low challenge, she would quickly become bored with the activity. Similarly, if she had low skill in a highly challenging situation, she might experience anxiety during that task. Studying the balance between challenge and skill, Csikszentmihalyi additionally examined surgeons, who also occasionally experienced the characteristics of flow in their work. While previous psychological thinking had clearly delineated work and leisure, Csikszentmihalyi's findings suggested that when the conditions were correct, individuals could experience flow during both work and leisure. In fact, later studies revealed that work was the type of activity most often associated with the flow experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014).

A collection of studies in the volume *Optimal Experience: Psychological Studies of Flow in Consciousness* (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988) extended our understanding of flow. One study cited two other aspects of flow that emerged in group settings. The first was group flow, which was characterized by a sense of belonging to something larger than oneself (Sato, 1988). The second was "medatsu", which was an awareness of being seen (Sato, 1988, p. 92). The *medatsu* aspect of the flow experience was reported to be particularly rewarding for individuals who felt powerless or isolated.

Another study contained reports of the experiences of women in the workplace. Allison and Duncan (1988) found that the structure of enjoyment was the same for women regardless of socioeconomic status. Both blue-collar and white-collar women experienced the best feelings when conditions for flow were met, and both felt anxiety and boredom in the opposite conditions, which the authors termed *antiflow* (Allison & Duncan, 1988, p. 120). However, it was clear from the participants' responses that flow opportunities (e.g., challenge met with equal skill) were built into the white-collar workers' jobs, whereas the blue-collar jobs were more conducive to antiflow. Therefore, blue-collar workers experienced more antiflow, although both groups utilized strategies to minimize boredom and maximize enjoyment.

Csikszentmihalyi (1988) suggested that flow is relatively rare in comparison to ordinary experiences, although the studies collected in *Optimal Experience* support what he called "the universality of flow" (p. 365). According to Csikszentmihalyi, that meant that the structure of the flow experience was consistent, even though the content of the experience might be different.

One study, in comparing common *microflow* experiences, found differences between individuals who reported enjoying solitary kinesthetic activities, such as pacing or other solo physical activities, and those who found social activities such as conversation or group dancing to be enjoyable (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Csikszentmihalyi posited that even in those every-day activities, pleasure is not synonymous with enjoyment, and that inner skills must be balanced with outer challenges for flow to occur. Waterman (1990) suggested one caveat to that balance: the *perception*

of one's skills must be balanced with the *perception* of the challenges. Csikszentmihalyi ultimately defined an enjoyable activity as including a feeling of discovery, a feeling of a challenge overcome, and a feeling that some difficulty has been resolved. Therefore, according to Csikszentmihalyi, the satisfaction of basic needs that results in pleasure does not qualify as enjoyment.

Eudaimonic enjoyment. The viewpoint that enjoyment must include some fulfillment of potential is central to psychological study of eudaimonic enjoyment. Franklin (2010) suggested that happiness can be viewed broadly as a feeling of pleasure that results from a variety of sources such as accumulated wealth or through religion. However, Franklin asserted that the most authentic form of happiness is fulfillment, also known as self-actualization.

Waterman (1990) posited that for individuals to achieve enjoyment through fulfillment, they must participate in activities that allow their potential to become skills. This idea built on Aristotle's philosophical belief that eudaimonia was determined as the sum total of fulfilled potential at the end of someone's life. In contrast to Aristotle, however, Waterman (1990) suggested that anyone who was actively working to actualize potential could be experiencing eudaimonic enjoyment. Therefore, according to Waterman, eudaimonia is not limited to the end of a lifetime but can occur in children and adults alike.

The findings of one study empirically contrasted definitions of eudaimonic enjoyment (referred to in the study as "personal expressiveness") and hedonic enjoyment (Waterman, 1993). Personally-expressive activities included those activities that were

intrinsically motivating, fulfilled potential (actualization), or resulted in flow. Findings confirmed that while personal expressiveness and hedonic enjoyment were correlated, participants reported different sets of feelings that occurred: personal expressiveness was associated with feelings of challenge, self-efficacy, high effort, and concentration, while hedonic enjoyment was associated with feelings of relaxation, excitement, losing track of time, and contentment (Waterman, 1993).

In contrast, Kashdan, Biswas-Deiner, and King (2008) suggested that examining the similarities between the models of hedonic enjoyment and eudaimonic enjoyment could be just as beneficial as examining the distinctions. In reviewing the methodologies used in a variety of studies, including Waterman (1990, 1993), Kashdan et al. (2008) interpreted the results to indicate that eudaimonia led to higher levels of happiness but was not a different form of happiness altogether. However, Waterman (2008), in a response to Kashdan et al., asserted that the investigators had misinterpreted his work. He clarified that he simply found high levels of eudaimonia to be linked with high levels of hedonia, but that high levels of hedonia did not necessarily result in high levels of eudaimonia.

Hedonic enjoyment. Although the term hedonic enjoyment is etymologically linked to the ancient Greek philosophy of hedonism, the modern operational definition is not strictly aligned with the philosophical implications described above. Kubovy (1999) defined a positive hedonic state as pleasure as a result of stimuli, or as the result of relief from discomfort. That definition does not imply a moral judgement of the pursuit of that positive state, in contrast to ancient philosophers' interpretations. Although hedonic

enjoyment is linked to physical pleasures, it also includes pleasures of the mind (Kubovy, 1999). Kubovy defined pleasures of the mind as a "collection of emotions distributed over time" (1999, p. 137), such as during music listening or enjoying a conversation over dinner. Kubovy suggested pleasures of the mind result from a cumulation of past emotions and experiences, not simply from a simple physiological response to stimuli.

Enjoyment in education. In the field of education, enjoyment has frequently been studied alongside other psychological constructs such as self-esteem and self-efficacy (e.g., Bandura, 1982, 1993), or intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (e.g., Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2000b). Those constructs each have rich bodies of research, a complete review of which is outside the scope of the present study. The following investigations are those most pertinent to the present study.

Ferris and Gerber (1996), in a study of enjoyment by students in higher education, tied together some of the constructs above in a phenomenographic study that explored the variations among students' experiences. They found that enjoyment of learning included internal personal characteristics, such as preference or self-concept, and motivational factors, such as the motivation to enroll or persist with learning. These factors were facilitated by a supportive learning environment, teachers who were invested, and effective delivery of instruction. Participants in the study revealed that their enjoyment of learning manifested as commitment to the institution.

In a study with junior high school students in the United Kingdom, Hopkins (2008) identified eight conditions that students believed contributed to their enjoyment of learning. Those conditions included the opportunity to actively participate, an appropriate

amount of teacher talk, appropriate social demands, opportunities to be challenged, a safe learning environment, a focus on learning and individual achievement, having a variety of activities, and appropriate length activities.

Gorard and See (2011) found that enjoyment in schools was promoted by factors such as positive social relationships with peers and with teachers, variety in the lesson delivery, and supportive learning environments. They contrasted those conditions with those that led to disengaged behavior, which included disruption from other students, lack of rapport with teachers, and unimaginative lesson delivery.

An important characteristic of each of the three studies reviewed above is that they place emphasis on the perspective and voice of the student. For example, Ferris and Gerber (1996) used a phenomenographic approach, a type of phenomenology that specifically focuses on the qualitative differences between participants' experiences. Hopkins (2008) utilized an Ishikawa or *fishbone* tool to organize participants responses during group interviews. Gorard and See (2011) conducted surveys and interviews with both students and teachers.

The importance of representing students' perspectives can be particularly highlighted by the distinction between teachers' and students' responses on enjoyment. Ferris and Gerber (1996) found that students considered enjoyment the most important influence in their continued engagement in education. In contrast, none of the thousands of teachers interviewed by Gorard and See (2011) mentioned planning for students' enjoyment of lessons. Gorard and See acknowledged that although enjoyment is "neither necessary nor sufficient for learning to take place, student reports of enjoyment are a kind

of barometer of when things are going well in a lesson and when they most definitely are not" (2011, p. 684).

Current perspectives. There are clearly a broad range of situations regarding the experience of enjoyment, and a variety of interpretations by scholars on what constitutes an enjoyable experience. Some of the most recent perspectives on enjoyment primarily center on the model of flow as the highest form of enjoyment (Haworth, 2017). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) distinguished enjoyment from pleasure, positing that pleasure is simply a good feeling but that enjoyment only occurs when an individual does something that "stretches them beyond what they were" (p. 12). In addition, numerous studies have confirmed that enjoyable flow experiences occur both during leisure and work (Csikszentmihalyi & Lefevre, 1989; Haworth & Hill, 1992; Siddiquee et al., 2016). Further, recent studies have demonstrated that enjoyment can come from low-, medium-, and high-challenge activities (Haworth, 2017; Siddiquee et al., 2016).

Recently, Davidson (2018) suggested that despite many current researchers equating enjoyment with flow, not all experiences that are reported as enjoyable necessarily elicit the flow state. Davidson (2018) further distinguished between subjective well-being and enjoyment: subjective well-being pertains to a person's life overall, while enjoyment results from a specific activity. It is conceivable that music would cross both of those definitions. Moreover, based on the discrepancies in existing models of enjoyment as a single dimension of other complex constructs, Davidson (2018) outlined a multi-dimensional model of enjoyment that included psychological need satisfaction, engagement, and pleasure. The profound variety of interpretations of the

construct of enjoyment reveals that further research is needed to accurately identify agreed-upon commonalities and discrepancies of the experience.

Musical Enjoyment

It is apparent that psychological and educational researchers have characterized enjoyment in widely varying ways. Similarly, there have been a variety of interpretations of enjoyment in music. Some have suggested that musical enjoyment stems from the accomplishment of an appropriately difficult musical task (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Godwin, 2015a). Others have suggested that musical enjoyment is no more than a reflection of sustained interest in a musical activity (Crickmore, 1968; Eisentraut, 2013). In studies specific to music and education, researchers have outlined indicators and prerequisites for musical enjoyment, including factors such as music preference (Eisentraut, 2013; LeBlanc et al., 1988, 1999; Leblanc et al., 1996), musical identity-establishment (Godwin, 2015a, 2015b), a sense of community (Gorard & See, 2011), and environmental conditions (Hopkins, 2008; Koops, 2017; Koops & Kuebel, 2018). One frequently cited factor for musical enjoyment is rooted in student-choice during musical activities (Godwin, 2015b; Koops, 2017; Koops & Keppen, 2015; Koops & Kuebel, 2018).

Musical listening. Historically, there has been an assumption that classically trained musicians in the Western tradition enjoy music differently from non-musicians. Kohut and Levarie (1990) labeled non-musicians in this context as "nonproducing listeners" (p. 4), which emphasizes a perceived divide between listening and performing in terms of musicality. Fuller-Maitland (1926) went as far as to say, "It is not difficult to

understand the enjoyment that *musical* people receive from *good* music but it is very hard to account for the vogue of certain compositions with the *unmusical*" (p. 105, emphasis in original). Similarly, Schneider (1921) suggested that trained musicians enjoy music because of their training, while listeners with a "primitive ear" are able to enjoy only the simplest of harmonies, as long as there are strong rhythms (p. 221). Hallstrom (1947) suggested that those who do not *do* music can listen, and in order to appreciate music, should know how to listen to classical music. Gunn (1939) defined enjoyment of music as the satisfaction of listening to music and hearing each emotional nuance.

Each of those historical viewpoints reflects a perspective that elevates Western classical music traditions while also illustrating a disdain for those who are untrained in those traditions. Although training and acculturation to classical music certainly affect the way that listeners attend to music (Kinney, 2004), contemporary views do not hold that the classical tradition is superior to other traditions. In fact, studies show that musical preference intersects with culture frequently (Abril & Flowers, 2007; Flowers, 1980; Fung, 1993), which would indicate that preference for Western classical music is not necessarily a valid goal for music education classes.

Despite this, scholars often interpret enjoyment of music to be aligned with preference, which they suggest could be adjusted through extended exposure. A variety of empirical studies have since confirmed that musical preference is indeed related to listeners' familiarity with the music (see e.g., Droe, 2006; M. Williams, 2017 for recent reviews of literature related to musical preference). Based on those results, there is an assumption in music education that if students are exposed to enough of any type of

music, they will develop a preference for it and therefore an enjoyment of it (Payne, 1980). However, Price and Swanson (1990) found that when music appreciation students' knowledge of various genres increased, their reported enjoyment of the musical excerpts did not increase.

Additionally, there is contemporary literature that advocates for respecting, rather than attempting to elevate or improve children's musical preferences (Abril, 2013; Gay, 2010; Shaw, 2012, 2015). Cultures differ regarding what is considered musically beautiful, as do individuals within cultures (Brattico, Brattico, & Jacobsen, 2009). In light of that perspective, an exploration of what each individual values related to enjoyment of music is warranted.

Brattico and Pearce (2013) presented an alternate view of the relationship between preference and enjoyment: preference may actually be a decision based on the intensity of the enjoyment experienced, rather than a factor that leads to enjoyment. Other scholars have suggested that preference structures for music have deeper biological or evolutionary roots (Brattico et al., 2009).

Kubovy (1999) offered that part of the enjoyment of music for a listener is in the balance of expectation and surprise. When expectations are established, and then either fulfilled or thwarted, the listener experiences some kind of relief response (Brattico & Pearce, 2013; Kubovy, 1999). In popular music listening, people often learn those expectations implicitly (Kubovy, 1999), while in classical music listening, the development of expectancies is often the result of musical training or sustained engagement and acculturation (Brattico & Pearce, 2013).

Another definition for enjoyment is the aesthetic-emotional response that results from an individual's assessment of the characteristics of the music (C. S. Pereira et al., 2011). In other words, music is enjoyable because it can induce a series of emotions based on prior experiences, formal aspects, and the implied or explicit meaning of the music (Brattico & Pearce, 2013; Kubovy, 1999). In a study involving fMRI, C. S. Pereira et al. (2011) found that brain activity linked to emotional response was most often caused by familiar music rather than preferred music. If enjoyment of music is a collection of emotional responses, and emotional responses are most closely correlated with familiarity of music, those findings actually support the traditional approach to promoting musical enjoyment through exposure to various genres of music through listening, That approach typically involved music appreciation classes that focus on elements of music, genre, form, classical composers, and historical periods of music (e.g., Gunn, 1939; Hallstrom, 1947)..

Kohut and Levarie (1990) presented an alternate model for the enjoyment of music listening. Their model closely aligns with the hedonic model of pleasure of the mind (Kubovy, 1999), i.e., they suggested that psychological pleasure in listening to music is derived from the release of tension. Kohut and Levarie called that tension-relief "liberated energy," and suggested that it was predicated by an experience of "drinking in the music" (Kohut & Levarie, 1990, pp. 7–8). Following that, the rhythmic energy of the music and the atmosphere of any group experience (audience or performers) would result in a physical, primal response in listeners.

One early study on musical enjoyment found that listeners' experiences of music were unique because not all people noticed the same aspects of the music, and many had different responses (Gatewood, 1927). This finding was similar to Schneider's (1921) assertion that musical enjoyment is entirely based on individual preference. In the study, Gatewood (1927) asked participants to rate various feelings they had while listening to the music including familiarity, pleasantness of the music, interest or boredom, memories or thoughts while listening, emotions felt, the extent to which rhythm, melody, harmony, and timbre contributed to overall pleasure, as well as other factors. Based on those responses, Gatewood surmised that listeners enjoy music performances based on physical responses (movement) to the music, feelings of satisfaction, association with emotions or memories, and interest in the composition or technique of the performer.

Many scholars have interpreted musical enjoyment for listeners as synonymous with music appreciation (Crickmore, 1968; Lewis et al., 2014; Payne, 1980; Price & Swanson, 1990; Silveira, 2014; Woody & Burns, 2001). For students enrolled in non-performing music classes, the traditional approach to promoting musical enjoyment has involved music appreciation classes that focus on elements of music, genre, form, classical composers, and historical periods of music (e.g., Gunn, 1939; Hallstrom, 1947). The trend of teaching non-musicians to enjoy music through informed listening has continued in contemporary music education from elementary (e.g., Tanner & Wilcox, 2013) through collegiate levels (e.g., Forney & Machlis, 2015).

However, studies have shown that although musicians and non-musicians perceived and attended to music in different ways (e.g., Geringer & Madsen, 1995;

Kinney, 2004), they may experience similar aesthetic responses to music (Madsen et al., 1993) and may not need additional training to enjoy music. In fact, Campbell (1998) argued that children are inherently musical and it is Western cultures' fixation on talent development—which withholds musical opportunities from some students—that gives the impression that those children are not musical.

Musical participation. Frequently, elementary and secondary general music classes include hands-on performing and creating activities, but some investigators have reported confusion among educators about what a general music course should include (Davis, 2009, 2011; Zelt, 2011). That feeling of uncertainty regarding middle school general music is summarized by Davis (2011): "Is it an accelerated version of the elementary music program? Or is it a decelerated version of the college music appreciation course?" (p. 17). In a review of general music curricula, Zelt (2011) found that a common element of general music texts is a claim to engage students "through active music learning, relating the activities to their everyday lives, and including popular music" (p. 42), although it is not always clear how to accomplish those goals.

Student's enjoyment of participatory musical activities is part of a growing body of literature. Koops (2012) found that music in Gambian societies was used as a form of socialization that served as entertainment, education, and communication. She identified expressions of musical enjoyment as dancing, singing, smiling, moving to see a musical performance from a different angle, clapping along, jumping, and demonstrating a reluctance for the music to end. One pertinent finding was that colloquial music was intended to be accompanied by dance and play, while school music seemed to be

intended to be "performed" in relative stillness (Koops, 2012, p. 10). Koops posited that children's enthusiastic participation was related to the degree of control, or agency, that they felt in a given musical activity.

Another study also found that student-choice and student-directed aspects of the musical experience seemed to be the most enjoyable (Koops, Hankins, Scalise, & Schatt, 2014). Participants involved in the study were former students of a rock orchestra initiative who were encouraged to engage in music learning practices that were common to informal music making. Informal music-making practices include student choice of music, improvisation, copying recordings by ear, learning in self-assembled ensembles, and engaging in peer-to-peer teaching (Green, 2006; Koops et al., 2014). One former student of the rock orchestra described above commented that informal learning "made the process longer and harder, but at the end, people felt like they had more of a stake in it" (Koops et al., 2014, p. 153).

In a study designed to establish a relationship between self-efficacy and singing enjoyment, Baskaran (2013) found that many children described their musical enjoyment as the amount of fun they had during the activity. Based on that and the other findings of the study, Baskaran suggested students be given more choice, more freedom to experiment, and that teachers should praise students for those choices and experimentations. Similarly, Kelly (2013) found that students expressed a preference for hands-on musical activities and that enjoyment of music class influenced children's overall enjoyment of music. In both studies, enjoyment was a frequently recurring factor

in children's descriptions of their engagement with musical activities (Baskaran, 2013; Kelly, 2013).

To further build the model of children's musical enjoyment, Koops (2017) conducted a phenomenological study that included child interviews, adult interviews, and observation of children age 4-7 as they engaged in musical play. Based on those data sources, Koops found that when students were enjoying musical experiences, they were actively participating in musical games, and they demonstrated signs of physical engagement such as laughing and smiling. Conditions that led to students' musical enjoyment included a balance of familiarity and novelty, a balance of structure and freedom, a balance of community and individual focus, and a safe and playful environment. Along with those, students' agency during activities was a precondition for enjoyment. When students were enjoying the activity, that led to increased participation and musical risk-taking, which in turn provided more opportunities for musical enjoyment (Koops, 2017).

Observations in a later study revealed four main indicators of musical enjoyment: affective behavior, continuation response, participation, and positive body movement (Koops & Kuebel, 2018). The first three were supported by extant literature on enjoyment and student engagement (Forsythe, 1977; Ito, Ainuki, & Akamatsu, 2015), but positive body movement emerged uniquely from Koops and Kuebel's (2018) observations. Additionally, Koops and Kuebel (2018) found that student choice, comfort with the environment, achievable and appropriately challenging goals, maturity, and the

duration and location of activities all contributed to students' enjoyment of musical activities.

Although researchers and teachers caution against pandering music education as "edutainment" (e.g., Okan, 2003, p. 255), Koops and Keppen (2015) suggested that planning music lessons with students' enjoyment in mind can streamline the flow of activities. They suggested that when even a few students are enjoying the activities, the rest of the students will gradually become more engaged.

Measures of Enjoyment

As scholars have become increasingly interested in happiness and well-being, there have been many attempts to empirically measure the construct of enjoyment. An early study on happiness and enjoyment correlated happiness with education, income, marital status, age, employment status, and worry over the Cuban Missile Crisis (Bradburn & Caplovitz, 1965). At the same time, Bradburn and Caplovitz acknowledged that "happiness is too personal and subjective a phenomenon to be studied by the crude measuring devices presently available to the social scientist" (1965, p. v). Since then, other researchers have concurred that happiness, well-being, and enjoyment are complex constructs (e.g., Haworth, 2017; Kashdan et al., 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 2008).

Many studies that included enjoyment measured it as an outcome, typically on a 7-point or 5-point Likert scale (e.g., Baskaran, 2013; Crickmore, 2017; Gao, Zhang, & Podlog, 2014; Ito et al., 2015). Additionally, enjoyment was often measured only as a single variable among many as part of a broader study. Those measures of enjoyment

were generally limited to a single question such as, "How much did you enjoy the activity?" (W. Anderson, 2016; Baskaran, 2013; Lin, 2005) or "How much would you like to hear that music again?" (George et al., 2007; Margulis, 2010). Some researchers asked participants to rate various aspects of the activity or music (Bleich, Zillmann, & Weaver, 1991; Gatewood, 1927), while others rated observable indicators of enjoyment (Cassie, 2011; Custodero, 1998a, 1998b, 2002, 2005; Ito et al., 2015; King et al., 2007; Koops, 2012, 2017; Koops & Kuebel, 2018). Few studies focused purely on the phenomenon of enjoyment itself, instead often using it to validate a different conclusion. As a result, enjoyment is frequently reported as one aspect of a broader construct, such as happiness or well-being.

Measures of musical enjoyment. In one study involving the enjoyment of musical performances, Thompson (2007) compiled a questionnaire based on experts' suggestions of what they thought likely contributed to enjoyment of music: mood, feelings of relaxation, familiarity with the performers or piece, social atmosphere, or general curiosity. Thompson also included factors that might cause a listener to enjoy a performance less. Additionally, the questionnaire included a few open-ended response questions for participants to list any other factors that were important in determining their personal enjoyment of a performance, although responses were limited by the form to three lines and three adjectives.

