Music History Education

Music History Education in Ontario Elementary Schools

By

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Abstract

This study investigates how a small sample of elementary music educators design meaningful lessons that include music history as a component of their music education pedagogy. The subject area of music is one where pre-service teacher education, school board supports, and professional development is greatly lacking, which directly results in the sparse teaching of music history education. Consequently, the goal of this research inquiry was to investigate and improve upon the current pedagogy surrounding the teaching of music history in Ontario elementary schools by compiling information on best practice methods. A qualitative research approach was used and data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Findings report that the successful integration of music history education at the elementary level depends on the teacher’s knowledge and expertise in the subject area of music. When music history education is taught in a context-specific way and is directly related to what is being learned in the music classroom, students can respond positively to the content being taught. It was also discovered that inviting musical experts into the classroom is an effective way for an inexperienced music teacher to expose students to different types of music, musical cultures, and the history of those cultures.

Key Words:
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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Research Context

Music Education in Ontario is highly performance based. From the elementary level up until the end of high school, there are four major “overall expectations” that are consistently outlined by the Ontario Curriculum: instrumental playing, vocal development, compositional practices, and the teaching of basic theoretical musical concepts (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009 & 2010). These are the main knowledge requirements that are expected to be achieved by students. Considering this, there is one more expectation outlined within the Ontario Curriculum that students are required to learn and that is music history. However, the way this subject is covered in the curriculum is quite minimal. From grades 1-6, there are only one to two specific expectations per grade, solely dedicated to the teaching and understanding of historical concepts in music (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009 & 2010).

1.1 Research Problem

A study conducted in 2008 by The Coalition for Music Education asked the question: "Who teaches music in your school?" (Whyte and Mould, 2011, p.31). The findings reported that 38 percent of Canadian elementary schools who responded to this study stated that the music teacher at their school has no musical background (Whyte and Mould, 2011). Another study carried out in 2010 by Hill Strategies Research reported that, 58 percent of Ontario elementary music teachers have no prior musical training and or background (Hill Strategies Research, 2010). According to the research, the number of inexperienced elementary music teachers across Canada and specifically Ontario is
quite high. The questions that arises is, how can a balanced music program be taught in the classroom when most elementary music educators do not have the basic qualifications to teach music?

Music History Education is rarely integrated into an elementary student’s classroom music experience (Whyte and Mould, 2011). Understanding the historical content behind the music can not only heighten student comprehension of repertoire but it can also provide a stronger connection with the music students are performing (Edwards, 1998). Making music history resonate with students is all about personalization. If a teacher has a good understanding of what genres of music students like, they have an opportunity to create a music history program that caters to the student’s interests.

Traditional teachings of the life of Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart are the classical history approaches incorporated by many music teachers (Whale, 2008). However, the way these histories are taught are often quite dry, disconnected from students’ own identities and experiences, and students lose interest quickly (Byrd, 2008).

Because there are only one to two specific expectations in the Ontario Music Curriculum dedicated to the teachings of music history through grades 1-6 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009 & 2010), it is easy for educators of music to overlook this part of the music education experience. Section C3.2 of The Arts Curriculum Grade 1-8 outlines that students should: “compare some aspects of the music of one culture and/or historical period with aspects of the music of another culture and/or historical period (e.g., *compare selected characteristics of music from the baroque and classical periods, using a Venn diagram...*)” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009). This expectation is a valuable opportunity for teachers to be responsive to students’ cultural identities by teaching, for example, about the history of Turkish Arabesque music and/or comparing
that to Persian Ney music. Instead of solely focusing on Eurocentric historical music examples.

Additionally, teachers who do make the effort to integrate music history into their music program commonly feel like they have an inherent obligation to teach students about classic composers or certain cultures of the past (Whale, 2008). Teachers less commonly recognize the potential of teaching students the history of jazz or hip hop, for example, as a component of their music curriculum program. A qualified music teacher, who has been musically trained at the post-secondary level, would have a greater mobility with the Ontario Music Curriculum, by being able to insert culturally responsive alternatives (such as the Arabesque music or hip hop examples) while still meeting curriculum expectations (Whyte and Mould, 2011). Music history education should not begin and end with the teachings of classical composers and cultures of the past, it should be broadened to encompass all genres of past music. Promoting student engagement, interest, and passion about the history behind the music is key. The generic Eurocentric music history lesson is sometimes not enough to spark intrigue amongst students in this day and age.

1.2 Research Purpose

In view of this problem, the goal of my research is to investigate and improve upon the current pedagogy surrounding the teaching of music history in Ontario Elementary Schools by compiling information on best practice methods. I conducted a qualitative study that critically looked at previous