Chong (2010) conducted a survey on the universality of singing enjoyment that also included open-ended response items. The participants of the study were specifically non-voice majors at a university. The survey form included a single multi-part open-

ended question: “Do you enjoy singing? If you do, why, and if you don’t, why not?” (p. 121). According to Chong, the data were analyzed qualitatively, although the reported results only included frequency counts of researcher-determined key words. While frequency of response is important in qualitative research, it is not the only determinant of salience.

One recent study compared the effect of mindful listening instruction on reported musical enjoyment (W. Anderson, 2016). In the study, W. Anderson (2016) distinguished between listening sensitivity (noticing subtle differences in musical examples) and listening enjoyment, which was defined as “pleasure derived from listening to music, as reported by the listener” (p. 50). The measure of musical enjoyment that was used in this study was a two-question, 7-point scale. The two questions for the students were a) How much have you enjoyed listening, and b) How much would you like to hear this music again in the future. While findings indicated that students reported higher levels of enjoyment after instruction on mindful listening, Anderson acknowledged that enjoyment might overlap with preference when using this measurement tool.

Experience Sampling Method (ESM). Experiential sampling has been hailed as the “gold standard” in enjoyment research, to which all other measures should be compared (Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwarz, & Stone, 2004, p. 1777). The Experience Sampling Method (ESM) was developed as part of a study on adolescent behavior (Csikszentmihalyi, Larson, & Prescott, 1977). The measure examined what activities adolescents engaged in, the rationale for their engagement in those activities, how they perceived the quality of the experience to be, and their mood during the

activity. Each participant was assigned a beeper which beeped at randomly-scheduled times throughout the day. When the beeper went off, participants were to self-report on an Experience Sampling Form (ESF) what they were doing, whether they were together or alone, why they were doing the activity, and rate on a 10-pt scale the degree of control over the activity they felt, the challenge-level of the activity, their skill-level, and the stakes of the activity. Participants also indicated their mood on 7-point Likert scales measuring whether they felt excited or bored, free or constrained, active or passive, happy or sad, and so on. Participants' mood relative to feeling active or passive was most impacted by the type of activity, while perceived happiness, trust, satisfaction, and creativity were least affected by the activities.

Later studies extended the generalizability of the ESM by utilizing it in different contexts such as comparisons of adolescents' television-to-music listening activity (Larson & Kubey, 1983) or differences in flow experiences during work and leisure (Csikszentmihalyi & Lefevre, 1989). Other studies extended the ESM by combining it with various approaches. In addition to ESM, Haworth and Hill (1992) used various measures of psychological well-being such as self-esteem and overall life-satisfaction to correlate enjoyment and interest with a balance of challenge and skill. Similarly, Abuhamdeh and Csikszentmihalyi (2012) combined the results of a survey and the ESM to develop a composite measure of enjoyment that consisted of interest, excitement, and fun, which were all highly correlated in the study.

Sloboda, O'Neill, and Ivaldi (2001) utilized the ESM in the context of music in people's everyday lives. They adapted the Experience Sampling Form (ESF) to address

whether the participant was listening to music when beeped, or if they had heard any music since last being beeped. A second section of the response form included questions related to what style of music was or had been listened to, whether it had been live or recorded, and in what social context the music had been heard. Following the completion of the week-long ESM portion of the study, each participant was interviewed to ascertain whether the week was typical in terms of their musical exposure.

In a further extension of the ESM in a musical context, Greasley and Lamont (2011) included open-ended questions, which they deemed necessary to explore the thoughts and feelings of participants (supported by Thompson, 2007). They asked participants to report on the rationale for choosing whatever music was listened to, and whether that music fulfilled the rationale (e.g., to help participants concentrate, to distract them, to help them relax, to invoke a certain emotion, etc.). Greasley and Lamont noted that while the ESM allowed for consideration of social context, it did not give insight on the impact of respondents' personality tendencies (such as being an engaged or casual listener).

Regarding the role of personality in musical enjoyment, Hall, Schubert, and Wilson (2016) examined the differences between trait and state absorption in the enjoyment of music. Hall et al. defined trait absorption as a personality tendency to totally focus on an activity. They suggested that state absorption is frequently equated with flow. To elicit the broadest range of strong emotional responses, Hall et al. (2016) asked participants to select music they found either powerful or boring. Participants answered Likert-type questions rating their emotions toward the music and the emotions

they thought the music itself expressed. Additionally, participants completed two absorption tests that measured state and trait absorption, respectively. Findings indicated that trait absorption was important in predicting preference for music that elicits negative emotions, while state absorption was important in predicting enjoyment of music as it was happening.

Huron (2011) suggested that listeners might experience sadness through listening to music in three circumstances: if the music mirrored sad speech, if the listener associated certain emotions with certain music, or if the listener engaged in "cognitive rumination" (p. 151) where the music provoked thoughts about sad life issues. He suggested that sad music can trigger comforting endorphins to be released because the music essentially tricked the listeners' brain into believing it was sad. Huron (2011) offered this explanation as to how some listeners experience enjoyment during sad music.

Flow Indicators in Musical Activities (FIMA). While the ESM was effective in the exploration of adults' experiences with music, it was not appropriate for the examination of flow in young children because of its reliance on reflection upon feelings and articulation of those feelings (Custodero, 1998a). To develop an appropriate measure for young children's flow experiences in music, Custodero (1998a) took an ethnographic approach of observing young children in musical activities during music classes. During that process, she observed the type of musical activities, the length of the activity, students' familiarity with the activity, affective indicators such as whether the students appeared to be happy, involved, etc., behavior indicators such as whether their skill matched the challenge, and other observable indicators of flow. Some observable

indicators of flow included children appearing to be focused and absorbed in the activity, whether their gaze was attentive, whether they had a positive facial affect, and if they demonstrated visible awareness of their success at a task.

In a series of studies with young children, including those who were preverbal (Custodero, 2005), it became clear that music has many conditions for flow embedded into its activities. For instance, musical activities have clear goals and immediate feedback based on expectations learned from exposure to Western music (Custodero, 2002). Additionally, children can engage in challenge-seeking behaviors such as self-assignment of tasks or self-correction during practice (Cassie, 2011; Custodero, 2005).

As previously discussed, observations of children during musical play have been effective in determining their enjoyment of the musical activities (Koops, 2012, 2017; Koops & Kuebel, 2018). Observable aspects of enjoyment in those studies included facial affect and body language, children's continuation behaviors, and on-task behavior. An additional distinguishing characteristic of those studies was an inclusion of interview data with children and adults to further explore children's experience of musical enjoyment.

Conclusion

Although a number of models for enjoyment have been proposed, from hedonic pleasure to the optimal flow experience, scholars have not come to a definitive consensus on what exactly constitutes enjoyment of music. The studies that qualitatively explicate the construct of musical enjoyment for children have been focused on very young children. Those studies have primarily reported observations of children's behavior during musical activities, which makes sense considering the necessary articulation skills

for reporting thoughts and feelings related to an experience. Studies that included interviews or open-ended responses used them as triangulating evidence to support other data collection techniques rather than as the primary mode of data collection.

In an attempt to engage various student populations, teachers often guess or assume what it is that students will enjoy, rather than simply asking them. One example of that line of thinking includes a qualitative study regarding recruitment of music students. Albert (2006) interviewed music educators, who suggested that ensemble exposure, culturally relevant practices, and student ownership of the ensembles were among their most impactful recruitment strategies. However, in that study, no students were interviewed. Duke et al. (1997) found that while teachers and parents recognized that students' enjoyment was a strong factor in whether students continued in music, neither teachers nor parents were able to accurately predict what it was about music that students enjoyed. That finding corroborated an earlier study, which found that principals and teachers predicted students' enjoyment of music and motivations to participate differently than students reported (J. C. Jorgensen, 1974). Hawkinson (2015) concisely noted that often "what is largely missing are the voices of the students themselves" (p. 116). Therefore, by offering a platform for students to voice their experiences of musical enjoyment, we can gain critical insight regarding what students enjoy about music, and how they enjoy music in their lives.

Chapter 3. Methodology

This chapter addresses the methodological decisions that were made in this study exploring the enjoyment of music by adolescents who have elected not to enroll in ensemble music classes at their school. It includes descriptions of the research design and rationales for a phenomenological design as the best fit for this research problem. It also details the context of the site selection, participants, and my own background and perspective on the topic. Finally, the chapter outlines the method of data collection and analysis, including the steps that were taken to verify the richness of the data and the rigor of the study.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore experiences of musical enjoyment by those students who had an opportunity to join a music ensemble class at their school but decided not to enroll. A guiding philosophy for the study is that "non-music" students are not automatically non-musical, and that their experiences of musical enjoyment are valid and meaningful for them. In-depth interviews were conducted with students who decided not to enroll in any elective music class at the beginning level.

Research questions guiding the study were

a) How do non-music students describe their experiences of musical enjoyment?

b) What musical experiences lead to enjoyment of music for non-music students?

Research Design

To explore musical enjoyment for non-music students, phenomenology was a logical choice. Because phenomenological studies place value on participants' descriptions of experiences, a complex phenomenon such as musical enjoyment can be explored without deconstructing the experience into variables or outcomes. Phenomenology is often appropriate if many aspects of an experience are intertwined and separating them would no longer accurately represent the experience as it was lived by the participants.

This design also allowed the complexities of students' experiences in music to be explored in their own words (C. Anderson, 2010), without making assumptions about students' values or experiences related to music. If the essence of the experience is distilled to the invariant aspects of each participant's experience, readers can make decisions about whether the findings are transferrable to their own specific situations. Because phenomenology can be conducted in an emergent design, participants could be added as new data were needed. This process ensured that sufficient data were generated throughout the process and provided an opportunity for a variety of perspectives.

Additionally, because the data regarding the experience of musical enjoyment "are contained within the perspectives of the people that are involved" (Groenewald, 2004, p. 45), a phenomenological approach of discourse and description was most applicable to uncover the essence of the participants' experience. Phenomenology provided the opportunity to acknowledge, bracket, and suspend my own experiences as a

researcher who has experienced both musical enjoyment and a lack of musical enjoyment in certain contexts.

The self-exploration of a researchers' own perspectives is known as the phenomenological *epoché*. The process involves making explicit previously held suppositions regarding the central phenomenon, so that those presuppositions may be suspended during data analysis (Giorgi, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). The *epoché* is central to phenomenological design and added transparency to the research.

Participant Selection

There is no established number of participants for a phenomenological study. Starks and Trinidad (2007) suggested that phenomenological research typically used between 1 and 10 participants. Similarly, Boyd (2001) recommended between 2 and 10 participants. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested between 5 and 25, while Thomas and Pollio (2002) suggested that sufficient data would be collected from 6 to 12 participants.

Seidman (2013) outlined two criteria for sufficient participant selection that informed this study. The first was that the number of participants should reflect a wide range of experiences so that readers might find common ground with the descriptions of experiences expressed in the study. The second criterion was that data should reach a point of saturation such that similar information was recurring in the interviews.

Data saturation is frequently cited as a criterion to determine the number of participants in a qualitative study (Kuzel, 1999; Morse, 1995; O'Reilly & Parker, 2013; Seidman, 2013). Despite being hailed as "the gold standard for purposive sampling" (Guest et al., 2006, p. 60), the threshold for reaching saturation has not been well-defined

in a way that is standardized across the profession. Guest, et al. (2006) operationalized data saturation as "the point in data collection and analysis when new information produces little or no change to the codebook" (p. 65). However, the contrasting viewpoint is that new data will always add something new, albeit with diminishing returns (Mason, 2010).

In an effort to more adequately identify the concept of saturation, Guest, et al. (2006) analyzed their own coding process and determined that after the first 6 of 60 interviews, 73% of the total codes used had been identified, and by 12 interviews, 92% of the total codes had been identified. Additionally, the codes that appeared important in the early stages of analysis continued to emerge as important themes throughout the later stages of analysis, indicating that "the full range of thematic discovery occurred almost completely within the first twelve interviews (Guest et al., 2006, p. 66). Those findings support the sampling recommendations cited in research method texts above (e.g., Thomas & Pollio, 2002).

Based on those findings, the number of participants interviewed in this study began with 8 students, with the possibility of adding participants after the first round of interviews if initial analyses suggested there were additional perspectives that were missing or required enrichment. This approach was in accordance with accepted phenomenological research methodology, which is that "gaps in the data are filled by obtaining more data, not by theoretical speculation" (Giorgi, 2009). Inclusion criteria were students who were not currently enrolled in music classes at their school but were in

the same grade as those who enrolled as beginning music students. An additional criterion was that those students experienced enjoyment of music in some way.

Site Selection & Context

In phenomenological research, the most important criteria in site selection is that individuals at that site experienced the central phenomenon under investigation. In the case of musical enjoyment, therefore, there were many options for research sites. Many schools have students who do not participate in music programs who still enjoy music in some way. In fact, non-participants in school music make up between 66% and 82% of a student population (Hawkinson, 2015; Kinney, 2008; D. B. Williams, 2012).

Despite the prevalence of schools that had sufficient non-music students who presumably experienced enjoyment of music, it was difficult to gain access to a school for interviews. A number of schools in various school districts were contacted, with varying degrees of responsiveness, before a site was selected. Eventually, access was gained to the current site by contacting one of the music teachers, who acted as a liaison with the principal of the school.

Ultimately, the site that was selected for this study was a middle school offering grades 6-8. Students could elect to enroll in music ensembles beginning in seventh grade, after a mandatory music class in sixth grade for all students. The class structure at the school contributed to site selection: Non-music students were assigned into a study hall during the school day and were easily identifiable during that period. They were accessible to be recruited as a complete group and were available for interviews during that time. An important clarification is that this site was intended to be "illustrative, not

definitive" (Patton, 2015, p. 283), meaning that it simply provided an example for the reader to determine the best fit to her or his own context.

The middle school that served as the research site was located in an affluent suburb of a large Midwestern city with a median income of $75,000. The school reported over 70% of students proficient in math and reading. While walking through the halls of the school, there seemed to be an emphasis on students taking responsibility for their own behavior, evidenced by posted codes of conduct, anti-bullying posters, and a chart of various adults that students should seek out based on specific issues they could encounter on a daily basis. One display outside of a classroom included students' word goals for the year, including words such as healthy, focus, patience, perseverance, kindness, and balance. Student agency seemed to be an emphasis of the school culture.

The music program offerings at the school included band, chorus, and orchestra. Uniquely, all students at the school were required to participate in those music course offerings during 6th grade, before being allowed to decide whether to continue in the music program. The students who I interviewed had decided not to enroll in music classes when they were given the opportunity to choose.

Managing Subjectivity

One of the ways researchers can manage subjectivity in phenomenological research is to conceptualize the participants as co-researchers who are contributing to the research as experiencers of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). While hermeneutic phenomenologists generally disregard this term because ultimately the researcher is the one who is working with and interpreting the data, they still acknowledge that

intersubjectivity between participants and interviewers is an important connection for interpreting the data (van Manen, 1990). Because we make decisions about what to excerpt, what to foreground, and how to analyze the data, there is a degree of discipline as researchers that we must maintain throughout the process. In other words, researchers need to be careful to maintain awareness of our own subjectivities so we do not only notice and use materials that support our pre-existing opinions (Seidman, 2013).

Another opportunity for researchers to manage subjectivity is in the construction of the interview questions themselves. Typically, long interviews are used in phenomenological research (Moustakas, 1994), although depending on the scenario, other techniques such as written free-response could be used (van Kaam, 1959). However, van Manen (1990) cautioned that sometimes writers (either researchers or participants) may have "knowledge on one level" that is not available to their "linguistic competency" (p. 113). In other words, participants might struggle to describe their experiences fully through writing and may need to grapple aloud with the description through dialogue. Sometimes verbal expression can clarify the transformation from lived experience into language (Seidman, 2013).

To ensure that our interpretation accurately represents the participants' experience, Moustakas (1994) recommended sending the final synthesis of the essence of the experience to each co-researcher and asking them to comment on the accuracy of the description. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested going a step further and including the participants' remarks regarding those member-checks in the final report as an added layer of validation. While member-checking can and should be part of the validation process,

ultimately researchers must rely on our own judgement in the completion of the final report (Seidman, 2013).

Through bracketing of presuppositions and personal reflection, researchers can offer readers the opportunity to judge whether we focused solely on the participants' experiences to describe the phenomenon. Transparency in bracketing our presuppositions can clarify for readers through what lens we are initially viewing the phenomenon. When presuppositions are bracketed and suspended, the researcher is said to have achieved *epoché*, or a state of purified consciousness (Moustakas, 1994). Giorgi (1985) suggested that this process would allow us to record a "naïve description" (p. 43) without researcher-presumed categories entering into the data collection process. Transcendental phenomenologists view the process of *epoché* as an internal and ongoing process, where the researcher systematically sets aside prejudices and presuppositions, and continues to notice when those presuppositions creep into analysis (Moustakas, 1994). Some have gone as far as to equate the process of *epoché* with literal meditation and yoga practices because of similar strategies for clearing the mind (Mare, 2016). Others have suggested that a more practical approach should be taken, perhaps one that is more visible to the reader (E. Thompson & Zahavi, 2007). Van Manen (1990) suggested that the act of writing "abstracts our experience of the world, yet it also concretizes our understanding of the world" (p. 128). Although he was not explicitly suggesting that researchers write out our own *epoché* process, that would be a way of concretizing our presuppositions and transparently sharing them directly with the readers.

In phenomenological studies, the process of *epoché* is to make explicit the perspective that researchers have prior to conducting a phenomenological study. Various scholars have outlined differing purposes of the *epoché*, but all agree that the central characteristic is to acknowledge preconceived ideas regarding the central phenomenon of study (Giorgi, 2009; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1990).

While none of those scholars gave explicit directions on how to accomplish the state of *epoché*, Sindberg (2006) wrote an *epoché* that served as a model for my own. In the following *epoché*, I bracket my own prior experiences with the phenomenon of musical enjoyment or lack of enjoyment, the advantages and disadvantages of my perspective as a music educator, and the extent to which I am an insider or outsider relative to the participants in the study (Pringle, Hendry, & McLafferty, 2011).

Aaron's Epoché: Bracketing the Researcher's Perspective

What are your life experiences with musical enjoyment? *[I remember taking piano lessons from my mother starting at age five. I did not enjoy them. I am told that they tried to start me a year earlier, but I would not have it. I remember having to sit at the piano and practice while I caught glimpses of my friends running outside, playing in the sun. I remember trying to play the piano loud enough that they might hear from outside and come ring the doorbell, thereby causing my mother to take pity on me and end my torturously long thirty-minute practice session early. I remember playing* Greensleeves *and enjoying the flowing melody and the triumphant peak of the phrase. I remember playing the theme from the television show* Duck Tales *and knowing it so well by heart that I could play it silently on my desk at school. I remember taking pride in*

being able to remember it, and in my growing dexterity as I was able to play more complicated pieces. I can still play the theme from Star Wars *to this day, hands-together no less!*

I always enjoyed singing in church, but I wasn't so sure about it because my parents were chorus teachers. Sometime in elementary school, they signed me up for a children's community chorus and I was one of the only boys. I didn't particularly enjoy the chorus overall, but we did get to sing Carmina Burana *with the Atlanta Symphony, which was a thrilling experience. I didn't join orchestra when it was first offered at my school, mostly because it overlapped with recess that first year. Toward course scheduling time, they told us we had to sign up for either band or orchestra next year or we would get automatically placed in chorus. I would not have that, mostly because it was what my parents did. I had seen bass players at a recent high school concert wearing sunglasses with Santa hats perched on the scrolls of their instruments, and so I decided that would be cool to try. My friend played cello, but I convinced him to switch to bass with me. I started lessons over the summer and I was hooked. I loved carrying the thing around and refused help or to give in and get a wheel to help move the bass.*

Later, my experiences with musical enjoyment became heavily intertwined with my accomplishments on my instrument. I was in both orchestra and chorus all through middle school and high school, continuing through all four years of college as well. I enjoyed the feeling of satisfaction when I practiced a piece until it was well-refined. I enjoyed the feeling of participating in an ensemble performance and being a part of an experience that was larger than my own contributions. I enjoyed attending honor

orchestras and honor choirs and All-State. I enjoyed the resonance of voices blending together around me. I enjoyed the process of tackling new technical challenges on secondary instruments as I developed new skills. I enjoyed discovering meaning through text in choral music. I enjoyed producing the sound of a beautiful tone, or the ring of my sound during a perfectly in-tune chord, or a particularly lyrical melody.

As a music educator, my enjoyment of music shifted to include observing others' blossoming enjoyment of music. Teaching music made me excited about form and harmony and pedagogy, because it helped to clarify the music-making process for my students. I discovered in teaching that my enjoyment of music was linked to my students' understanding of music and their ability to apply the concepts and skills we worked on in class to new scenarios. My enjoyment of music resulted from their success and their subsequent enjoyment of music.]

What perspective does your role as a music educator give? *[I wonder if I have an advantage in assuming a phenomenological attitude as a music teacher. I have many of my own background experiences in teaching and as a result, expectations of where I might assume students are in their experiences. At the same time, when I hear a new student play bass for the first time, I must observe things as they are, not as I hope or predict them to be. I cannot be upset with a student for flaws that I expect them to have already corrected, just as I cannot be upset with their former teacher for allowing those flaws to persist. In fact, I am dispassionate in my assessment of them, only noting what I see and hear in their playing. A phenomenological interviewer must engage in the same unassuming, non-judgmental approach, both in the interview and in the analysis of the*

data. Even if I have my own expectations or assumptions, I need to hold them in suspense and carefully compare them to what I observe and specifically hear.

I think it is also helpful that I am relatively unsure of what students will have to say about their experience of enjoyment of music. I anticipate that they will say they do, in fact, enjoy music, and that they will tell me about what kinds of music they like. However, I am certain that if I had to guess ahead of time what artists or albums they would list as their favorite that I would undoubtedly fail. If I had to guess what it is about music that they enjoy, I would likely guess incorrectly.

When I ask what they like to do when they enjoy music, I imagine some of them will say they like to listen to music. Some may say they like to play music or sing. Some will probably say they like to dance. Those presuppositions are based on my prior experiences teaching adolescents and observing their behaviors and building rapport with them. However, the descriptions of their feelings about music and what they specifically enjoy about music is totally beyond my capacity to guess. And I certainly cannot guess what it is about music that makes them want to sing or dance or what makes them feel the way they do when they engage with music.

As I have worked through this study, critics have asked me what I hope to find, perhaps expecting me to give specific answers related to non-participants' enjoyment of music. Perhaps they expect me to conjecture what types of music students enjoy, or why they predicted they would not enjoy school music. My answer is that I am happy that I have no idea what the participants will say. In the construction of a phenomenological inquiry, my naivete is to my advantage.]

In what ways do you have an insider perspective to this topic? *[I am an insider only in that I have experienced musical enjoyment and that I have spent time around others who experience musical enjoyment. My experiences have included making music, listening to music, and teaching music. I might recognize indicators of musical enjoyment that are similar to my own experiences. Something that I will have to be continually conscious of throughout the interviewing and analysis process is that my own conception of musical enjoyment does not superimpose itself onto participants' descriptions of their experiences. When I was teaching middle school orchestra, I interacted with students this age and listened to their informal descriptions of their experiences of musical enjoyment.]*

In what ways do you have an outsider perspective to this topic? *[To begin with, I was never really a non-music student. Even before I decided to sign up for a school music class, I had taken piano lessons for five years, I had been in a community youth choir, and I had parents who were music teachers. I have never had the experience of being in a home that did not value music as part of an education. We had many instruments in the home, including guitars, various percussion instruments, a grand piano, a didgeridoo, and eventually my grandfather's bagpipes. While I have had the experience of choosing not to join a school music class, that decision was primarily related to the scheduling of the class during recess, and not to music itself, which may be consistent with others' experiences.*

I was once a middle schooler, but it has been a long time. In that way, I am an outsider to their current cultural experiences. Since I have not taught middle school

students for years, I have not kept up with current youth culture. Even when I was in middle school, I did not fully engage with the same music as my peers; I tended to be more interested in the music that my parents listened to.

I am also an outsider regarding the specific setting of this study. I do not live in the area and I have not spent much time in the town outside of a professional capacity. I do not know the general culture of the school beyond what I have been exposed to during the course of this study. Everything that I know regarding the student population, demographics, socioeconomic status, and the school schedule I have learned specifically for this study.

Since my role is neither fully defined as an outsider nor an insider, it is important for me to keep reflective notes on my own perceptions throughout the process so that I can maintain awareness of my own thoughts in relation to my previous experiences and understandings.]

Data Generation

The in-depth interview is one of the most common modes of data collection in phenomenological research (Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989). Seidman (2013) recommended that phenomenological interviews be conducted in a three-part sequence: to establish the context of the participants' lived experience, to allow participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within that context, and to reflect on the meaning that the experience holds for them.

Interview Planning. To craft the interview protocol, I began with a data planning matrix (Patton, 2015) to determine what information would contribute to answering the

research question. Patton's data planning matrix utilizes six categories of questions: experience-based, opinion and values, feelings, knowledge, sensory, and background. Each of those categories explored the interviewee's past, present, and potential experiences with the central phenomenon. The resulting interview protocol can be viewed in Appendix A.

Frankel (1999) asserted that in studies that aim to explore the perceptions of participants whose worldview is drastically different from that of the researcher, "fixed choice questions would be likely to reflect the biases of the researchers who constructed the questionnaire and would automatically limit the range of participant responses" (p. 343). To that end, the data in this study were collected with an orientation of participants' perception of the phenomenon of musical enjoyment. Phenomenological interviewing is a method that allows the researcher to place value on the perceptions of the participants, whether or not participants' perceptions match physical reality (Thomas & Pollio, 2002). Therefore, in phenomenology, participants' descriptions of experiences, based on their reconstruction of the experience of the phenomenon, are the data (Thomas & Pollio, 2002).

Data Collection Procedure. Data were collected through the use of a Blue Snowball external USB microphone, a MacBook Air laptop computer, and the software GarageBand. I exported the audio files from GarageBand to MP3 format for playback, transcription, and analysis. The external microphone and laptop were selected because they were the hardware already in my possession. I selected GarageBand for simplicity of use and export.

Interviews were conducted in three rounds over the course of a month following the interview protocol in Appendix A. Participants were interviewed in a public location on campus that was open and visible to students and teachers while also isolated enough to provide privacy for the participants. Participants were interviewed in an order based on their availability on a particular school day. While the first two rounds of interviews were primarily individual interviews, participants were occasionally interviewed in groups based on attendance and availability during their study hall period. The third round of interviews were entirely group interviews to further explore participants' different responses within a group (O'Reilly & Dogra, 2017)

Table 1: *Interview Schedule*

Round	Interview	Individual	Group	Length
1	1	Jack		11:14
	2	Allie		11:37
	3	Kyle		17:54
	4	Dexter		18:20
	5		Susan, Amy, Danielle, Fran	13:01
2	6	Allie		14:13
	7	Jack		20:28
	8		Amy, Danielle	19:21
	9	Susan		19:56
	10	Dexter		22:01
	11	Kyle		18:17
	12	Fran		24:28
3	13		Jack, Dexter	22:52
	14		Kyle, Allie	20:08
	15		Susan, Amy, Danielle, Fran	26:00

Based on Seidman's model, interview questions in the first round focused on how participants experienced and engaged with music in their lives, and in what contexts they enjoyed music. This round of interviews explored the details of participants' experiences

with enjoyment of music by asking them to recall and reflect on individual experiences with music. Specific topics in this round of interviews included how participants define enjoyment, what enjoyable music experiences they have had, and what musical activities they enjoy. This stage involved what van Manen (1990) labelled "Retrospective Phenomenological Reflection" (p. 10), where participants transform their recollections of experience into words.

The second round of interviews were a chance to set-up a specific scenario for the participants. Van Manen (1990) argued that because any description of an experience happens after the experience occurred, all descriptions are necessarily retrospective in nature. However, because of the replicability of musical enjoyment, it is possible to both experience the phenomenon and describe that experience simultaneously. Patton (2015) referred to the process of responding to something other than direct questions as elicitation, i.e., eliciting a response to a stimulus. In this case, I asked participants to select music to play aloud that they enjoyed. While participants were listening to the music they selected, I asked them to describe their experience of enjoyment: what they enjoyed about the music, what they noticed as they listened that contributed to that enjoyment, and what factors they perceived to influence their enjoyment. Each participant contributed at least three audio elicitation examples during individual and group interviews. Some participants offered to share more than three examples of music they enjoyed.

The third round of interviews gave participants an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of musical enjoyment in their lives. In this round of interviews, I asked

participants to reflect on the emotions they associated with enjoyment of music, as well as what about the music elicited those emotions. This round of interviews also offered the opportunity for participants to comment on emergent themes in the data that were revealed by preliminary analysis. For instance, I revisited activities such as singing or dancing to music that some participants had mentioned while others had not yet. This round served as a preliminary member-check to verify that the themes I had begun to notice were indeed present in the participants' experiences.

Multiple interviews allowed me to build rapport with the participants, as well as give them ample time to reflect and fill in details in later interviews (O'Reilly & Dogra, 2017). According to Deatrick and Faux (1991), children respond particularly well when interviewers are able to take on the role of friend.

Managing Roles. Since the goal of this study was to explore students' lived experiences of musical enjoyment in their own words, not to impose my own experiences of musical enjoyment or my assumptions of how non-music students enjoy music, I took steps to engage in "joint meaning-making" with the participants (Westcott & Littleton, 2005, p. 144). Historically, the perspective of adults has been that children were not able to articulate their experiences (Freeman & Mathison, 2009). However, the more current conclusion is that "rather than relying on adult conceptions, the interview method is an optimal way to study the child's world" (Deatrick & Faux, 1991, p. 211). To that end, I offered open-ended questions, avoided the temptation to interrupt the children interviewees, and placed value on their exact language and terminology (Roulston, 2010; Westcott & Littleton, 2005).

Additionally, I took into consideration that I am a music educator asking about musical enjoyment, which may have influenced some of the participants to respond in ways they expected me to want to hear. It is common that school-age pre-adolescents respond in ways that are designed to please the adults around them (Deatrick & Faux, 1991; Faux, Walsh, & Deatrick, 1988; O'Reilly & Dogra, 2017). Although I did not disclose to the students that I was a music educator, I did share that information with the gatekeeper, who may have passed it along to the participants.

Many of the students made comments related to my role as an authority figure, typically in relation to whether or not they were "allowed" to have their phones or needed to pick "school appropriate" songs or songs without cursing. Even though Allie did not ask if she should pick a song without cursing, she did make a point of saying that she didn't like songs with cursing, which may have been an allusion to that social constraint. Kyle consistently selected songs with cursing and was frequently unhelpful, perhaps deliberately. Of all the participants, he was the only one who specifically did not acknowledge my potential role as an authority figure, although his demeanor might have been a tacit response to that perceived role. These responses to my role as an authority figure were consistent with findings on research involving children (Deatrick & Faux, 1991; Faux et al., 1988; O'Reilly & Dogra, 2017).

Throughout the interview process, I carefully monitored and documented my own presuppositions, hunches, and preliminary analyses to ensure they remain suspended (Moustakas, 1994; Giorgi, 1985a) and did not influence participant responses (Polkinghorne, 1989). While Seidman (2013) suggested that no analysis should take

place until *all* participants' interviews are over, I was mindful that dimensions may emerge from the data that might have been initially overlooked and used emergent data to guide interviews toward maintaining an orientation toward the central phenomenon of musical enjoyment.

Ethics Considerations. Students were interviewed at their school campus in a public location approved by the local administration. Seidman (2013) recommended spacing the interviews approximately a week apart to allow each interview to build on previous interviews, which is the procedure I followed. Student participants were given assent forms for the study, and their parents were given the corresponding consent forms. Additionally, verbal assent was confirmed at the beginning of the interview process with each participant.

Participants were given pseudonyms to protect students' privacy and to keep their data confidential. All electronic data was stored on a secure hard drive. Written fieldnotes that were taken during interviews were scanned and stored on the secure hard drive as well at the completion of the study. This study was approved by my university's institutional review board. That approval can be found in Appendix B. Per the policy of my university's institutional review board, data were archived for five years following the closeout of the project.

Data Analysis

Analysis of data began with a full transcription of the recorded interviews, which I completed through the following process. Using the voice typing feature on Google Docs, in combination with the software SoundFlower, I played the audio recording

through QuickTime while Google transcribed it. Following the initial transcription, I listened to the recordings and edited each of the transcripts by hand. Google voice typing was about 50-75% accurate, according to comparisons of the edited and original documents using the web resource https://copyleaks.com/compare. Using this method, the ratio of time to transcribe compared to length of recording was approximately 3:1. After completing the editing process for each transcript, I listened to the recordings again, making notes of inflection or emphasis in the transcripts that might be salient to participants' descriptions of their experiences.

Once I had transcribed all of the interviews, I read through the transcripts from all eight participants in their entirety, to get a sense of the whole description of the experience (Giorgi, 2009). After the initial reading, I read the entire set of transcripts again, marking meaning units and noting motifs that began to emerge. Although each description of the experience of enjoyment of music was outwardly different, musical enjoyment was revealed to have inwardly consistent structural constituents. To determine those consistencies, Giorgi (2009) asserted that "the psychological phenomenological researcher abstracts from the individual and concentrates on the phenomenon," (p. 198), which was an idea I kept in mind throughout the analysis process.

Data were analyzed using a descriptive phenomenological framework. While other analysis methods exist within the bounds of phenomenology, I selected descriptive analysis because it emphasizes the exact vocabulary and phrasing that children used in their descriptions of musical enjoyment. I considered but ultimately rejected interpretive or hermeneutic phenomenological analysis, which is the other notable approach to

analysis. Because one of the motivations for conducting this study was to engage with students' perspectives without imposing my own assumptions, it did not seem appropriate to fill-in the blanks, so to speak, with my own interpretation. A descriptive analysis does not "go beyond the given," even in situations where interpretation of the data might result in a more elegant or less ambiguous explanation (Giorgi, 2009, p. 127). This approach avoided imposing my own assumptions onto participants' descriptions of their experiences.

In qualitative research, analyzing data generally is defined as organizing the data, coding and categorizing it into themes, and representing those themes that emerged in a meaningful way (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Often, there is some type of interpretation of the data that occurs as well. Even Giorgi, who subscribes to a strictly descriptive method for phenomenological analysis, acknowledged that in the coding process, the researcher makes some interpretive decisions (Giorgi, 2009).

The first step of the phenomenological analysis was to read each of the transcripts for a sense of the whole. This step was necessary, not only to refresh my memory from the interviews, but also because forward and backward references frequently occur in participants' descriptions, often without their explicit realization (Giorgi, 2009). During this step, nothing that the reader notices should be formally written or coded, but instead simply absorbed as a general awareness of what the participant intended by the description.

The next stage of phenomenological analysis was accomplished by returning to the beginning of the transcript in a phenomenological attitude, which means to consider

each description from the perspective of the person who experienced the phenomenon. In other words, participants' *perceptions* of the experience of musical enjoyment were regarded as true for each individual, even if they did not align precisely with others' or my own experiences. On this reading, I made a mark in the transcript each time I noticed a "significant shift in meaning" (Giorgi, 2009, p. 130). Each of these marks separated the text into *meaning units*, which simply divide the text to make it manageable, although they carry no theoretical weight. Moustakas (1994) suggested that meaning units be clustered into themes to better recognize overlapping or recurring ideas.

The third stage of phenomenological analysis was to transform the meaning units into language that is situated within the lens of the topic of interest – in this case, musical enjoyment. That process involved carefully considering each meaning unit with musical enjoyment in mind. Giorgi (2009) suggested that each meaning unit might undergo multiple transformations: into language that is sensitive to the phenomenological attitude, into "psychologically pertinent expressions" (p. 137), and finally into language that specifically targets the central phenomenon of the study. Since not all of the meaning units were equally data-rich regarding the phenomenon of musical enjoyment, not all meaning units needed to undergo the same number of transformations. Some were relevant simply for context, while others provided more phenomenon-specific content. Regardless of data-richness, one transformation that should always be performed is first to place the transcript in the third-person, so the researcher does not inadvertently over-identify with the participants' experience. According to Giorgi (2009), the purpose of the

transformation process is to make manifest the participants' thoughts and feelings toward the experience in psychologically-relevant language.

After having transformed the data into phrases that are oriented to the central phenomenon, the fourth step is to examine the data for invariant aspects of the experience, which are those elements that, were they missing, would fundamentally alter the experience. For example, a chair without a back could still be sat on as a stool (which might be considered different enough), but a chair without a seat would no longer be a chair in any recognizable sense. Giorgi (2009) cautioned that although experiences might appear outwardly different, they may be inwardly (psychologically) similar. To that end, I looked for inwardly similar meanings across the variety of outwardly different experiences and transformed participants' descriptions to include consistent terminology that was appropriate to psychology, and specifically enjoyment of music.

Those transformations were ultimately used to write the description of the experience of musical enjoyment. According to Moustakas (1994) there are two parts to the description of the experience: the textural description, which centers on participants' perceptions of a phenomenon, and the structural description, which centers on what conditions allow the phenomenon to occur. In this case, the textural description consisted of what non-music students experienced during musical enjoyment, and the structural description consisted of what conditions allowed for musical enjoyment to occur for those students. Despite transformations, however, it was important to the accuracy of the study to relate the structural and textural themes back to the original transcripts (Giorgi, 2009; Pringle et al., 2011).

Verification and Rigor

Because a phenomenological approach demands multiple readings of the text (Giorgi, 2009, 2012), first "freshly and naively" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 47) and then more thematically (Polkinghorne, 1989), the result is a constant-comparative method of analysis (Anderson, 2010). The data were consistently considered holistically for the individual, in discrete meaning units within each participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Data were also considered across multiple participants, in the formation of a phenomenological horizon of the experience. This process allowed for a thorough and rigorous analysis of the underlying structures of the phenomenon.

Following the analysis that resulted in a textural and structural description of the phenomenon of musical enjoyment, I returned to the participants to ask them how my description compared to the essence of their experience. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that the member-checking stage would be a good opportunity for focus groups, so that participants could evaluate the constituents of the experience together. On the one hand, the contextual composite should be salient for all participants if it truly represents the invariant attributes of the phenomenon. Because of that, both individual member-checks and a final focus group were appropriate to provide an added layer of verification.

H. R. Pereira (2012) suggested that perhaps the most telling indicator of accuracy in a phenomenological study is the "phenomenological nod" (p. 18). This concept comes from van Manen's (1990) suggestion that "a good phenomenological description is something that we can nod [our head] to, recognizing as an experience that we have had or could have had" (p. 27). In other words, if readers examine the textural and structural

descriptions that participants described of musical enjoyment and are able to nod their heads in agreement that the non-music students in their lives seem to experience musical enjoyment in similar ways, then the study captured the essence of that experience.

Creswell and Miller (2000) suggested that one way to elicit an affirming response in readers is through thick description. Readers can decide whether the results could be credibly transferred to their own similar situations when they read vivid detail of participants' experiences, their response to those experiences, and situations that precipitate those experiences. Cypress (2017) suggested that thick description can enhance transferability, which was one of the criteria that Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified in place of reliability and validity for qualitative research. Rubin and Rubin (2005) referred to thoroughness and credibility in this context. According to them, thoroughness means that researchers attend to multiple perspectives and possibly conflicting explanations. Credibility results from presenting "convincing evidence for each major conclusion" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 265).

Limitations of the Design

Many of the limitations of a phenomenological study are characteristic of all qualitative research. In this case, the term *limitations* does not represent the shortcomings of a particular research design, but rather the limits of what the design does or does not accomplish. According to C. Anderson (2010), characteristics of qualitative design that necessarily limit the findings include the following: the quality of the research is dependent on the researcher, who often functions as the research instrument; rigor of the study requires more justification than in quantitative studies; analysis is time-consuming

because of the volume of data; the researcher's presence may influence the responses of the participants; and findings can be problematic to present visually.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was not to generalize to a broader population, but rather to explore experiences of participants and describe those experiences in rich detail. Based on the richness of those descriptions, it may be possible for readers to transfer some of the constituents of enjoyment to other scenarios. It is possible that some teachers will find that the experiences of the participants in this study resonate with students at their schools as well.

Chapter 4. Data and Analysis

This chapter presents the data that were collected through in-depth interviews with students who elected not to join school music ensembles. Students' experiences of musical enjoyment were explored, including how students experience musical enjoyment, what they experience that they classify as musical enjoyment, and under what conditions that enjoyment was experienced. Analysis of the interview data serves to reveal structural and textural descriptions (*how* and *what* was experienced) of the phenomenon of musical enjoyment for those students.

Description of Participants

The participants in this study were all middle school students who were not enrolled in music classes. However, they had taken music classes previously in elementary school and a required music class in 6th grade. They were all 12-13 years old. The participants in the study were ethnically diverse, including students who were white and people of color. The students in the entire school population were 72% White, 12% Asian or Pacific Islander, 7% Black, 4% Hispanic, and 4% two or more races, according to Niche.com. The distribution of ethnicities among the participants in the study matched that of the overall school population.

When asked whether they enjoyed music, all of the participants responded that they enjoyed music in a variety of ways, although they sometimes struggled to articulate

that experience of enjoyment. Those responses prompted me to ask participants how they defined enjoyment. In total, eight participants were interviewed, which was commensurate with the findings of Guest et al., (2006) regarding saturation in interview research. The participants selected their own pseudonyms, which was a process they seemed to enjoy very much and helped to build rapport. If they decided not to create a pseudonym, I created one for them. The pseudonyms we chose were Allie, Amy, Danielle, Dexter, Fran, Jack, Kyle, and Susan.

In phenomenological research, one of the tasks of the researcher is to 'horizonalize' the data (Moustakas, 1994), which is to identify the consistent horizon, regardless of the various skyline features. Despite their similarities, the participants shared a variety of different roles that music played in their lives, i.e., the metaphorical skyline from which the horizon can be discerned. Brief character sketches of the participants follow that give a glimpse into the participants as I came to know them.

Character Sketches

Allie. Allie was an eighth-grade girl who enjoyed volleyball and soccer. She enjoyed social experiences, such as spending time with friends. She reported that she derived enjoyment from activities she preferred to do, activities that were fun for her, or activities that were relaxing or exciting, depending on which of those emotions she desired at the time.

> *Aaron: Can you tell me, just in general what enjoyment means to you?*
>
> *Allie: Like, something you enjoy…well…like something you like to do, that you find fun, or… I don't know, depending on what it is, like, relaxing, or like energetic, like what gives you energy or something you have fun doing.*

Allie had never noticed whether listening to music affected her emotions. Allie did not consider herself to be musical; she offered as a rationale that musical people participate in school music classes, although she did not elaborate on why she believed that to be true. Allie did not play any musical instruments, and she predicted that learning a musical instrument would not bring her any enjoyment. However, she did not consider herself un-musical because she enjoyed listening to music. When asked to use a word to describe her attitude toward music, Allie described herself as indifferent. She stated that she enjoys music, or rather, she doesn't *not enjoy* music.

Allie: Yeah, like, I like [music], I mean, I don't not *like it, so…*

Aaron: You like it as long as… what?

Allie: Like, if I get to pick what I'm listening to.

Allie perceived someone who enjoys music not to be musical, but instead thought that music is just an activity they participate in. However, when she applied that same logic to sports, a person playing a sport they enjoy is somewhat athletic. She shared that she thought enjoyment was a stronger factor than skill in determining athleticism. Therefore, according to Allie, musical enjoyment, "in a way," equals musicality. Allie suggested that people who are musical tend to participate in music classes or stage productions, which indicated she perceived musicality to be the result of formal training.

Allie equated the term "nonmusical" with a dislike of all music. On a spectrum of musicality of her own design, she placed herself a little below the middle (40% musical, according to her), because she enjoyed listening to music but would not enroll in a music

class or learn a musical instrument. She did not think of herself as musical, but she also would not call herself unmusical.

Amy. Amy was a seventh-grade girl who enjoyed activities with her friends and family. She described the experience of enjoyment as feeling happy.

> *Amy: Probably like… just having fun, but like, having a good time with people, if you're listening to music with them, or just by yourself like, if you're sad sometimes music can help you feel better.*

Amy played soccer and sang. Although she used to record herself singing and send those videos to friends, at the time of the study, she only sang alone, for enjoyment's sake.

> *Amy: I just like to sing, just cause… it's just fun, I guess. I don't know.*

Her friends think that Amy is a good singer, but she has low self-efficacy regarding her singing. Some indicators that Amy had low self-efficacy regarding her singing were her emphatic assertion that she did not write her own songs, her prediction that she could never pass an audition for a musical theater production, her admission that she gets embarrassed when singing in public, and the fact that she no longer shared her singing with others.

> *Aaron: Do you ever express yourselves with music?*
>
> *Amy: Like, when I listen to happy songs when I'm feeling like I'm in a good mood, but I don't like write songs to express myself.*
>
> *Danielle: You sing!*
>
> *Amy: No, no. I like to just like, sing to myself.*

Later in the same interview, Amy explained why she no longer recorded herself singing:

> *Aaron: Do you share it with people?*
>
> *Amy: Yeah, but I don't really anymore [laughing].*

AARON: Ok, that's fine. Why do you laugh about that?

Amy: I just… I just get embarrassed.

Amy considered herself to be "kind of a singer" and "a little bit musical," because she enjoyed singing but was not famous because of it, and she did not play the piano or other instruments. That sentiment implied that to be a singer, some level of fame must be attained. Enjoyment of singing (albeit in the shower), recording herself singing, and friends' affirmation of her skill were not evidence enough to convince Amy of her own musicality.

However, Amy considered *all* recording artists to be musical because they "enjoy singing their songs and writing them." Even though Amy perceives musicality to stem from enjoyment of music and from the doing of music, her low self-efficacy, perhaps due to lack of formal training, prevented her from acknowledging her own musicality.

Danielle. Danielle was a seventh-grade girl who enjoyed playing sports, such as soccer and lacrosse. She also enjoyed spending time with her friends and family. Danielle suggested that for a person to be considered musical, they might need to sing or play instruments.

Danielle played the piano for three years when she was younger, so she asserted that she used to be musical but was not anymore. In other words, according to Danielle, musicality can shift based on continued engagement in a musical activity or skills and knowledge of formal music training. Danielle did not consider herself musical because she had forgotten everything she learned in her formal music training. However, Danielle asserted that her friends who sang for enjoyment were musical.

She associated the word "nonmusical" with a connotation of not enjoying music or not engaging with music in any way whatsoever. She suggested that a better word to refer to someone who does not study music in a formal setting is "un-musician" rather than "un-musical," since those people still presumably enjoyed music.

Dexter. To Dexter, enjoyment meant living in the moment. He also perceived enjoyment as having a positive self-image and being happy with himself. Dexter, a seventh-grade boy, enjoyed activities he perceived to be exciting, such as basketball and snowboarding. Dexter valued his personal time and having the agency to decide what activities he did. Dexter got more excited to play basketball when he was listening to music than when he was not. He was motivated by that excitement to continue playing basketball without cessation. Without music, Dexter would experience boredom while playing basketball and would be more likely to discontinue that session.

Dexter primarily enjoyed music by listening to music. Dexter listened to music every single morning and every afternoon while traveling to and from school. He also listened while he played basketball alone. Although Dexter did not play musical instruments or sing, he did enjoy singing along when listening to music. Another musical activity that Dexter enjoyed was dancing to music. He felt that he could express himself through that activity. As a result of his enjoyment of dancing to music, Dexter considered himself slightly musical.

Because school was a source of stress in Dexter's life, he used music to direct his attention away from the stressors of school. Some of Dexter's motivation in ignoring distractions stemmed from anxiety about the future. At the time of the study, he was

struggling with self-discovery and feelings of low self-efficacy related to school. Music allowed Dexter to shift his attention so that he was no longer anxious.

> *Dexter**:** I guess I just don't like to think about the future? You know how some people ask like, "What do you want to be in the future!?" I have no idea what I want to be in the future. Like, I have no idea. Like, sometimes like, I think about like, "What am I good at?" You know like, I don't really know. And sometimes even in school, I think about the future, I think about big projects I have to worry about and maybe that I don't want to do them. That's why I always procrastinate, so I don't like to think about work, or school, or anything like that, or the future. So, that's why I kind of said living in the moment, blocking everything out.*

However, Dexter did not use music to focus his attention on any specific object, but rather to not focus. His enjoyment of music resulted from simply participating in the activity of listening rather than attending to anything specific.

Another musical activity that Dexter enjoyed was dancing to music when given opportunities to dance informally during past music classes.

> *Dexter: Well, that was in choir class and you know, she just turned on this YouTube video of Just Dance and I guess because last year I was in sixth grade and that's when I did all the dancing, and also in fifth grade was like when I also did dancing, too. Cause sometimes during indoor recess they'd turn on Just---not Just Dance, but just you know, videos of people dancing. And me and my friend did exactly that: we just danced. And you know, we'd go crazy, have fun. And then next year came around, 6th grade choir class, and I was still doing that in class. And she'd turn on Just Dance videos and I've had the same kind of fun I did the year before. So, it was just fun, you know, going crazy.*

Despite enjoying dancing to music, Dexter had low self-efficacy related to the dancing.

> *Dexter: I don't think [the other students] were* impressed *[smiles].*
>
> *Aaron: [laughs] Why not?*
>
> *Dexter: Because I wasn't actually <u>good</u> at it. But I just followed the video, you know. I did a lot more than the video did. I mean, I just, I don't know, I just… I was the only boy out there, all the boys, they were sitting in the bleachers and you know all the girls were out front and I was just like the only boy out there, dancing.*

During those informal dancing experiences, Dexter was aware that he was the only boy dancing, but he enjoyed the social independence of being different from the other boys. He valued his uniqueness and having the agency for self-expression and creativity in dance moves.

> *Dexter: Being different is cool. It's…it's a cool thing to know that you're different than everybody else, you know. That you are, like, your own person. You're not like everybody else and you're doing your own thing. You're not following the crowd: you're going on your own and doing your own thing. And I think that's pretty cool, doing your own thing.*

Dexter sometimes discovered new music through friends who shared their preferences with him. He would engage in peer-sharing of music to alleviate feelings of boredom during school. In the case of country music, Dexter was surprised by his own response to the quality of the music. The rhythms used in the genre, combined with the vivid imagery, impacted Dexter's enjoyment more than he had predicted.

Fran. Fran was a seventh-grade girl who enjoyed playing basketball. She described enjoyment as "having fun." Similarly, she described musical enjoyment as having fun while listening to music or responding physically to music by moving to the beat, singing, or dancing. Fran did not consider music to be a huge part of her life, although she listened to music daily and noticed it in her daily life, including soundtracks during television and movies.

Fran did not perceive music to have a major impact on her emotions, although she suggested that music could influence her emotions in a small way. For instance, Fran listened to happy music to alter her mood if she was feeling sad. Listening to music generally made Fran feel more energetic. When she listened to a song that had sad lyrics,

she reported that she would feel sad or sympathetic during the song, but afterwards would return to her original mood.

Fran said that she considered a person musical if they played a musical instrument or had a quality singing voice. She also considered someone who enjoyed singing and sang frequently to be musical. However, Fran did not typically think of music listeners as musical, since they do not "*do* some sort of music." Contrastingly, Fran thought someone who danced to music could be musical, since they were "doing" music. However, she did not consider herself musical, even though she enjoyed dancing and danced frequently. She qualified that competitive dancing was more musical than "just" listening and dancing along with her friends.

However, Fran was unwilling to label herself "non-musical", but instead hedged with the response that she was "a little bit musical." She thought that non-musical people would not listen to music, would not enjoy music, and would not respond to music by singing or dancing. On the other hand, the label "a little bit musical" would include dancing and singing for *enjoyment*, but not "as a sport", according to Fran.

In comparison to sports, Fran thought that someone who casually played basketball would "just be doing it for enjoyment." According to Fran, the label "athletic" is dependent on the skill of the player. Fran suggested that if someone is unskilled, they cannot be athletic. However, Fran firmly asserted that skill is not a barrier to musicality (i.e., she disagrees with the idea that if you are unskilled, you're not musical). According to Fran, if someone were actively exerting effort to improve (e.g., at piano playing), they

were musical. Fran perceived her experience to be the average, typical experience: listening to and enjoying music but having no interest in pursuing music formally.

Jack. Jack was a seventh-grade boy who enjoyed playing piano and guitar on his own. Although he took piano lessons for four years, he grew bored with the formal structure of learning, and at the time of the study preferred to compose and improvise in low-stress, informal environments. Jack preferred to learn by doing and expressed low self-efficacy in formal music instruction settings, despite his prior experiences with music literacy. Even when watching instructional videos during informal learning, Jack experienced low self-efficacy. He found himself more successful when he experimented until he "gets it."

Jack used a synthesizer and computer programs to experiment with a variety of timbres in spontaneous composition. He enjoyed the freedom to explore the different sounds that a synthesizer can produce. Jack expressed that school music offerings exclude pianists and guitarists, the two instruments that he had informally learned. He perceived that school music courses only address old music, to which he did not relate. He would prefer that school music offerings address contemporary music and contemporary music ensembles, such as rock band. Jack would also value the opportunity to learn about combinations of timbre in contemporary music ensembles and how to effectively use digital music tools.

Jack enjoyed uniqueness in music that came from modern resources and opportunities for creativity with timbre, such as the freedom to include "bubble noises" in his compositions. Because of his previous experience playing piano, Jack valued the

authentic response of the keys on his synthesizer keyboard that mimic the response of a grand piano.

Kyle. Kyle was an eighth-grade boy who experienced enjoyment during activities he considers to be fun, such as playing and watching sports, playing video games, and spending time with his friends. Although Kyle firmly stated that he would never join a music class, he said that he might enjoy a music class that was related to the music that he was familiar with and preferred (rap and hip-hop). Kyle's enjoyment would result from the agency to select the songs he would study, which would be socially popular. His lack of enjoyment in previous formal music settings directly related to a lack of agency in song selection:

> *Kyle: Like when I'm just sitting down, and I can pick the music, I can pick what I do with the music. Instead of in the music classes they force you to do what they want with **their** music that no one likes, and it's like a foreign language that no one really cares about.*

Because Kyle disliked the thought of public performance, he envisioned a music class without a performing component. He expressed interest in music production, including auto-tune, background loops, form, and composition. He had never experimented with digital studio composition in informal settings but was open to learning. For Kyle, only complete agency would be sufficient for enjoyment of a music class. The illusion of choice (e.g., the teacher selected two songs that the students chose between) was not enough for Kyle to enjoy the experience.

Kyle selected music listening based on emotional regulation strategies. For instance, if he lost a football game and felt sad, he selected music that helped him to process those emotions. Kyle was unable to articulate how the music helped him to

process his emotions. Even in those situations, Kyle continued to listen to his preferred genre, hip hop. Once he had processed his emotions, Kyle would listen to faster music that he associated with feelings of happiness. Kyle frequently selected music that he perceived to match the emotions he felt.

Kyle sometimes used music to change his mood but thought that when he did that, he masked the emotions he was feeling rather than processing his emotions in a healthy way. Instead, he preferred to embrace his emotions rather than using music to block out his feelings. Kyle preferred to process his emotions this way rather than pushing them away or ignoring them.

The musical preferences of Kyle's peers strongly influenced his selection of music. He felt social pressure to listen to the same music that his peers enjoyed, or they would bully him. At the same time, he engaged in judgmental behavior when others listened to music (genres or artists) that he did not prefer.

Aaron: Do you feel like the music helps when you're alone?

Kyle: Yeah, cause then you can like, tap your foot and stuff and there's no one to like, judge you on it.

Aaron: Tell me about that. Do you feel like people will judge you for what you listen to?

Kyle: Oh yeah, cause if it's not what they like, then people can get offensive about it, cause they're a bunch of pansies.

Aaron: What happened? Tell me about it?

Kyle: I don't know, it's just like if someone is listening to like Katy Perry, it just is like… just weird for me, to like to see someone listen to that stuff that I don't enjoy.

Aaron: So, you're saying that you'll judge people about their music sometimes?

Kyle: It goes both ways.

However, despite the social pressure, he still maintained agency in his music selection occasionally and continued to enjoy music that his peers did not. His rationale was that there is such a wide variety of music available that each individual can maintain their own preferences, even when those preferences go against social norms. Kyle's response to bullying was to maintain his social independence and engage in whichever activities he preferred.

> *Kyle: Like, people are just jerks a lot, but if you can just fight through it and just do what you want to do and then it's no problem like, with anything.*

Exciting music also helped Kyle to focus in preparation for sports, similar to building potential energy ready to transform into kinetic energy. In these scenarios, Kyle enjoyed fast tempos and did not attend to the lyrics. When Kyle listened in preparation for sports, he found that he was able to mentally prepare for maximum effort during the game.

Kyle did not consider himself musical, even though he enjoyed listening to music. However, he considered someone who is unmusical to dislike all music or any form of music. He consistently related enjoyment of music to his own agency to choose what music to learn and in what way to learn it. Kyle's self-efficacy for music is low: he does not perceive himself to have any potential success in music learning, based on his own determination of quality related to his developing voice.

Aaron: Do you think that you would have the potential to be good at music?

Kyle: [immediately] No.

Aaron: why not?

Kyle: Voice cracks.

Aaron: Okay, what about like, piano. Your voice never has to come out?

Kyle: Um, I… I'm just not that good, cause I can't even type a keyboard without looking at it.

However, he found the idea that anyone would explicitly call him non-musical to be unrealistic.

Susan. Susan was a seventh-grade girl who enjoyed playing sports, such as basketball, and spending time with her friends. Typically, Susan's enjoyment stemmed from social interaction and opportunities to be active. Musical enjoyment for Susan included listening to music with friends or in preparation for sporting events. Her enjoyment resulted from fond, happy memories of those occasions. For instance, during summer, music helped contribute to what Susan called "the summer state of mind," which resulted in feelings of enjoyment that were referential to the accompanying activities of summer.

Susan particularly enjoyed songs with which she felt a personal connection, although she acknowledged that she did not realize that about herself before beginning this study. She typically listened to music that reminded her of her family and friends or reminded her of happy memories. Because of Susan's closeness with her friends and family, it was important to her that she maintain shared interests and relationships. She thought that music can help to bring her closer together with her friends and family since it reminded her of them.

Although Susan listened to music and enjoyed a large variety of genres, she would not characterize herself as musical. According to Susan, musical people possess knowledge of the origins of music, as well as a propensity to participate in musical theater. Susan assumed that musical people were familiar with all of the Broadway musical productions.

Susan confidently stated that she was unmusical, even though she appreciated and enjoyed music. She had low self-efficacy related to musical knowledge. Because she did not have any formal training and just "rolls with it," she did not think that she was musical. Susan perceived formal education as a pre-requisite to musicality. In Susan's perception, knowledge of music directly relates to musicality.

At the same time, Susan felt offended by the term nonmusical, despite musing that she probably should not feel offended, since she does not participate in formal music learning. However, she was offended nonetheless because she was passionate about *certain* artists: those that she preferred and had the agency to select.

Structural Activities

Participants identified eight major activities that they engaged in before and during experiences of musical enjoyment. Those activities that led to musical enjoyment for the participants of this study were listening, dancing, attending live performances, singing, responding physically to music, socially sharing music, creative activities, and musical play or informal learning. Consistent with Moustakas' (1994) framework of characterizing themes in a phenomenological study, the activities that students engaged in prior to experiencing musical enjoyment are considered part of the *structure* of the

experience. Every participant had experienced musical enjoyment through all of the structural activities, with the exception of dancing for Jack, and the attendance of live concerts, which neither Jack nor Kyle had previously had the opportunity to do.

Structural Activity 1: Listening. Every participant immediately discussed listening during the interviews about musical enjoyment. Even in cases when I did not bring up listening, participants associated listening strongly with their enjoyment of music. For instance, when I asked a primer question to establish whether Dexter enjoyed music, the conversation turned immediately to listening:

> *Aaron: Do you enjoy music?*
>
> *Dexter: Yeah, I listen to music.*
>
> *Aaron: Tell me about it.*
>
> *Dexter: I usually listen to music on the way to school every single morning with my earbuds in. Um, on the bus ride to school and on the way home, too. So, it's in the morning and afternoon, and just whenever I'm outside playing basketball, I listen to music.*

Dexter demonstrated continued engagement with music listening on a daily basis. Another exchange went like this:

> *Aaron: Tell me about a time you felt enjoyment related to music.*
>
> *Danielle: Um, when you're just like, listening to music, I guess. You're just like, blasting it and having fun.*

A third exchange went like this:

> *Aaron: Describe what musical enjoyment means to you.*
>
> *Susan: Just like, listening—When I listen to music, it's normally with my friends or playing sports, so it like, reminds me of that.*

Those examples help to clarify that listening is a central activity to these students' experience of musical enjoyment. Each of the participants brought up listening as the primary source of musical enjoyment in their lives.

During music listening, the participants attended to a variety of musical elements, including beat, tempo, rhythm, melody, timbre, form, and lyrics. They made judgments about the music based on preferences for those elements. The "beat" of the music was the most commonly referenced element, although participants sometimes struggled to clarify what they perceived as the beat:

> *Aaron: When you hear a song for the very first time, how do you know that you like it?*
>
> *Fran: Like… the beat.*
>
> *Aaron: Tell me more about that.*
>
> *Fran: Like, if it's like—like, a beat that's…I don't know, … like, usually fast beats? Or like… like, more fun, and like, better? And then like, sometimes slow beats. It just depends on like… a slow beat can be good, but the singer's voice has to be good too.*

Other participants did not offer clarification on their concept of beat:

> *Aaron: So, when you're listening for the first time to a brand-new song, how do you know whether you like it or not?*
>
> *Kyle: Just like...if it's like...I don't...if it's catchy, if I can like get the words down, and if like, the beat's good.*
>
> *Aaron: Ok, can you tell me more about a good beat?*
>
> *Kyle: No, not really.*

Regardless, participants were aware of a variety of elements within the music that contributed to their enjoyment of the music. Those elements typically followed the

expected constraints of their preferred genre of music (e.g., Susan's preference of "music that still has a trap beat to it but it's a bit more chill.")

As participants explored their enjoyment of music, another salient feature that arose for many participants was the meaningfulness of the lyrics in the songs they enjoy. For participants to enjoy the music, the lyrics typically needed to be meaningful and relatable in some way:

> *Jack [during an audio elicitation exercise]: It starts out slow, which I kind of like, and it just tells a story – Cage the Elephant (the band), each of their songs tells its own story…This one really tells a story. It's like you're telling a story, but it also has song!*
>
> *Aaron: So, the sense that the song is telling a story is important to you?*
>
> *Jack: Yeah, not really, but it just has to have some sort of meaning.*

Kyle expressed a desire for the music to be relatable, but not so relatable that it evokes an emotional response every time:

> *Kyle: Yeah, I like when it hits home kind of, but also like, isn't too close to home where it like, makes it emotional. It's just kind of in that little gray spot in the middle.*
>
> *Aaron: Tell me about that: how you relate to the song?*
>
> *Kyle: I don't—like, if they—like, the things they say, like if they help you with the situation that you're in, then it can be, like, it kind of hits home. But if it's talking about murder and* that *hits home, that's kind of weird; you should probably turn yourself in.*

In his description of the extent to which he considered music should be relatable, Kyle was careful to distance himself from some of the themes that are prevalent in his preferred genres, rap and hip-hop. Susan expressed a similar desire for relatability:

> *Susan: Like, you can tell from some of the songs that I like that it like comes from like their heart. Like, some of the pop songs are just like, "Go have fun, party!" And it doesn't really apply to my life.*

Dexter also sought relatability in the music he listened to, despite the differences between the experiences he related to compared to the other students:

> *Dexter [on listening to country music]: I don't know, he's talking about he's working the night shift and he's been working hours and hours on* Red Dirt Heat, *kind of saying like he's been sweating, working hard, out on the land…*
>
> *Aaron: How do you feel like you respond to this song? What happens for you inside?*
>
> *Dexter: I don't know, nothing? Sometimes I'll bob my head or mouth the lyrics.*
>
> *Aaron: What else do you like about this song?*
>
> *Dexter: I like how it kind of starts slow and it just goes right into the chorus. And actually, this summer I have a job on a farm, so I know it—it kind of makes me think about working on the farm…it was talking about those big green tractors, and big green pastures, stuff like that.*

Although he needed some time and prompting to discover what it was about the song that he enjoyed and related to, Dexter eventually realized the connection that he felt to the music.

The above descriptions of the experience of musical enjoyment through listening form a clear example of horizonalization of a phenomenon. The features of the horizon are substantively different: different preferences for genres, different elements of music that listeners attend to, differences in relatable lyrics, and so on. However, despite those differences, the experience of enjoyment through listening (the line of the horizon) is consistently based on preference for the music selected, the perceived agency to make those selections, and a sense of meaningfulness or relatability to the lyrics.

Structural Activity 2: Dancing. Another activity that participants described as leading to their enjoyment of music was dancing to music. Every participant, with the exception of Jack, included dancing in their description of musical enjoyment. Characteristics of participants' experience dancing included agency to be silly or humorous, opportunities for creative spontaneity and self-expression, and high levels of engagement with the music. Perhaps the most salient characteristic of participants' enjoyment of music through dancing, however, was the social aspect of the experience.

> *Danielle: I feel like when you're listening to music by yourself, it's like, I don't know, it's a lot different. But when you're with your friends, it's more enjoyable and you like, dance to it and stuff.*

Susan described an experience of dancing together with friends at a party:

> *Susan: Well, like sometimes if I'm at a birthday party or something, we'll have a dance competition: like, make up silly dances and just like everyone dancing and singing together.*

Fran brought up school dances as an experience of enjoying music. In addition to the social aspect, she enjoyed the familiarity of the music and the popular dances that accompanied them:

> *Fran [describing the school dance]: They played songs that are fun to dance to and stuff. Like if they played* Whip and Nae-Nae*, that kind of stuff.*
>
> *Aaron: What made them fun to dance to?*
>
> *Fran: I mean, I'd heard them before and people had made up dances to them so just doing them was fun. It was exciting and stuff…just like, a big group of people and you'd be dancing and there'd be dance battles and stuff.*

Kyle described similar experiences of dancing to music in social settings:

> *Aaron: Can you tell me about the experience of dancing to music?*

Kyle: I don't know, like, you'll be at a party, put on a speaker, and just dance to it.

Aaron: What do you feel when you're dancing?

Kyle: Enjoyment.

Aaron: Yeah? Tell me about that.

Kyle: I don't know, it's just like, fun, I guess. I don't know. You just don't think about stuff and you're just having a fun time. You're not really thinking of like, the stuff that's wrong, you're just thinking about what's right and going with it.

Although Kyle occasionally needed much prompting, he frequently had insightful perspectives to share related to musical enjoyment.

Dexter's experience of enjoyment through dancing involved some aspects of social independence from norms. He described occasions when he would dance in class and realized he was the only boy dancing, which was something he seemed to take pride in:

Dexter: You know, actually the only thing I enjoyed about that music class was Friday when the teacher used to put on Just Dance *on the Smartboard and I'd be like, the only guy on the floor dancing, just jamming out to the music and going crazy. I wasn't thinking about anybody else: I was just going crazy on the floor. I was just going all out dancing, just being myself...I was the only boy out there, all the boys were sitting in the bleachers and all the girls were out front and I was just the only boy out there dancing.*

Aaron: You mentioned that you were the only boy. Tell me more about how that played into it?

Dexter: I don't know, I guess I just like the fact that I'm different. You know, being different is cool. It's a cool thing to know that you're different than everybody else. You know that you are your own person. You're not like everybody else and you're doing your own thing. You're not following the crowd: you're going on your own and doing your own thing. And I think that's pretty cool: doing your own thing.

In that same scenario, the social validation that Dexter received bolstered his enjoyment as well:

> *Dexter: Sometimes it was like… sometimes it was the teacher who was like, "Hey look at Dexter, he's going!" And sometimes it was the other kids like, "Look at Dexter!" and I was like "Yeahhhh, look at me!* [pride in his voice] *Look at me, I'm going crazy!" You know, sometimes it was just making people laugh, which was pretty cool to do. I'd go crazy. I was just dancing like crazy on the floor and you know everyone was looking, they were laughing… I guess I like to make people laugh.*

Fran also experienced social validation through her dancing. Similar to Dexter, Fran enjoyed making her peers laugh and the positive response that she received based on her creative and humorous dance moves:

> *Fran: We ride a bus to away games, and I would play some upbeat music and start dancing to it on the bus and everyone would laugh at my dance moves and then it just—the music pumps me up.*
>
> *I'd have my earbuds in and I'm just dancing, and no one knows what song I'm listening to, it's just me dancing. And everyone just staring, and some people are like, videotaping and stuff.*
>
> *Aaron: Ok, so while that's happening, while you're dancing, what's going on in your head?*
>
> *Fran: I'm just like laughing and having fun. I have a lot more energy.*

Susan had similar experiences of social validation through humor and silliness during dancing to music:

> *Susan [regarding the dance competitions at parties]: Ok, well we normally like, divide up into teams, and there's like, judges, and they give you songs, like one song that we did was Fergalicious or something just whacky or that's old that we love, and then they just have to make up a crazy dance and perform it for everybody and then the judges pick the winner.*
>
> *Aaron: When you are all making up the dances, tell me more about that?*

Susan: We just try to do like, silly things like the disco, or like classic dances like that [demonstrates a cross-body disco move]. Or we would try to make it funny by doing the worm and stuff.

The experience of musical enjoyment through dancing stemmed from the participants' freedom to make up their own dance moves or imitate dances they found humorous or fun to perform. The social engagement with friends and the social validation that the participants received through dancing also contributed to their enjoyment of the experience.

Structural Activity 3: Live Performance and Concerts. Participants who had the opportunity to attend live music performances enjoyed them, as long as the performances matched their musical preferences. Participants viewed live music concerts as opportunities for social engagement, similar to dancing experiences. Also similar to dancing, participants enjoyed the freedom to act silly, excited, and unrestrained during concerts. Live concerts seemed to combine the familiarity and preference components of listening to music with the social aspects of dancing. The added layer of enjoyment that participants experienced during concerts was related to the opportunity for closeness to the musicians, feelings of connection to the performance, and the affirmation that participants' expectation of the performer's skill matched reality.

Susan: I went to the Maroon 5 concert in September. That was really fun because I got to be with all of my friends, eat fun food, and just watch the artist in person.

Aaron: Tell me about the performance?

Susan: it was really good. I don't know how to explain it, but he sounded like he did in his normal music and he was actually singing!

Amy gave a similar example, emphasizing that she was impressed the band sounded the same live as they did in recordings:

> *Amy: I went to the Twenty-One Pilots concert and it was really fun. The drummer did a really good job playing loud. It sounded like their music when you listen to it, like, on the radio!*

Fran's enjoyment of the concert experience included many of the social aspects explored above, but also incorporated the closeness to the performer and the resulting connectedness she felt toward his performance:

> *Fran: I went to [a concert] over spring break and it was—I knew a lot of the songs and I went with my friends, so that was fun: dancing and stuff.*
>
> *Aaron: Can you describe the whole experience to me?*
>
> *Fran: Well, we went there and – it was a Justin Timberlake concert, and we had really close seats. And he was dancing and all of us were dancing…there were like, VIP seats that were on the stage, kind of, and there's a part lifted up where Justin Timberlake was. And then under that were the people and we were like, two rows from that.*
>
> *Aaron: What's different about seeing him in person?*
>
> *Fran: Well, I mean, we danced a lot and we were screaming and stuff. Like, being there is more exciting because you get to see the person in real life and it's like, live music.*

Amy described the energetic atmosphere that occurred during live music performances:

> *Amy: They're just like, upbeat and people are just jumping around!*

Dexter emphasized that closeness to the performer and energetic atmosphere contributed to his enjoyment of the experience as well:

> *Dexter [describing an ideal concert experience]: With my friends, hopefully on the floor just jumping around, yelling, with my friends.*

Dexter also emphasized that preference, familiarity, and agency were necessary to precipitate his enjoyment of live music concerts:

> *Dexter: The concerts I've been to, I don't like them just because I don't listen to them. My cousins forced me to go. I'm like, "I don't even listen to them!" So, I was just there, and I was like, "I don't know any of these songs." And they're just standing up and cheering. I was thinking, "I don't like this. I don't know this girl."*

Structural Activity 4: Singing (along). Singing was another activity that led participants toward enjoyment of music. Frequently, singing was limited to singing *along* to music on the radio, although Amy described experiences of singing alone for enjoyment's sake. Participants frequently described singing along to music in social settings, such as live concerts, and also sharing with friends. The experiences with singing that participants enjoyed were low-stress and informal, often with the understanding that there would not be a public performance component.

Kyle in particular voiced his discomfort with the idea of public performance, although he had not ever publicly performed or been asked to publicly perform by anyone:

> *Kyle: I feel like they try and put too much stuff on you. Like, if you take a music that means you have to go be in like...you have to go and sing in front of the school. It's not chill, it's super stressful. You got to wear your uniforms and stuff and it's just like really stressful, so I just don't take it...it's...it's too much…Like, just because I want to take a music doesn't mean I have to go out and sing in front of like, a tournament.*

Amy also preferred informal singing, although she engaged in the activity more readily than Kyle:

> *Amy: I just like to sing cause it's just fun. And it makes me feel good.*
>
> *Aaron: What do you sing?*

Amy: Anything. Like, in the shower, I'll sing.

In that case, Amy seemed to be emphasizing that she enjoyed the lack of formal rules for singing: she could sing "just" for fun without pressure.

Aaron: Do you enjoy singing?

Amy: Yeah.

Aaron: So, would you consider yourself a singer?

Amy: No. I just like to sing to myself. But I probably couldn't ever like, sing in the musical, or – I just like *to sing, just because… it's just fun, I guess. I don't know. Sometimes the lyrics are just fun to sing if you know them. They're just fun to sing if you know them.*

Amy's familiarity with the music was a contributing factor to her enjoyment of singing it.

Others preferred to sing in more social settings, albeit still informal and low-stress with opportunities to be silly:

Fran: It's [a song] we'd listen to at camp, and like everyone thought it was funny and stuff and we'd just sing along there, and I'd sing it in like, a weird voice.

Fran's enjoyment of singing, much like her enjoyment of dancing, seemed to be related to the social validation she received from her friends. Susan's enjoyment of singing was also related to social connections built through the activity:

Susan: I'll sing with the radio with my family, but that's pretty much it.

Aaron: Tell me about singing with your family

Susan: I don't know. Sometimes we just turn on the radio if we're going to like basketball or volleyball and we'll just jam out to songs we can all agree on. And it's just fun to drive.

Aaron: So, describe to me the experience of jamming out. You turn on the radio and then…?

Susan: Well, it depends on what season it is. Like, in summer sometimes we roll the windows down and like, in winter, we'll sing along to it, just not as loud.

Kyle similarly enjoyed singing in social settings:

Kyle: Like if you're with your friends, you'll get a song that you all enjoy and then you'll just like, goof around when you sing it really loud and just like have fun with it.

Aaron: Can you think back to an experience when you were all just goofing off, having fun with a song?

Kyle: We were in my basement and I have a bunch of speakers in my basement for like, when we're cleaning, so we can just listen to that. And I turned it like, halfway up – which is really loud – and we just put on songs that we all know and then we just started singing and running around.

Danielle also described situations where she would sing along to music, although she did not immediately recognize that as "singing":

Aaron: Do you sing or anything like that?

Danielle: No.

Aaron: What about singing along to the radio?

Danielle: Yeah but not like… [trailed off]

Aaron: Not what?

Danielle: Not like, for recording myself or anything.

Based on that exchange, Danielle's perception might be that to be considered a singer, one must also be a recording artist or share their music publicly, at least. During a later interview, Danielle expanded on occasions when she might enjoy singing, and how her enjoyment of music impacts other tasks:

Danielle: Like, when I'm doing homework, I can't do – like, I can listen to music but not ones where I know a lot of the words, because then I like to sing along, and I get distracted.

Similar to her peers, Danielle enjoyed singing along to music with which she was familiar and matched her preferences. For the participants to enjoy the experience of singing, the most consistent feature was the assurance that the activity would remain informal, with freedom to act silly and socialize with friends.

Structural Activity 5: Physically Responding. Participants would also demonstrate their enjoyment of music while responding physically to music in a variety of ways. Those responses included participants bobbing their heads, tapping their feet, bouncing physically, or mouthing lyrics. Those miscellaneous physical movements were generally more subconscious responses than dancing or singing along.

> *Aaron [during audio elicitation]: So, it sounds like dancing and music are really related for you. What else happens when you listen to music?*
>
> *Fran: Oh yeah, I mean, I'll like bob my head. When I hear a song I know, I start moving my hands*
>
> *Aaron: So, right now are you holding yourself still?*
> *Fran [laughing]: Yeah.*

Jack expressed similar, almost subconscious physical responses to hearing music, although he made sure to emphasize that his physical responses were more subdued than those of other people:

> *Jack: When I'm enjoying music, like sometimes my foot starts tapping or I start moving to the music. I just enjoy listening to it, I don't go like [mimes head banging], like, shake around or whatever.*

Kyle suggested that he responds differently to music when he is alone than when he is with his peers:

> *Kyle: Yeah, if I'm shooting hoops alone, I'll listen to music but if I'm with friends, I'll talk with them.*

Aaron: Do you feel like music helps when you're alone? Do you feel differently?

Kyle: Yeah, because then you can like, tap your foot and stuff. And there's no one to like, judge you on it.

Aaron: Tell me about that. Will people judge you for what you listen to?

Kyle: Oh yeah, because if it's not what they like, then people can get offensive about it.

Although Kyle was influenced by his peers regarding music selection, he did not perceive this interaction to limit his agency in the same way that adults or authority figures limited his agency:

Kyle: Like in 5th grade, the last time I took a music class, they would like force you to try and learn an instrument, but like, I don't really care about an instrument really.

Aaron: Do you remember that experience of being forced? What instrument did you have to learn?

Kyle: I don't even remember; it was just annoying. Or they'd make you play a box or something.

Aaron: So, you'd rather do stuff that you get to choose, and you have control over?

Kyle: Mmhm. I don't know like have a class decision on any song? Instead of like picking two songs and then having a vote on that, like have [students] pick the options of the songs.

When Kyle listened to music that is not aligned with the preferences of his social group, he felt free to physically respond in an organic way when he was alone compared to when he was with friends.

Kyle [describing listening to music before a baseball game]: I'm just bouncing to the song, getting ready, just focusing on what's next, the next thing, just getting it right, and then getting ready to explode when you get to the game.

Listening to music helped Kyle to build a sort of internalized potential energy that could be released as kinetic energy during the baseball game.

Structural Activity 6: Sharing. Participants frequently engaged in sharing music with their friends and family. Music served as a social bond within friend groups. Additionally, peer-sharing of music frequently was the way that the participants discovered new music that they enjoyed.

Dexter described the experience of hearing his favorite genre of music for the first time through the social sharing of music:

> *Dexter: It was one day in study hall and my friend was sitting there listening to music and had his earbuds in. And I was sitting there so bored and I was just like, "Here, give me an earbud." So, he gave me one and he was listening to this country song and I was like, "Oh my God, this is* so good!" *So, then I started on my own time looking it up on my own and I found out that country music is pretty good. And I was just kind of thinking to myself, you know, "I can't believe I've never been listening to this the whole time!"*

Jack also described discovery of new music socially, highlighting the influence of social media on a song's commercial success:

> *Jack: I mean, sharing it on Instagram and memes can lead to a song being successful, even after the song has been published. Like, there's a song by Lil Nas X that came out like, six months ago that's just now starting to gain traction…I mean, I just heard of Lil Nas X's country-something… like, I literally started hearing it like three days ago.*

Susan expressed the importance that music strengthened the personal connections that she held with her friends and family:

> *Susan: I mean, I didn't really notice it until I started doing this, but I listen to songs that remind me of my family or like, the good times.*
>
> *Aaron: Why do you think that's important to you?*

Susan: I'm just really close with my family and friends. I'm pretty picky about my friends, so when I like them, it's important for me to be really…to share everything with them.

Kyle echoed that social bonds could be strengthened by sharing music with friends:

Kyle: If you don't listen to them, then you…Well, if you can listen to what [your friends] do, then you can fit in better with them.

However, Kyle also expressed the importance of social independence when his preferences did not align with those of his friends:

Kyle: I was listening to an old song, and people were just saying it was old, why am I listening to it.

Aaron: But you enjoyed it anyway?

Kyle: Yeah.

Aaron: Do you feel like social pressure factors into the songs people like?

Kyle: Yeah, I feel like that can be a part of it, but I also feel like it's just what you enjoy, and there's just so much out there. Like, people are just jerks a lot, but if you can just fight through it and just do what you want to do, then it's no problem with anything.

Structural Activity 7: Creating. Another characteristic of activities that precipitated participants' enjoyment of music was that they included some creative components. Examples of creative activities that participants enjoyed included dance competitions, composition, and improvisation. They particularly appreciated the low-stress, informal environment for those creative activities. Additionally, creative activities frequently resulted in high self-efficacy and feelings of self-expression as a result of having the freedom to experiment without the same pressure that formal music learning typically involved.

Of the participants, Jack engaged in the most explicitly creative activities. He described using a synthesizer to experiment with timbres and melodies in his spare time:

> *Jack: Sometimes I'll mess around on the computer or find a synth or something and just mess around. Like, you have a few keys and then a bunch of buttons that do other stuff like maybe make the music electronic, or like, sound like a piano.*
>
> *Aaron: Ok, so tell me what you do with them?*
>
> *Jack: I have a keyboard – a piano, not a grand one but a modern one – but the cool thing is I can connect it to a computer, and I connect that and then I also have like a little tablet thing that can connect. So, I have like, the buttons on that and then the keyboard, which has the same feel as a grand, which is cool…And you can use the piano to like, imitate a guitar so you can have more tactile feedback and like, you can actually make some of your own noises, which is cool.*
>
> *Aaron: So, what do you like about that?*
>
> *Jack: It's just like, you can be as unique as you want, and it just gives you a wide variety of stuff to mess with and like, you don't have to – you can, but you don't have to be serious, or you can be.*

Jack enjoyed the control of the keyboard and the tablet to experiment with different combinations of sounds. He also enjoyed the freedom to compose spontaneously and informally:

> *Jack: With all the new resources, you have more creative integrity to the song. You're like, "Oooh, I can make like, bubble noises right here." And then it gives your stuff a unique taste.*
>
> *Aaron: Ok, so tell me about one of your recent experiences you've had with that?*
>
> *Jack: I don't like, make songs, I just kind of have fun with it. Like I know how to write and read notes with the piano, but I kind of just like freestyling it, because it doesn't make sense for me to just have fun but then put through two hours of writing it down when I could just make another one – like, five other ones – in that same time.*
>
> *Aaron: So, what about – I don't know whether to call it a song, or maybe just a tune – just one of your freestyling sessions. Tell me about that. Think back to doing that and describe the experience to me?*

Jack: I'm just kind of in my own zone messing around…making what you want, you kind of feel like a creator of some sort. Like, I wouldn't say God…but like, you kind of feel like you're making your own little world in that hour, half-hour session.

Agency and the freedom to experiment were salient to Jack's experience of enjoyment through creating. Susan and Fran each described similar spontaneity and experimentation when creating dance moves:

Susan: We just try to do like, silly things like the disco, or like classic dances like that [demonstrates a cross-body disco move]. Or we would try to make it funny by doing the worm and stuff.

Fran: Usually we'll start like, doing funny dances and singing. It's just like, in-the-moment dances that you just come up with right on the spot that would be funny.

Kyle and Allie described opportunities to be creative in formal music learning situations that they enjoyed:

Aaron: So, can you think back to, maybe to elementary school, to some music activities you remember enjoying?

Kyle: Like playing on the African drum things. Like, when you hit the side and then you hit the middle, and like, just make stuff like that. That was fun.
Aaron: Tell me more about when you got to hit different parts of the drum?

Kyle: It just makes a different noise, and it was kind of cool, experimenting.

Allie may have been in the same elementary music class and had similar experiences of enjoyment with experimenting with timbre and rhythmic patterns:

Allie: They brought in someone who did the drums, I thought that was kind of cool. Like, not the drums in a band but from a different country. It was different because you use your hands for it. Like, you hit it with your hands.

Aaron: What did you enjoy about that experience?

Allie: I thought it was fun because you could make up your own pattern with it.

Although their experiences were not as refined as Jack's experimentation with synthesizers, they nonetheless enjoyed the agency to be creative utilizing the resources and skills they had. Kyle expressed an interest in learning more about the creative aspects of music production and composition:

> *Kyle [envisioning something he might hope to learn about music]: Like, the* how *to do it…like, autotune, the beats, the background noises, the piecing in the music, like where it goes, how to make it.*

Dexter enjoyed the opportunity for self-expression through creativity and the sense of ownership that it led to for him:

> *Dexter [describing dancing to music]: I wasn't actually* good *at it! I just followed the video. Well, I did a lot more than the video did.*
>
> *Aaron: And how does that relate to the music?*
>
> *Dexter: You know, like, doing your own thing. When I listen to music, I'm doing* my *own thing…it's kind of a win-win because no one else listens to [country music] so it's* my *own thing.*

Structural Activity 8: Musical Play and Informal Learning. Similar to situations in which participants felt creative agency, participants also experienced enjoyment during musical play in formal music settings and informal music settings. Musical play included activities related to music that were viewed as games or play scenarios. Those activities generally required low cost, time, or skill (Gates, 1991). Participants enjoyed opportunities for playfulness, experimentation, and agency. Those aspects aided the formation of fond memories, which resulted in participants remembering those activities as particularly enjoyable.

One salient memory of musical play was described by Amy, Susan, Fran, and Danielle in a group interview:

> *Aaron: Can you think back to activities you enjoyed in any music classes and tell me about them?*
>
> *Danielle: I liked the Dog Bone Game*
> *Susan and Amy [simultaneously]: Yes! Yes!*
> *Fran: That was so fun.*
>
> *Danielle: Like, one person was handed an object, and everyone closed their eyes.*
>
> *Fran: And you'd put your hands behind your back.*
>
> *Danielle: And you had to sing.*
> *Fran: You had to sing.*
> *Amy: You had to, like, sing a song.*
> *Fran: Sing a song and then like, guess who had the dog bone.*
>
> *Aaron: How did you guess who had it?*
>
> *Amy: They would say it.*
> *Danielle: Well, the person who had it would sing, like, "I have the dog bone," but in a disguised voice.*
>
> *Fran: Everyone's eyes were closed, and they'd like, disguise their voice.*
>
> *Danielle: And the person in the middle had to guess who!*

Their excitement about the memory of that experience of musical play was evident in the way their faces lit up when they began describing the game. They also interrupted each other and finished each other's sentences in their eagerness to describe the game. The opportunity for playfulness in a formal music setting contrasted some of their other experiences in formal music learning, which they described as boring.

Jack described some of his experiences with musical enjoyment through informal music learning:

Jack: I still have a piano, and my sister has a drum that I've learned to play by myself and it's cool. Not a drum, a guitar. Why did I say drum? But it's really cool, just to mess around with it. I just play and maybe just listen to a song, so I can try playing it.

Aaron: Do you go on YouTube and watch videos about how to do it?

Jack: Eh, no. Not really. I like learning from just doing it. Sometimes [the videos] make me more confused.

Aaron: So, tell me more about that. When you're playing guitar and you're enjoying yourself, how does that feel?

Jack: Like, I'm just messing around with songs…I just like learning by myself and I just feel, kind of – I'm enjoying it, the process of learning how to play guitar. And I'm not restricted for stuff or am forced to only do it.

Aaron: Can you think back to a recent time you were teaching yourself guitar and tell me about that experience?

Jack: I was just playing it and listening to the music and kind of trying to sync to the music. That was basically all I was doing and it kind of got me a better understanding of what to do.

Aaron: Okay and when you got it to sync up, how did you feel?

Jack: Happy? Because I got it to work.

Allie also predicted that that she would prefer informal music learning opportunities to formal music learning, because she did not predict her style of learning to match those that teachers might utilize in a music classroom:

Allie: If you're in a classroom, the teacher might have a specific way of how they like to teach, but if that's not how you learn or like *to learn, then it's not going to be beneficial to you.*

Aaron: Do you think you have potential to be good at music?

Allie: I mean, I don't really have any free time to learn to play [instruments].

Aaron: I'm talking about totally outside of the real world, do you feel like you would have potential to learn music?

Allie: I don't know, I don't really enjoy that type of music. Like, I just like doing it on my own. I mean, if I taught myself, then yeah. But I probably wouldn't want to learn from someone..

While informal music learning does not always involve learning on one's own, Allie's interpretation seemed to reflect that idea. Informal music learning can be defined as learning that occurs "largely in the absence of adult supervision or guidance" (Green, 2005, p. 1), typically through aural learning, experimentation, imitation, and improvisation. Although Allie's definition did not include examples of how she might teach herself, she did mention that she would prefer to learn without teacher input.

Dexter expressed a similar desire for music that he could learn on his own time, without imposition from others:

Aaron: So, you already mentioned listening as an activity you enjoy. Are there other musical activities that you enjoy outside of school?

Dexter: I mean, I don't do any. But I guess I would enjoy maybe playing a guitar, just because it's a thing I could just use in my spare time. Playing guitar would be cool.

Structural Conditions

As participants described the structural activities that they engaged in while experiencing musical enjoyment, structural conditions that were invariant to the experience of musical enjoyment began to emerge. Those structural conditions clustered into four themes: Participants experienced musical enjoyment when the music matched their established preferences, when the music evoked referential memories, when the music impacted their emotions, and when the music modified their attention.

Structural Condition A: Music Matches Preferences. While each of the participants expressed a variety of preferences that were different, they all held those preferences as a standard of their enjoyment of music. Participants preferred when their expectation for the music matched reality, as in live performance or new releases of music.

> *Susan: Taylor Swift has like, evolved so much, and when we were younger, she was so girly and stuff and that's what like, we went to see, and like now she's very…I don't know how to describe it…*
>
> *Danielle: Her new tour looks like…*
>
> *Susan: She's like outgrown like almost like the baby phase, kind of?*
>
> *Aaron: So, her music was not what you expected?*
>
> *Susan: Well her new music isn't what I expected.*
>
> *Danielle: Yeah, I don't really like her new music, but I used to like it, like her old music.*
>
> *Aaron: What did you like about her old music?*
>
> *Danielle: Um, I don't know, it's just on the radio a lot, so like I heard it, and now I never hear her songs.*

They appreciated a variety of music to match a variety of life situations. They also preferred music that was memorable, easy to learn, and "catchy".

The participants had established preferences for the music they enjoyed, often for a variety of reasons:

> *Dexter: Usually I listen to country because, like, country is – some is calming and smooth, other's more like rock and roll and gets me pumped.*
>
> *Jack: I like whatever music I listen to. Probably alternative.*

Allie: I like country music…I think it's because you don't really hear it as much. I feel like you hear rap and hip-hop and stuff a lot more, and I feel like this is – like, country music – I feel like there's more meaning behind it.

Fran: I guess I like the loud, fun music? Pop?

When the music matched their established preferences, they enjoyed their musical experiences. When musical experiences did not match their preferences, they did not enjoy them:

Kyle: Like when I'm just sitting down, and I can pick the music, I can pick what I do with the music. Instead of in the music classes they force you to do what they want with their music that no one likes, and it's like a foreign language that no one really cares about.

Danielle: If you're like—if you're listening to all sad songs then that would get boring, so you want some upbeat ones.

Jack [describing the music course offerings at his school]: Because like for piano people, there's nothing, and like for the people with guitars, or like drums…there's like, nothing for modern music. It's all like the same stuff we've had for the past hundred years, maybe more. It gets to a point where it just gets boring.

Perhaps Allie summed up the sentiments of the participants the most succinctly when describing the importance of musical experiences matching pre-established preferences:

Allie: It's important, because if you don't like it then it's not going to be fun.

For many of the participants in this study, preference and familiarity were intertwined inseparably, particularly familiarity with the lyrics:

Allie: I mean, you're more likely to like a song if you know what they're talking about or if you know what they're saying, rather than if it's some random song you've never heard, you're probably not going to enjoy it that much.

Amy: Well, in the car I heard a song that I've never heard before and I just kind of, like, I don't like it that much because I didn't know the words.

Susan: Well, if I'm familiar with [the artist], I'll probably be a lot more excited to hear their music than some up-and-coming artist.

The participants in this study demonstrated their preference frequently through continued listening, sometimes to the point of oversaturation and overfamiliarity with the music:

Fran: I'll usually set up multiple [songs] in a playlist and then just listen to the playlist on repeat. And then as soon as I get tired of the songs then I just put more songs into the playlist and get rid of the other ones.

Other participants did not demonstrate as diligent self-regulation as Fran to prevent themselves losing preference for their song selections:

Amy: I'll just play a song that I really like—I'll play it so much that I start to not like it as much anymore. But then I find another one that I enjoy.

Susan: When I like a song I just keep it on repeat, and so sometimes I get sick of it because I listen to it so much. But if I'm just like, really in love with it then I'll just keep playing it.

Kyle's description of diminishing musical enjoyment gave some insight into why overfamiliar songs might no longer be enjoyable:

Kyle: The song gets ruined.

Aaron: Tell me about that?

Kyle: Just gets overplayed.

Aaron: What does that mean?

Kyle: Like it just happened so much you like—it wasted all the—like you squeezed all the enjoyment out of the song, so it's just like, there's just nothing there anymore. There's nothing to it that you have heard in it. Just old bland usual stuff that you've already heard.

Jack suggested that there might be a delicate balance between familiarity and overfamiliarity as it relates to preference and enjoyment:

Jack: It's like kind of three phases: One) you find a new song, Two) you listen to it a lot but then you're kind of getting bored, and Three) you just know the song but you don't listen to it. So, if someone pulls it up you can sing the lyrics or whatever, and it's like the middle one is just that awkward phase…

Aaron: Tell me more about that?

Jack: I don't know [laughs]. I literally started hearing a song like three days ago and for like, the first hour, I was like, "Oh! [raised eyebrows, raised pitch]" and I only listened to that song for one hour straight. And then I was like, "I'll go to different music," and then now it's just like, "I know that song… I—I know it…it's annoying, but I know it."

Because participants occasionally experienced oversaturation with the music they enjoyed, it was important to them that they have a variety of music options that matched the variety of life situations that they might experience:

Susan: Um, well, I'll play different songs like, depending on my mood. Like, if I'm getting pumped up, I'll play stuff that's a faster beat, but like, when I'm tired, I'll do like almost like throwback songs, like stuff like that.

Jack: If you hear the same stuff over and over again, it becomes boring. Then your enjoyment of the song will go really down and then like it could affect you as a person, just because like "ehhhh"? And also, a lot of people listen to the same twenty songs just because they're used to it, which I still do. But like, it's better to have a variety than listening to like the same stuff because it just like harms your enjoyment?

Jack also acknowledged that his preference for variety might not be universal:

Jack: I mean, I listen to alternative, so no song is the same, which is like, really why I'm super biased on the uniqueness of a song, while some people might just like listening to the same stuff.

Structural Condition B: Music Evokes Memories. Participants felt deeper enjoyment of music when they perceived a personal connection to the music. They preferred music that they considered to be relatable and that had a meaningful message

that applied to life situations that they were currently or had previously experienced. They also associated music with fond memories from when they first heard that music.

Perhaps because of the timing of the interviews, memories of summertime were particularly salient in participants' descriptions:

> *Allie [during audio elicitation]: It just reminds me of summer time, because that's when it came out and so I listened to it in the summer.*

Or, for example, this exchange between Amy and Danielle during a follow-up interview:

> *Danielle [during audio elicitation]: Here's one I remember like, hearing a lot, but I don't really listen to it. But it just kind of reminds me of like something you listen to like with your friends I guess.*
>
> *Aaron: What does it make you think about?*
>
> *Danielle: Summer kind of, Like....*
> *Amy: [nods]*
>
> *Aaron: Why does it make you think of summer? You both said yes, right?*
>
> *Amy: Well I just think it kind of sounds like…um, super upbeat, and just it sounds like something you listen to like if you were going to the beach or something.*

Participants also recalled fond memories of close relationships with friends and family:

> *Susan [during audio elicitation]: My mom really likes this song, so I kind of think of her. And my brother also really likes this song, so I think of him, and like summer, because he always played it out by the pool.*
>
> *Danielle [during audio elicitation]: Well I just think of like, fourth grade, because that's like when the song like this really popular it just brings me back to it. We were like, always listening to this in fourth grade and like we'd dance to it kind of.*

Relatability to the lyrics emerged as a theme frequently throughout the series of interviews. Participants experienced enjoyment of music when they felt referential connection to the lyrics. Amy described feeling calm while listening to a particular song

because it reminded her of a type of music that she associated with being soothing because of cultural and social experiences:

> *Amy [during audio elicitation]: I just like how it's like, calming, I guess. Like, I feel like you could fall asleep to it because it's like – it kind of sounds like a lullaby.*

Susan described that her enjoyment of music is lessened when she cannot relate to a song, but how she experiences greater enjoyment when she can relate:

> *Susan: Like, you can tell from some of the songs that I like that it like comes from like their heart. Like, some of the pop songs are just like, "Go have fun, party!" And it doesn't really apply to my life.*
>
> *Aaron: Ok, so you feel like you can't relate to it? But then songs you feel like you really enjoy, you can relate to in some way?*
>
> *Susan: Yeah.*
>
> *Aaron: Tell me more about that?*
>
> *Susan: I don't know, like, [the song] Life Goes On. Like, through all the struggles and stuff, I still have to move forward with my life.*

When participants could relate to the music in their life, they described a sense of connection to the music, which translated to enjoyment for them. It also contributed to a sense that the lyrics were directed toward them and had a meaningful message that impacted or reflected their life.

Structural Condition C: Music Impacts Emotions. In all of the descriptions of musical enjoyment, the impact of music on emotion was prevalent. Participants would use music to intentionally regulate their emotions, or they would sometimes subconsciously regulate their emotions through the structural activities outlined in the previous section. In general, music helped participants to process emotions, helped to

augment emotions, or in some cases, temporarily masked or altered emotions. Participants particularly experienced enjoyment when the connoted and perceived emotion of the music matched their situationally desired emotion.

Participants perceived that songs connoted a specific emotion. They would frequently refer to "happy" music or "sad" music. For example,

> *Amy: Like, I listen to happy songs when I'm feeling in a good mood.*
>
> *Danielle: If you're feeling sad, you can listen to like, happy music. Or sad music if you're really sad.*
>
> *Susan: Ok, so Young, Dumb, and Broke is a very calming song, but it's still got a really, like, rap background, which I don't know if you understand that, but like, the beat in the background.*
>
> *Fran: If it's a sad song, then you feel sad just during the song, but then after, you go back to your original mood that you had before you listened to it.*

Other descriptions focused more on the emotions that participants experienced as a result of listening to the music, without assigning a certain emotion to the music itself:

> *Allie [during audio elicitation]: I feel really happy and energized. And I feel like it puts you in a good mood! This song gives me energy and it like, hypes me up.*
>
> *Jack [during audio elicitation]: I always listen to that before tournaments and it sounds good and like, it gets you ready for stuff. It kind of makes me feel more confident in myself.*
>
> *Dexter: With music, I could just play [basketball] as long as I want. It just keeps me going and going and makes me like, never want to stop.*

Dexter described experiencing enjoyment when music helped him to feel emotions that he desired in certain situations, although he was not always explicitly aware that the music served that function in his life:

> *Dexter: Music, calms me down. I don't know, I just listen to it and enjoy it and I guess it gets me calmed down just enjoying it. I mean, being angry is not enjoying,*

but being calm is, you know. I guess the enjoyable part is being calm and just enjoying music, relaxing.

Aaron: Do you ever listen to music to calm you back down if you start to get mad?

Dexter: I can't remember a time when I did.

Susan described experiencing musical enjoyment when the music evoked her desired energy level or emotion:

Susan: When you're on a plane or something and you're like, tired, you don't want to get pumped, you want to be chill and stuff.

Kyle utilized music to regulate and process his emotions in a more deliberate way:

Aaron: Can you think of a time when music made you feel some type of emotion?

Kyle: Yeah, like when we lose a football game, I kind of get sad, so I change the type of music I listen to.

Aaron: So, when you change music, how does that…?

Kyle: It just gets you in the emotion, so you can get it all out of your system faster, so you can get back up.

Aaron: Do you ever listen to music to change your mood?

Kyle: Yeah, but then I feel like when you do that, you're kind of just pushing your feelings down instead of just embracing it and getting it over with.

Amy described similar methods of utilizing music to help process emotions and cope with loss:

Aaron: Are there other emotions that you can think of that you felt while you were enjoying music?

Amy: Like, sad music. People listen to sad music when they're—like, after a break-up or something?

Aaron: Is that enjoyable? To listen to sad music?

Amy [emphatically]: No.

Despite not enjoying the process of listening to sad music, Amy experienced enjoyment nonetheless through emotional regulation and processing her emotions.

Kyle also described using music to regulate his emotions in a preparatory way, to energize him before he played sports:

> *Kyle [during audio elicitation]: I feel like this just gets you in that feel. Like, this is what I listen to before I go to sports games. To get you in that mindset to go all-out, like, don't leave nothing behind.*

Participants described using music to help make unenjoyable activities, such as homework or long car rides more enjoyable. The music would enhance those unenjoyable experiences:

> *Allie: Because you're doing something you enjoy. Like, no one likes to do homework, so if you can somehow incorporate something you like doing with doing your homework, it's more fun.*

> *Kyle: When I was in the car, I was listening to music because it helps the time go faster. I was just listening to the music and then like, it just…I don't know, when you're listening to music like, everything seems to go faster. It's just a good time consumer. Like, if you're bored you can listen to music.*

Susan described the experience of music altering her emotions, which resulted in enjoyment for her:

> *Susan: I feel like whenever you're listening to music, it kind of like, boosts your mood. So, when I'm listening to pump up music, I get pumped up. And if I listen to calmer music, it'll help me stay focused and calm.*

> *Aaron: So, how does that translate to you enjoying the music?*

> *Susan: Oh! Because it puts me in the mood that I want to be in.*

Music can alter moods, energy levels, or emotions, as described above. Participants also found enjoyment through music when it augmented their existing emotions, as long as those were the emotions they situationally desired:

> *Amy: If you're like, in a good mood, then like, happy music could help your mood even more?*

Kyle described how music enhanced his existing enjoyment of playing basketball:

> *Kyle: When I was shooting hoops by myself, I just put some headphones in and it made it more enjoyable.*
>
> *Aaron: What changed?*
>
> *Kyle: Like, the feeling of it. It just felt better.*
>
> *Aaron: And what if there had been no music?*
>
> *Kyle: It would have been less enjoyable, but it wouldn't have been terrible.*

Similarly, Susan described an enjoyable experience of spending time with her family at the pool, and the way that music enhanced the feelings of enjoyment that she was experiencing:

> *Susan: Kind of, you don't really notice it. It's like, in the background but it makes you like, enjoy the moment more?*
>
> *Aaron: Ok. Close your eyes and see if you can go there now. Tell me about it.*
>
> *Susan: Well, my dad's probably mowing the lawn because he loves doing that, and then we're probably making a smoothie or just relaxing on a raft. And like, the music is going on in the background and we're just like, bobbing our heads to it.*
>
> *Aaron: And how are you feeling with all of that going on?*
>
> *Susan: Very happy.*

Consistently, participants expressed enjoyment of music when the connoted mood of the music matched their desired emotional experience. When the music did not match their situationally desired emotion, participants tended to express lower levels of enjoyment.

Structural Condition D: Music Modifies Attention. An additional function of music in participants' lives was as a modifier for attention. Participants would experience musical enjoyment when music improved their focus both during unenjoyable or enjoyable activities. Often, participants would deliberately regulate their attention with music, although music modified participants' attention whether they intended it to or not. Participants also experienced enjoyment of music when engagement in a musical activity distracted them from stressors in their lives.

Dexter described the ways that music modified his attention. Sometimes he intentionally used music to distract from stressors as a form of escapism; other times the music distracted him despite his best efforts:

> *Dexter [on playing music loudly]: I guess I just don't like to think about the future? You know how some people ask, "What do you want to be in the future!?" I have no idea what I want to be in the future, like, I have no idea. Like, sometimes I think about what am I good at? I don't really know. And sometimes even in school I think about the future, I think about big projects I have to worry about and maybe that I don't want to do them – that's why I always procrastinate – so I don't like to think about work or school or anything like that or the future. So, that's why I kind of said living in the moment, blocking everything out.*
>
> *Aaron: And the music helps you to do that?*
>
> *Dexter: Yeah.*
>
> *Aaron: So, you don't focus on the future or any work, you focus instead on…?*
>
> *Dexter: I don't really focus on anything when I'm listening to music. I just sit there and listen to it. Sometimes I don't even do my work. Especially in school, sometimes listening to music, I just – I don't do my work – I just sit there. Just*

listen. Like, during science class, the teacher…she said if you want to listen to music, go ahead, get your earbuds. So, that's what I did, I got my earbuds, turned on my music, turned it on really loud, and I was trying to do my work but it was kind of hard to concentrate, cause I had it really loud and it was kind of hard to focus. So, most of the time I was trying to concentrate but my music kept making its way into my head.

In a follow-up interview, I asked Dexter about how music changed his attention or modified his focus, and he gave this response:

Dexter: Yeah, music does not help me focus. it does help me change my attention, and it does help me block everything out, because… I don't know when I'm listening to music, I don't…it's hard to focus on things, like reading while listening to music, you know, it's not--you can't really read and listen to music at the same time, because you're trying to read those words in your head and also trying to enjoy the music too, like you can't really do that, so… Music doesn't help me focus at all, actually, it does the opposite. So, I use music to block everything out and ***not*** *focus. I use music to* ***not*** *focus on things and block everything out.*

Danielle suggested that when she listens to music that she is familiar with, she has a harder time concentrating on her work, so she strategically picks music she enjoys listening to that she does not know as well:

Danielle: Like, when I'm doing my homework, I can't do – like, I can listen to music, but not ones where I know a lot of the words, because then I like to sing along to it, and I get distracted. So, I just listen to music that I don't really know, that's kind of slower, so I can focus more.

Aaron: How do you pick what music to listen to in that situation?

Danielle: I don't know, I just pick it. [laughs] Or maybe Billie Eilish, she's calming.

Fran described a similar situation of being distracted because of her familiarity with the music she was listening to:

Fran: Like, knowing the words usually causes you to start saying the words in your head. And then you can't think of the words that you're trying to put on the computer.

Allie described a different experience of music modifying her attention: in her case, music helped her to become more focused on the tasks she attempted:

> *Allie: Well, I don't know why, but [music] makes me more focused, because I'm not just thinking about like, doing my homework. I feel like it makes the time go faster.*

Kyle referred to a feeling of focus and a sense that time was moving faster as well when listening to music:

> *Kyle [during audio elicitation]: This one helps me, like, think. This one helps me focus.*
>
> *Aaron: How does it help you focus?*
>
> *Kyle: Well, it blocks everything else, so I can focus on that one thing I'm trying to do. Just like, I get distracted easily, and just music, it just helps me focus on that one thing, so I got to get it done easy and fast.*

Jack also described a feeling of increased focus when listening to music:

> *Jack: Also, it helps to get our focus—our attention—to a singular point and not scattered, and when other noises that are harmful to our activity, music will just like, block it out basically.*

In a follow-up interview with both Kyle and Allie, they explored the idea that music distracted them from stressors in their lives:

> *Kyle: If you're stressed out about homework, music can help you not be stressed. I don't know how, it just does.*
>
> *Allie: I agree, but I don't know how it does, it just kind of does.*
>
> *Aaron: So, you're sitting there working on your homework…you put on some music, and what happens?*
>
> *Kyle: It goes away. Well, some of the stress goes away.*
>
> *Allie: Because you're doing something you enjoy. Like, no one likes to do homework, so if you can somehow incorporate something you like doing with doing your homework, it's more fun.*

Texture of the Experience

According to Moustakas (1994), the textural description of the experience includes the thoughts, feelings, and ideas that comprise the experience. In other words, the textural description explicates what participants feel when they experience enjoyment of music. During musical enjoyment, participants experienced situationally desired emotions, a sense of focus (which sometimes manifested as flow), feelings of ownership toward the music, and a desire to continue engagement with the musical activity that resulted in their enjoyment of music.

Textural Synthesis 1: Situationally-Desired Emotions. For all participants, enjoyment of music was present when the emotion evoked by the music matched the emotion that they desired to feel. Those emotions covered a broad spectrum, including happiness, excitement, calmness, and sadness. Additionally, participants described enjoyment when certain emotions were alleviated, such as boredom, loneliness, or anxiety. Participants perceived the connoted emotion of the music based primarily on genre, tempo, volume, and lyrics.

> *Danielle: This girl on my soccer team, before games, she listens to like, heavy rock. I guess that like, pumps her up. Or just like, music with fast beats and stuff. And then if you're feeling sad, you can listen to like happy music or… sad music if you're really sad.*

Danielle's enjoyment of the music hinged on the music helping her to feel happy in situations when she was sad, which was the emotion she desired in that situation. Danielle's friend enjoyed the feelings of excitement resultant from the heavy rock music she listened to prior to the games, which matched her desired emotion. Interestingly, if

Danielle were “really sad,” she suggested she might listen to “sad music,” presumably to help process those feelings. When Susan was feeling sad, she sought out happy music to help her experience the emotions she preferred in those instances:

> *Susan: When I'm like tired and stuff, I'll play music that still has like, a trap beat to it but it's a bit more chill. And like, when I'm getting pumped up it's like kind of like the second song I showed you [during audio elicitation].*
>
> *Aaron: So, do you ever listen to songs that are the opposite of your current mood?*
>
> *Susan: Not really like I never listen to sad songs, I never listen to like slow songs… and I always listen to music that always has like a steady beat… except for this one [laughs].*
>
> *Aaron: So, if you're feeling really sad, what would you listen to?*
>
> *Susan: Yeah, like happy songs. Because it would put me in a better mood.*

Allie also utilized music to produce the emotions that she preferred in certain situations:

> *Aaron: Can you think back to a time when you listened to music for a particular reason…and tell me about that experience?*
>
> *Allie: Like, sometimes before soccer or volleyball games, I listen to like, really upbeat and fast music, to like, get pumped up I guess.*

The perceived energy of the music contributed to feelings of excitement that translated into potential success during the game. The energy of the music was also salient for Fran:

> *Fran [describing music that she enjoys]: It’s loud and has energy.*
>
> *Aaron: So, what is it about being loud and energetic that’s enjoyable?*
>
> *Fran: Like, when it’s loud and – it’s like, a lot more fun to listen to.*

Later, Fran described how she sometimes used music to regulate her emotions:

> *Fran: I mean, if you’re sad, then, like, you want to be happy. You can listen to [music] and then it…like, sometimes music changes your mood. Makes you more energetic.*

In circumstances when participants desired to feel calm and the music helped them experience that emotion, they expressed enjoyment as well:

> *Allie [during audio elicitation]: Um, it's not really like super upbeat, so it's… I think it's calming, I guess? It's slower.*
>
> *Aaron: Is that how it makes you feel?*
>
> *Allie: Yeah.*
>
> *Aaron: Do you sometimes listen to music when you want to feel more calm?*
>
> *Allie: Yep.*
>
> *Aaron: Can you tell me about a time when you did that?*
>
> *Allie: I listen to calm music when I'm trying to do my homework. Just so, one: I don't get distracted. Two, I just… yeah.*

Besides being a clear example of Patton's (2015) wry observation that interviewees may only answer exactly what interviewers ask and offer no further explanation, that exchange also illustrates the use of music to feel a desired emotion. When that endeavor was successful, participants experienced enjoyment.

> *Amy: Well like, before games, people like listening to music to pump themselves up or like, if you're mad or angry you'll listen, er… like if I'm sad I listen to like, happy music to cheer me up but I don't really know anybody else.*

Amy experienced musical enjoyment as a result of situationally desired emotions in a similar way to the other participants, and she had the wherewithal to recognize that her experiences were not necessarily universal.

Dexter described a scenario where music alleviated feelings of boredom and loneliness for him, which were emotions he did not want to experience at the time:

> *Dexter [describing listening to music while playing basketball alone]: I guess it makes it more fun? You know, sometimes I'm outside, it's kind of …you know, by*

myself, it's kind of boring because I'm playing by myself. but when I'm listening to music, you know, it's cool, and I don't like… it's more fun, upbeat. You know, I'm not-- like I'm not listening to sad songs while I'm playing basketball, I'm listening to, you know, upbeat songs, so, I guess it just makes me feel less lonely?

In all of the scenarios above, enjoyment of music meant feeling emotions that participants desired or perceived to be situationally appropriate. Although the features of the horizon – the particular emotion desired – differed, the horizon itself was consistent. Using imaginative variation (Giorgi, 2009; Moustakas, 1994), it is possible to conceive of situations where someone might want to experience any range of emotions through music; as long as that emotion aligned with their situationally-desired emotion, the musicker would experience enjoyment. If someone wanted to be frightened, perhaps during a horror film, they would enjoy the music that evoked that emotion. If they wanted to process anger, music that accomplished that emotional regulation task would result in enjoyment. For these participants, the alignment of the emotion they felt with the emotion the wanted to feel was paramount to their enjoyment of a musical experience.

Textural Synthesis 2: Focus and Flow. Participants described experiencing a sense of focus during enjoyable music activities. Some constituents of that experience matched the description of the flow experience, especially a distorted sense of time (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Although Kyle struggled to articulate how or why music helped him focus, he was very clear that music helps him to maintain focus:

Kyle: Uh, I don't know, it helps me like focus and like it's just a good time consumer. Just get you in the right mindset.

Aaron: How does it help you focus?

Kyle: Because it like blocks everything else and it like...it just...yeah.

Allie described similar experiences of maintaining focus while listening to music:

> *Allie: Well, I don't know why, but [music] makes me more focused, because I'm not just thinking about like, doing my homework. I feel like it makes the time go faster.*

A distorted sense of time is one of the characteristics of the flow experience, which typically indicates that participants are so fully engaged in the activity that they are unaware of the passage of time.

> *Kyle: I don't know, when you're just listening to the music, like, everything seems to go faster.*

Another characteristic of the sense of focus that participants felt was that their attention was focused on what they wanted to focus on. Much like participants' enjoyment through situationally-desired emotions, when participants' attention was focused in the way they preferred, they experienced enjoyment:

> *Dexter: Without the music, I realize I think about school a lot. I use-- I realize how much work I have to do, I realize… I think about what I probably have to do when I get to school like tests, and maybe I have to think about homework I didn't do, so yeah. But with music I don't have to think about that.*

In that situation, Dexter's preferred to avoid focusing on certain experiences or anxieties. In the absence of music, Dexter found himself fixating on some of his anxieties related to school. However, when music was present, it helped Dexter to focus his attention elsewhere.

Textural Synthesis 3: Ownership, Connection, and Self-Expression. When experiencing musical enjoyment, participants felt a sense of ownership for the music they

were enjoying. They also experienced self-expression frequently, even when not performing music or performing to music.

One indicator of participants' sense of ownership was the way that they referred to the music they enjoyed:

> *Allie: [pausing before audio elicitation]: Ok my music is loading.*
>
> *Dexter: While I listen to music… I like, I just zone out …I don't listen to anybody around me, it's just me and my music, and… I don't know, I'm just living in the moment, listening to my music and enjoying it, and I just zone everything out. So, it's just me and my music. Just enjoying it.*

Participants referred to the music they enjoyed as "my music" – they took ownership of the music and that made them feel a stronger connection to the music. The cycle of ownership and connectedness also seemed to work in the other direction. A feeling of connectedness to the music could in turn give a sense of ownership for the music:

> *Jack: If you're like, feeling down about something, you kind of like get this like feeling that you're the person that the song's about, and like you can really connect to the song.*
>
> *Danielle: You can tell what's like, going on in their life kind of and like, if you're having a hard time I guess you could connect to it.*

Along those lines, when participants felt connected to the music and a sense of ownership for it, they perceived it to allow them to express themselves. Since these participants did not typically perform any music, their self-expression primarily manifested through their listening selections:

> *Amy: Like, I feel like artists express themselves through music or like, if they're going through a hard time and they look to music to help.*
>
> *Aaron: Do you ever express yourself with music?*

Amy: Like, I listen to happy songs when I'm feeling in a good mood. But I don't write songs to express myself.

Although Amy transitioned to discussing song-writing, her initial response to how she expresses herself through music was that she selects music that reflects her mood. If someone were to hear the music Amy was listening to, they might be able to determine her mood. In that way, the music Amy selects manifests as self-expression of whatever emotion she might be experiencing.

Occasionally participants' self-expression through music was demonstrated by the ways they physically responded to the music:

Dexter: I wasn't thinking about anybody else. I was just going crazy on the floor, you know, I was going like, all out dancing. Just being myself.

For Dexter, dancing was an opportunity to be himself, regardless of societal expectations. That freedom of self-expression contributed to his experience of enjoyment.

Textural Synthesis 4: Desire for Continued Engagement. Whenever participants experienced enjoyment of music, they expressed a desire to continue whatever structural activity was precipitating their experience:

Aaron: So, when you're listening to a song and you're really enjoying it, how do you notice in yourself that you really like it?

Jack [laughing]: I'm still listening to it! Or I listen to it many times.

Continued engagement frequently included listening to music for its own sake, without any added emotional or attentional benefit:

Kyle: I don't know. I'm not listening for anything, I'm just like, listening to listen.

Jack [on the feeling of enjoyment]: I'm just listening to music? I don't know how to describe it; this is some philosophy stuff!

Allie: If I like the music, I'll just listen to it.

Dexter: Sometimes, listening to music, I just sit there. Just listen.

Often, participants enjoyment of music included repetitious engagement:

> *Fran: Yeah, I usually set up like-- if I liked songs, then I put like… like multiple in the playlist and then just listen to the playlist on repeat. And then as soon as I get tired of the songs then I just like, put more songs into the playlist and get rid of the other ones.*

Some participants followed through with that desire for continued engagement even to the point where they no longer enjoyed the experience.

> *Jack [on repeated exposure to a song]: Even though it's one of my favorite rappers, I just got really irritated. I mean, I like the song, but you just get bored of it. And it becomes super bland and dark, even though the music's great. And you just hear it everywhere and everywhere. And it makes you kind of become like a psycho because you just keep on hearing it and can't stop hearing it…and it gets really annoying.*

> *Susan: When I like a song, I just like, keep it on repeat and so sometimes I get sick of it but-- because I listen to it so much-- but most of the time if I'm just like, really in love with it then I'll just keep playing it.*

> *Amy: I'll just play a song that I really like—I'll play it so much that I start to not like it as much anymore. But then I find another one that I enjoy.*

Even though participants knew they would eventually grow to dislike the music they were listening to repeatedly, they continued their engagement with the music. Their enjoyment of the experience was strong enough to outweigh possible future feelings of dislike.

Essence of the Experience

Throughout the series of interviews, structural and textural descriptions of the experience of musical enjoyment emerged. Participants experienced musical enjoyment as a result of listening, dancing, singing along, sharing music socially, attending live

concerts, opportunities for creativity, and through informal learning and musical play. Those structural activities precipitated musical enjoyment for the participants in this study. Although listening was the most prevalent, the other structural activities played active roles in the lives of the participants.

Conditions that made enjoyment possible through those structural activities included that the music matched participants' preferences, that the music evoked memories of friends and family and situations, that the music influenced participants' emotions, and that the music modified their focus in various situations.

Those conditions and activities led to the experience of musical enjoyment for the participants of this study, students not enrolled in elective music classes. The texture of the experience, or *what* participants felt during enjoyment of music, included situationally-desired emotions, a feeling of focus, a sense of ownership, and a desire for the musical activity to continue. In essence, when music helped participants feel the emotions or attentional focus they wanted to feel, they built a connection to the music and continued engagement with any musical activity that sustained that connection.

Chapter 5. Discussion

This chapter contains a discussion of the findings of this study through the lens of the questions that guided the research. The purpose of this study was to explore the phenomenon of musical enjoyment by students who chose not to enroll in school music programs. Students were interviewed regarding their experiences with music, musical preference, feelings of enjoyment of music, and what experiences lead to enjoyment of music. Specific research questions that were addressed in this study were (1) How do non-music students describe their experience of musical enjoyment? and (2) What musical experiences lead to enjoyment of music for non-music students?

Brief Summary of Findings

The present study revealed musical activities that students enjoy, which included listening to music, singing along, attending live performances, dancing to music, sharing music with friends, physically responding to music, creating music, and engaging in musical play or informal music-making. While those activities are represented in prior research, the present study demonstrated that they are also salient for students not enrolled in music classes. Additionally, findings indicated that students enjoy musical experiences that match their preferences, experiences that evoked memories, as well as those that impacted their emotional or attentional state. When participants were

experiencing musical enjoyment, it was manifested as situationally-desired emotions, situationally-desired focus, a sense of ownership, and a desire for continued engagement.

The present study also engaged students not enrolled in school music classes, which is a population on which there is little direct research in the music education field. The findings indicate that the construct of musical enjoyment is similar in almost every way for 'non-music' students compared to music students. The exception is that the participants in this study elected not to enroll in school music classes, and they described feelings of boredom related to past school music experiences.

Research Question #1. *How do non-music students describe their experience of musical enjoyment?* This question examined the textural components of musical enjoyment, i.e., what the participants in this study experienced during enjoyment of music. Through this question, I sought to explore the feeling of musical enjoyment of students who are not engaged in structured, formal music learning in school. By explicating what students enjoy about music despite non-involvement in the music offerings at school, we might better understand how those students engage with music in their daily lives.

Participants described their experiences of musical enjoyment as those that made them feel the emotions they desired in particular circumstances. Musical experiences that participants enjoyed also made them feel focused and gave them a sense of ownership of the activity. Those feelings resulted in participants' desire for the activity to continue. Although those feelings occurred during enjoyment of music, participants frequently

struggled to articulate the source of those feelings or descriptions of the feelings themselves.

Research Question #2. *What musical experiences lead to enjoyment of music for non-music students?* Experiences that precipitated musical enjoyment for the participants in this study included listening to music, dancing to music, singing along, sharing music socially, attending live concerts, participating in creative activities related to music, and engaging in informal music learning or musical play outside of the school music program. The findings of this study support earlier studies that found students engage with similar music activities inside and outside of school settings (Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall, & Tarrant, 2003), in that students not involved in school music programs experience enjoyment in similar ways as those who are involved in school music.

The structural activities described above served as precursors to musical enjoyment, particularly when they met structural conditions that were identified by the participants: the music matched predetermined preferences regarding genre, timbre, tempo, and instrumentation; the music evoked memories of friends and family in a variety of situations; the music impacted participants' emotions; and the music modified their attention, either toward the music itself, toward a separate task accompanied by music, or sometimes away from certain focuses.

General Discussion

The findings of this study represent an underrepresented perspective within the field of music education: the perspective of the students not involved in school music education. Despite their lack of involvement with in school music education programs,

each of the participants described regular engagement with and enjoyment of music. Whereas traditional models position enjoyment as a result of the matching of skill with challenge (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), the participants in this study did not describe situations when they engaged in musical activities that challenged them. They also tended to view themselves as without musical potential, and therefore did not experience musical enjoyment as a fulfillment of potential, as suggested by Franklin (2010).

Instead, participants experienced musical enjoyment that more closely fit the hedonic enjoyment spectrum from pleasant to unpleasant feelings (Kubovy, 1999). Waterman (1993) suggested that hedonic enjoyment was experienced whenever a pleasant affect accompanied the satisfaction of physical, intellectual, or social needs. The findings of this study support that musical enjoyment is the result of satisfaction of social needs, but also suggest that participants experienced enjoyment when emotional and attentional needs were satisfied as well. While participants did not describe experiences what Waterman defined as ""personal expressiveness" (feeling challenged, competent, or invested) (1993, p. 689) through music, they did suggest that they were able to express themselves through personal relation to the music they selected.

Consistent with expectations, the data record did not suggest that enjoyment of music for non-music students was related to high levels of effort, clear goals, or feeling adequately challenged. However, perhaps the challenges that they faced in listening, responding, and creating musical experiences did, in fact, match their skill, which might account for some of the flow-type experiences that participants described.

Discussion of Textural Synthesis

Situationally-preferred emotions were crucial to participants' experience of enjoyment. When the music helped them to feel the emotions they desired, participants reported that they enjoyed the experience. From the standpoint of hedonic psychology, individuals generally seek to maximize pleasure and minimize pain (Kubovy, 1999; Tamir, Chiu, & Gross, 2007). However, participants did not exclusively enjoy the emotions typically associated with pleasure. They also utilized music to emotionally regulate by engaging with emotions that were hedonically unpleasant, such as sadness or anger. Kyle mentioned using music to process his sad emotions when he lost a football game, for instance. Danielle described a friend of hers who would listen to "heavy rock" to get into the mindset to defeat opponents. That approach to emotional regulation is similar to that used by some athletes, when unpleasant emotions might actually increase performance (Lane, Beedie, Devonport, & Stanley, 2011). Although unpleasant emotions themselves were not enjoyable to the participants, the emotional processing that resulted from engaging with those emotions was enjoyable for them, as was the harnessing of those emotions for an explicit purpose, such as success at sports.

While the participants in the study primarily enjoyed pleasant emotions, their enjoyment of a musical experience ultimately hinged upon whether that particular emotion was situationally desired in a given context. For instance, when asked whether he used music to mask or alter his mood, Kyle asserted that he could do that but would rather embrace his emotions and "get it over with." Those findings support previous

research that adolescents sometimes seek out unpleasant emotions in the short-term to promote happiness in the long-term (Saarikallio & Erkkila, 2007).

Schäfer, Sedlmeier, Städtler, and Huron (2013), in a survey of factors related to music listening, found that emotion and mood regulation is one of the primary functions of music in people's lives. The finding in the present study that participants described emotion regulation through music as an enjoyable experience supports and extends their research. Although previous research suggested that girls and boys use music to emotionally regulate in different ways (North et al., 2000; Saarikallio, 2006; J. Sloboda & O'Neill, 2001), all participants in the present study, regardless of gender, described using music both to increase energy levels and to process or cope with unpleasant emotions, which are associated with boys and girls respectively in the extant literature (e.g., Saarikallio, 2006).

Similar to experiencing emotional regulation, participants experienced attention regulation during musical enjoyment as well. In much the same way as their experience of situationally-desired emotions, participants experienced situationally-desired focus. Results of the current study suggest that music listening heightened participants' attention, whether toward the music or toward a specific task and their enjoyment of that focus depended on whether the object of their attention matched their preference. Those findings are consistent with previous research on the topic of focus of attention during music listening and that music listening can result in an "enjoyable attentional or cognitive response to music" (Diaz, 2010, p. 64). The music gives listeners a sense of

control over their attention, which also seems to be related to their enjoyment of the situation.

Research on the connection between flow and music has primarily dealt with music performance and creative activities (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Custodero, 2002, 2005). However, since the participants in this study were most often not performers, the typical characteristics of flow such as the balance of challenge and skill and clear goals and progress do not apply. When asked to describe enjoyable musical experiences, participants never referenced performing experiences as examples of enjoyment, which may suggest that performance did not have a salient relationship with their experiences of musical enjoyment. Additionally, participants frequently referenced boredom or anxiety in relation to their past performing experiences (e.g., Kyle describing school performances as "not chill" and "super stressful", Dexter suggesting he did not know how to make chorus "not boring", Jack expressing frustration and anxiety that students would need to perform alone for the teacher if they missed a required concert). Prior research has established the constructs of anxiety and boredom as opposites of the flow experience (e.g., Allison & Duncan, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975).

Nonetheless, the participants occasionally described some of the attentional characteristics of flow during music listening and dancing, specifically, a distorted sense of the passage of time and a feeling of immersion in the activity. The finding that music listening can result in those characteristics of flow is consistent with prior research linking music listening, flow, mindfulness, and attention (Diaz, 2013). Notably, the present study was with non-music students, whereas the previous research by Diaz (2013)

was conducted with undergraduate- and graduate-level musicians. The similar findings between the two disparate populations lends support to the idea that focus of attention during enjoyable musical experiences is an invariant constituent of the enjoyment experience.

During enjoyable musical experiences, participants also felt ownership toward the music, perhaps due to a sense of control that focused attention and situationally-preferred emotions provided. A sense of ownership toward the music resulted in a feeling of connectedness to the music. Reciprocally, a feeling of connectedness to the music could lead to participants' feeling of ownership. The finding that ownership is a main component of enjoyment supports previous research that attributed student enjoyment to a sense of ownership (DeVries, 2011; Koops, 2017; Koops & Keppen, 2015; Santa, 1998).

The participants in this study placed considerable importance on their musical selections as related to their identity, which is consistent with previous research concerning the role of music in the lives of adolescents (Rentfrow, 2012). When participants were enjoying musical experiences, they perceived those experiences to be outward expressions of their identity. MacDonald, Hargreaves, and Miell (2002) suggested that deciding what music to listen to was a way of announcing to the world "who you are" (p. 1). The way people define themselves related to music, known as *identities in music* (IIM) was evident in participants' experiences of musical enjoyment. Participants would frequently label themselves as "a rock person" or "not a country person", defining some of their identity through their music preferences.

Musical preference seemed to be intertwined with musical identity, which was in turn reinforced by enhanced feelings of connectedness to and ownership of the music. Those findings are consistent with the findings of Hargreaves and Marshall (2003), which suggested that a sense of ownership is something adolescents enjoy about music experiences, both inside and outside of school. For the participants in this study, musical preference acted as a "badge of identity" (MacDonald et al., 2002, p. 17) that helped to develop their identity further. Abril and Flowers (2007) found strong correlations between musical preference and identity.

Another aspect of musical identity that warrants further investigation was participants' conception of musicality compared to unmusicality. Prior research related to musical identity has explored identity as musicians or as singers (e.g., Joyce, 2003; Lamont, 2002; Shaw, 2016). However, none of the participants in this study identified as musicians at all, including those with prior musical training. Additionally, few of the participants were initially willing to identify as musical until asked to consider whether they were 'un-musical', at which point they often begrudgingly claimed they were "a little bit musical". Those findings support earlier work that students often do not fit neatly into the categories of musical or non-musical (Lamont et al., 2003), even among students who do not participate in school music classes.

When participants were enjoying musical experiences, they expressed a desire for continued engagement. These findings are consistent with those of Koops (2012, 2017) and Koops and Kuebel (2018), which indicated that children who were enjoying a musical activity engaged in continuation responses such as asking to do an activity again

or acting reluctant for the activity to end. The participants consistently described a phenomenon during music listening in which their continuation desire was so strong that they listened until they were no longer enjoying the music. Despite an awareness that they would eventually grow to dislike the music, participants repeatedly set themselves up for future dislike because their continuation response was so strong.

In those instances, participants would give preference to the short-term pleasure in favor of long-term displeasure. That stands in contrast to typical emotion regulation, which often results in long-term pleasant feelings that result from embracing and processing short-term unpleasant feelings.

Discussion of Structural Synthesis

Both emotion regulation and attention regulation were associated with enjoyable musical experiences for the participants. As such, a precipitating experience for enjoyment was that music evoked specific emotions or attentional focus. Additionally, participants assigned basic emotions such as happiness or sadness that they perceived music to connote, which supports prior research that listeners consistently agree on perceived emotions in music (Gabrielsson, 2002; Schubert, 2013). However, participants specifically reported enjoyment when the perceived emotion matched their desired emotion, which may indicate that their mood was directly influenced by the music.

Contrary to prior research that suggested listeners enjoy sad music (Eerola, Vuoskoski, Peltola, Putkinen, & Schäfer, 2018; Hunter, Schellenberg, & Griffith, 2011; Kawakami, Furukawa, & Okanoya, 2014; Vuoskoski, Thompson, McIlwain, & Eerola, 2016), the participants in this study generally avoided sad music because it made them

feel sad, even if only for a moment. That finding seems to contradict an assertion by Lehmann (1997) that emotional experiences with music are most deeply felt by those with experience making music, since the participants in this study were so influenced by the perceived emotion of the music that they avoided music with certain connoted emotions altogether.

While some of the participants acknowledged that *others* might enjoy listening to sad music (e.g., after the end of a romantic relationship), they did not seek out sad music themselves to precipitate enjoyment. They instead sought out music they described with adjectives such as "calm" or "chill" to aid in the processing of unpleasant experiences. It was common for participants to describe an experience of musical enjoyment (e.g., selecting calm music to process sadness) while simultaneously asserting that they had never actively or explicitly sought that experience. That paradox may be related to participants' reliance on gut instinct (Gigerenzer, 2007) for music selection in lieu of systematic decision-making.. However, future research is needed to explore this seeming contradiction that was presented in the data.

One selection criterion that participants referenced frequently was the degree to which the music evoked referential memories, whether through the content of the lyrics, the social experiences surrounding the first or repeated listening of the music, or association with the musician or a specific performance (i.e., a live concert). Belfi, Karlan, and Tranel (2016) compared the vividness of music-evoked memories with the vividness of memories evoked by other triggers, and found that music-evoked memories were more vivid than other memories. That explanation could contribute to the

enjoyment that participants derived from the referential memories they associated with music. The findings of the present study are also consistent with previous research that listeners experience strong connectedness and nostalgia to certain music, which in turn contributes to feelings of enjoyment due to fond memories (Barrett et al., 2010; Chou & Lien, 2010).

Preference and familiarity also led to participants' experience of musical enjoyment, particularly when music matched their pre-established preferences. The intertwining of musical preference, familiarity, and emotional response is well-established (Droe, 2006; C. S. Pereira et al., 2011). However, consistent with prior research, the present study found that if the music did not match pre-established preferences, added familiarity would not necessarily increase emotional response or enjoyment (Margulis et al., 2015; Price & Swanson, 1990). Participants' preference for certain music predicated their enjoyment and was determined by a complex system of social factors, gut feelings, prior experience, relatability to the music or performer, and familiarity that they could not clearly articulate.

The findings of the present study also revealed some structural activities that extended Koops' (2017) observations of 4- to 7-year-old to early adolescents. Similar to the participants in Koops' study, the participants in this study also responded physically to the music, by dancing, bobbing their heads, moving their hands, or singing along. When they experienced musical enjoyment, the participants in the present study were more likely to continue that musical activity, similar to the young children in Koops'

study. They also expressed that while familiarity and matched preferences were vital to their enjoyment of music, they occasionally needed new music to maintain their interest.

However, contrary to Koops' (2017) findings, none of the participants in this study suggested that their enjoyment of music resulted in musical risk-taking. In fact, when describing situations when they might have taken musical risks (e.g., performing for friends or in a concert, learning a new instrument, or learning about music generally), the conversation often turned to topics that suggested low self-efficacy related to musical ability. For example, Amy repeatedly suggested that she got embarrassed when she sang in front of others, and as a result, stopped sharing her singing. While embarrassment could be linked to other constructs besides self-efficacy, it implies risk of some kind. Embarrassment, combined with her reluctance to characterize herself as a singer, her insistence that she could never pass an audition for the school musical, and her hesitancy to even mention her singing in the first place suggest low self-efficacy. According to Bandura (2010), "people who believe they can exercise control over potential threats do not conjure up apprehensive thoughts and hence are not distressed by them" (p. 2). If Amy experienced high self-efficacy related to her singing, she would likely not express those indicators of self-doubt.

Additionally, while Koops (2017) found that children enjoyed a balance of structure and freedom, the participants in this study did not suggest that their musical enjoyment was related to structure at all. They instead described enjoyable musical situations as those where they had complete agency, ownership, and choice. Those differences may be related to developmental differences between pre-adolescents and

adolescents. The differences may also be attributable to social differences such as self-defining as musical or unmusical. Additional explanations could include the differences between formal and informal music learning, or the differences between school and outside-of-school music settings. Further research is needed to explore the seeming discrepancies between Koops' (2017) findings and those of the present study.

Limitations to Present Research

Occasionally students would adjust their language to include the word "enjoy" or they would answer with something related to "enjoyment", perhaps because they expected that to be the 'correct' answer. Since participants knew that enjoyment of music was the central phenomenon of the study, they may have deliberately included references to it in their responses. For that reason, I would encourage readers to interpret with caution direct references to the central phenomenon by the participants. At the same time, I perceived that participants referenced enjoyment explicitly because they had not spent time prior to this study considering the definition of enjoyment or what constituted feelings of musical enjoyment. Perhaps, musical enjoyment was so ubiquitous for them that they had a difficult time not using the term itself in its own definition.

Other challenges faced during the completion of the study included gaining access to the students to conduct interviews. Principals who were approached about allowing me to conduct this study expressed concerns about students being taken from classes, students being interviewed one-on-one, and the time commitment necessary to complete the study. Because the research site used in this study had some unique characteristics (e.g., ensemble beginning age, affluence, participant demography), readers should

consider those characteristics when transferring the results of the study to their own situations. At the same time, many of the constructs that arose in this study were consistent with prior research.

Additionally, it should be noted that recent research has identified socioeconomic status as a common barrier to elective music education (Elpus, 2014; Elpus & Abril, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2006; Kinney, 2008, 2019). In the community of the research site in the present study, however, socioeconomic status was not a barrier to school music participation due to the higher than average median individual income ($75,000). So, although the community was not representative of the average suburb in terms of median income, that particular barrier may also not have been salient in students decision-making process regarding school music offerings.

Due to district policies, participants were occasionally interviewed in groups, which may have influenced some of the responses that they provided regarding their experiences. Group interviews seemed to provide a more comfortable atmosphere for students to share and to recall experiences based on the recollections of others, which was consistent with prior research involving children (Eder & Fingerson, 2002; Flewitt, 2014). Flewitt (2014) suggested that group interviews might be a more relaxed setting for children than situations where they are one-on-one with an adult, especially one who is unknown to them. However, because children share differently in a group (O'Reilly & Dogra, 2017), it was also valuable to hear their perspective individually as well. All of the participants were interviewed individually at some point except two, Amy and Danielle, who were interviewed as a pair due to attendance and scheduling necessities.

Amy and Danielle were friends and were comfortable both agreeing and disagreeing with each other. All participants were interviewed as part of a group at some point as well. This format gave me the opportunity to take note of differences and contradictions in participants' responses between individual and group interviews. However, participants did not substantially change their responses when they were in group settings. They seemed comfortable disagreeing with their peers if a description did not match their experience. However, participants seemed to initiate conversation more readily in individual compared to group interview formats. In the group interview, participants seemed to wait for someone else to initiate the conversation. As such, readers might interpret the findings with those limitations in mind.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on some of the challenges faced during the completion of the study, future research could pursue a variety of avenues. One future study might involve students of the same age group, but utilize other qualitative research methods such as observations of musical engagement, extended individual interviews, artifact collection, or interviews with parents and teachers.

Another study might involve even younger students in a district where the decision to join ensemble music classes is made at an earlier age. The most common starting grades for instrumental music are fourth, fifth, and sixth grades (Delzell & Doerksen, 1998; Doerksen & Delzell, 2000; Gillespie & Hamann, 1998; Hartley & Porter, 2009). In that way, the school district beginning elective music classes in seventh grade made the site of this study somewhat unique, although it allowed for older students

to be interviewed who might be able to articulate descriptions of their experiences more fully. However, because students frequently make the decision to enroll in music classes at those younger ages, it would be beneficial to gain the perspective of students as young as eight- or nine-years-old as well, which could add to the research conducted by Delzell and Leppla (1992) regarding instrument selection. Additionally, that line of research would further help to fill a gap in existing research between the enjoyment of music by preschool and elementary students (Koops, 2017; Koops & Kuebel, 2018) and middle and high school students (e.g., Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Cassie, 2011).

Another avenue of research would involve creating a survey based on the structures and textures that were uncovered in this study, so as to statistically generalize to a broader population of students not involved in music education. Such a study could examine whether the structures of enjoyment of music that emerged from this study are consistent with a larger population. With a Likert-type scale, students could rate the degree to which the themes that emerged in this study apply to their own experiences. Researchers might gain a broader picture of how students enjoy music outside of school music classes, and as a result, be better informed on how to engage those students in music course offerings, including large ensemble classes as well as alternative music courses. Additionally, using the structures and textures of musical enjoyment that were found in this study, researchers could examine whether there are statistically significant differences in the experience of musical enjoyment for music students compared to non-music students.

Implications for Music Education

The findings of this study provide insight into the way that students who were not enrolled in music classes engage with and enjoy music in their lives. Part of the traditional viewpoint on students who are not enrolled in music is that they are "musically uninterested" (Gates, 1991, p. 15). Additionally, many of the studies that have been conducted on student enrollment in music classes have tended to focus on the students who are already enrolled (e.g., Elpus, 2015, 2017; Elpus & Abril, 2011) or on the factors that contribute to their decision to enroll or persist in music (e.g., Kinney, 2008, 2010, 2019; J. L. Stewart, 2005). In this study, I chose to focus on the students who are not enrolled in music courses to specifically engage with their perspective on music.

Although the participants in this study did not consider themselves to be musical, they engaged with music in many activities covered in the National Standards for Music Education, particularly the standards for general music (NAfME, 2014). Frequently, participants discussed criteria for evaluating performances or artists. While participants did not necessarily have an extensive vocabulary to describe their criteria, it was clear that they had developed a system for distinction between selections, even when that system relied extensively on gut feelings or intuition (see Gigerenzer, 2007 for a full discussion of gut feelings and intuition).

Public perception of music programs seems to oscillate between music as a vocation (Lamont & Maton, 2008; Miksza, 2013) and music as a beneficial educational experience for every child, especially with the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act featuring music as part of a well-rounded education (Darrow, 2016). However, the

perception that music education is especially for the talented few seems to persist. Indeed, the participants in this study echoed low self-efficacy for music based on a perceived lack of talent, which is in line with prior research on students' predictions of success in music education (D. L. Campbell, 2009).

Music educators put forth the hope that their classes will inspire lifelong love of music, lifelong learning of music, and perhaps even the hope that some of the students will join the ranks of professional musicians (P. M. Jones, 2006). Music educators may hold that hope because they think fondly on their own journey toward music as a career (B. D. Jones & Parkes, 2010), or perhaps because the traditional model of master and apprentice that results in professional musicianship continues to remain prevalent in modern music education (Brenner, 2010; Burwell, 2013; Westerlund, 2006).

Alternately, we might approach music education not in the hopes that all of the students continue to love and perform music throughout their lives, but rather with the perspective that music is a valuable knowledge-set and provides experiences that help students to better understand the world. Music is an enjoyable and rewarding pursuit. Music can also present a balance of skill and challenge that results in optimal flow experiences. Additionally, based on the results of this study, music provides opportunities for students to regulate their emotions and moods, which is a valuable skill for adolescents to develop as they emotionally mature.

Since enjoyment is frequently cited by students as a motivation for beginning and continuing music education (P. S. Campbell, 1998; Duke et al., 1997; Gouzouasis et al., 2008; Hawkinson, 2015; Rife et al., 2001), it is important to engage students in enjoyable

music experiences. The findings of this study can help educators to understand what about music is enjoyable for students not enrolled in music courses so that we may better engage them in the study of music. Although enjoyment is not necessary for learning to occur, it is an indicator of whether students perceive a lesson to be going well (Gorard & See, 2011). Additionally, an emphasis on enjoyment in a lesson can give students the sense that their voice is valued and that the learning is for their benefit (Hopkins, 2008).

Based on the findings of this study, music educators might consider implementing additional music offerings. The participants in this study enjoyed engaging with music through listening, singing along, and dancing, among other activities. Participants noted that school music courses were not inclusive of instrumentation outside of traditional large ensembles. Additionally, they further expressed enjoyment of opportunities for individual creative agency. Those two structures of enjoyment suggest additional tracks for music education curriculum.

If elementary music education allowed the focus to be on establishing a foundation of music literacy, both visual and aural, mirroring curriculum for learning to read, it would not be unreasonable to expect students to leave elementary school at the end of five years of music study with a lasting understanding of notation and pitch discrimination. That would lay the foundation for students to be prepared to begin one of the three tracks: large ensemble participation, small ensemble participation, and music consumption. The large ensemble track, as it does now in the school music curriculum, would focus on the establishment of technical skills and on being a part of a larger endeavor, both immediately as a part of a group and as part of a tradition extending back

centuries. The small ensemble track would maintain an emphasis on informal music learning (Green, 2002), including composition, improvisation, and especially independent musicianship, perhaps through basic keyboard and guitar instruction (mirroring common instrumentation in current popular music). The music consumption track would train students to be critical consumers and to analyze music that they hear for elements of unity, variety, form, and so on.

By establishing a solid foundation through these tracks in middle school, there would be greater opportunities for specialized options in high school. In addition to large group performance, courses could be offered that target music consumption, small group performance, and perhaps even music production, including composing, arranging, and audio editing. These would no longer need to be introductory classes only but would instead be part of a sequenced curriculum.

Further, an emphasis on music consumption in the curriculum might be a way to incorporate vernacular music into the classroom more organically, rather than trying to shoehorn it into the large ensemble format. In the current model, it is difficult for publishers to keep up with the demands of a constantly circulating pop chart. When they do succeed, arrangements are often watered-down and unfulfilling for the very same students who begged to perform a certain piece in the first place. That is not to say that large ensembles should not be allowed to experience vernacular music, simply that there are perhaps other avenues as well. The participants in the present study primarily interacted with music as consumers of music. Therefore, it would logically follow that we might start where students are already and teach them from there.

Additionally, it became clear through the present study that the participants did not need to be "taught" how to enjoy music as previous scholars have asserted (Fuller-Maitland, 1926; Gunn, 1939; Kohut & Levarie, 1990; Schneider, 1921). As a result, a more contemporary approach to music appreciation might include giving students the vocabulary to articulate what they perceive in music listening without elevating or diminishing any particular style of music.

However, to implement such curricular change in school music programs, teacher education programs would need to expand to specifically address pedagogy and curriculum for formats outside of the traditional large ensemble. Jorgensen (2003) asserted that university music students already have many demands on their time, and therefore additional coursework may not be feasible in teacher education programs.

Conclusions

Understanding how students enjoy music and what about music they enjoy can allow music educators to engage with students outside their classrooms in a deeper way. This study explored the activities that lead to musical enjoyment, the conditions for musical enjoyment, and what is experienced during musical enjoyment to better understand the influence of music on non-music students' lives. The musical activities that students enjoyed are very similar to previously documented indicators of musical enjoyment: listening, dancing, singing, moving, sharing, and creating music. Participants' perspectives and experiences challenged the notion that students are uninvolved in school music because they are uninterested in music. Instead, it would appear that the music offerings at their school do not resonate with the ways they would enjoy learning music

and what about music they would enjoy learning. Additionally, the similarities between the way the students in this study engaged with and enjoyed music are similar to the ways musical enjoyment has been described in extant research, suggesting that so-called non-music students may not be as different from music students as previously thought.

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Appendix A: Student Interview Protocols

Musical Enjoyment Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Research Topic #1: How do non-music students describe their experiences of musical enjoyment?

Research Topic #2: What musical experiences lead to enjoyment of music for 'non-music' students?

- How would you describe the feeling of enjoyment?
- How would you describe musical enjoyment?
- Can you tell me about an experience you've had when you felt enjoyment related to music?

- Do you enjoy listening to music? (Primer closed question)
- Do you enjoy playing any musical instruments? (primer closed question)
- What, if anything, do you enjoy about music
    - (Follow-up You mentioned you enjoy _____, would you tell me more about that?)
- What kinds of music do you enjoy?
    - You mentioned _____ is your favorite band/artist. What would you ask them about music if they were here?

Behavior

- What are some activities you enjoyed in past (elementary) music classes?
- What are some activities you did not enjoy in past music classes?
- What kinds of musical activities do you currently enjoy
    - Consider both inside and outside of school
- What activities would need to be offered in a music class for you to enroll?

Opinion

- What did you think of music classes in elementary school?
- What is your opinion of the music classes offered at your school currently?
- If you decided to enroll in a music class, what would you want to learn about?

Emotion

- Think back to a time music made you feel something. Would you tell me about those feelings?
- When you listen to your favorite music now, how does it make you feel?
- In what situations might you listen to music to feel certain emotions?
- In what situations might you listen to music *because* you feel certain emotions?

Knowledge

- What music classes are offered at your school?
- What music classes are offered at the high school?
- What opportunities do you know of for music participation outside of school?

Group Interview Protocol

Audio Elicitation: Students bring in music they enjoy and play/listen to it

- What are you feeling as you listen?
- What did you think about?

- What, if any, musical activities do kids enjoy together?
- What are kids' opinions of school music?

Appendix B: Approval to Conduct Research

Friday, February 15, 2019 at 2:21:58 PM Eastern Standard Time

Subject: Initial Submission Approved for #2018B0465
Date: Friday, February 15, 2019 at 1:09:36 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: Buck-IRB
To: Gillespie, Robert
CC: yackley.4@osu.edu

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Behavioral and Social Sciences Institutional Review Board

300 Research Administration building
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1063

orrp.osu.edu

02/15/2019

Study Number: 2018B0465
Study Title: Enjoyment of music by non-participants in school music

Type of Review: Initial Submission

Review Method: Expedited

Date of IRB Approval: 02/15/2019
Date of IRB Approval Expiration: 02/15/2020

Expedited category: #6, #7

Dear Robert Gillespie,

The Ohio State Behavioral and Social Sciences IRB **APPROVED** the above referenced research.

In addition, the following were also approved for this study:

- Children (permission of one parent)

As Principal Investigator, you are responsible for ensuring that all individuals assisting in the conduct of the study are informed of their obligations for following the IRB-approved protocol and applicable regulations, laws, and policies, including the obligation to report any problems or potential noncompliance with the requirements or determinations of the IRB. Changes to the research (e.g., recruitment procedures, advertisements, enrollment numbers, etc.) or informed consent process must be approved by the IRB before implemented, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects.

This approval is issued under The Ohio State University's OHRP Federalwide Assurance #00006378 and is valid until the expiration date listed above. ***Without further review, IRB approval will no longer be in effect on the expiration date.*** To continue the study, a continuing review application must be approved before the expiration date to avoid a lapse in IRB approval and the need to stop all research activities. A final study report must be provided to the IRB once all research activities involving human subjects have ended.

Records relating to the research (including signed consent forms) must be retained and available for audit for at least 5 years after the study is closed. For more information, see university policies, Institutional Data and Research Data.

Human research protection program policies, procedures, and guidance can be found on the ORRP website.

Daniel Strunk, PhD, Chair
Ohio State Behavioral and Social Sciences IRB

Appendix C: Parental Permission for Child's Participation in Research

This is a parental permission form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you permit your child to participate.

Your child's participation is voluntary.

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to discuss the study with your friends and family and to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to permit your child to participate. If you permit your child to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and will receive a copy of the form.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to explore the enjoyment of music by students who are note enrolled in elective music classes at their school.

Procedures/Tasks: Participants will engage in interviews with the researcher, which may include group interviews with some or all of the other participants in the study. To aid with analysis of the interviews, interviews may be audio- or video-recorded. Video recordings will not be viewed by anyone except the researcher. They will only be used to confirm the transcription of the interviews and to review non-verbal cues such as facial expressions and gestures related to musical enjoyment. Non-identifying clips of the audio recordings from interviews may be used in professional presentations of the research.

Duration: Interviews will be conducted over the course of approximately 3 weeks. I will negotiate with teachers and administrators to make sure that participating in the interviews will not substantially impact students' school work.

Your child may leave the study at any time. If you or your child decides to stop participation in the study, there will be no penalty and neither you nor your child will lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University.

Risks and Benefits: There are not expected to be more than minimal risks in this study, as participants will only be discussing enjoyment of music. They might benefit by learning more about how they enjoy music and what it is about that music that they enjoy. Their responses might also contribute to the future of music education and could help shape how and what music is taught in schools.

Confidentiality: All recordings from the interviews will be stored on a secure hard drive and will not be viewed by anyone except the researcher. Pseudonyms will be assigned to each student and their true identity will not be labelled with the collected data.
Efforts will be made to keep your child's study-related information confidential. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your child's participation in this study may be disclosed if required by state law. Also, your child's records may be reviewed by the following groups (as applicable to the research):

- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies;
- The Ohio State University Institutional Review Board or Office of Responsible Research Practices;
- The sponsor, if any, or agency (including the Food and Drug Administration for FDA-regulated research) supporting the study.

Will my child's de-identified information be used or shared for future research?

No.

Incentives: No incentives are being offered to participants by the researcher.

Participant Rights:

You or your child may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you or your child is a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you and your child choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights your child may have as a participant in this study.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Contacts and Questions:

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study, or you feel your child has been harmed as a result of study participation, you may contact Aaron Yackley at yackley.4@osu.

For questions about your child's rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

Signing the parental permission form:

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form and I am aware that I am being asked to provide permission for my child to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to permit my child to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form**.**

Printed name of subject

Printed name of person authorized to provide permission for subject

Signature of person authorized to provide permission for subject

Relationship to the subject

Date and time **AM/PM**

Investigator/Research Staff

I have explained the research to the participant or his/her representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

Printed name of person obtaining consent

Signature of person obtaining consent

Date and time **AM/PM**

Appendix D: Assent to Participate in Research

- You are being asked to be in a research study. Studies are done to find better ways to treat people or to understand things better.
- This form will tell you about the study to help you decide whether or not you want to participate.
- You should ask any questions you have before making up your mind. You can think about it and discuss it with your family or friends before you decide.
- It is okay to say "No" if you don't want to be in the study. If you say "Yes" you can change your mind and quit being in the study at any time without getting in trouble.
- If you decide you want to be in the study, an adult (usually a parent) will also need to give permission for you to be in the study.

1. What is this study about?

This study is about your enjoyment of music.

2. What will I need to do if I am in this study?

If you are in this study, you will participate in interviews about how you enjoy music and what you enjoy about music. You may be asked to bring in music that you particularly enjoy and talk about it.

3. How long will I be in the study?

The interviews will be held once a week for approximately three weeks, depending on the specific school schedule.

4. Can I stop being in the study?

You may stop being in the study at any time.

5. What bad things might happen to me if I am in the study?

There are no bad things that we think might happen to you if you are in the study, since we will just be talking about enjoyment and music.

6. What good things might happen to me if I am in the study?

You might learn more about what enjoyment of music means to you and help music teachers decide what to teach and how to teach in the future.

7. Will I be given anything for being in this study?

You will not be given anything for being in this study

8. Who can I talk to about the study?

For questions about the study you may contact Aaron Yackley at yackley.4@osu.edu.

To discuss other study-related questions with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

Signing the assent form

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form. I have had a chance to ask questions before making up my mind. I want to be in this research study.

_____ _____ **AM/PM**

Signature or printed name of subject **Date and time**

Investigator/Research Staff

I have explained the research to the participant before requesting the signature above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

_____ _____

Printed name of person obtaining assent **Signature of person obtaining assent**

_____ **AM/PM**

Date and time

This form must be accompanied by an IRB approved parental permission form signed by a parent/guardian.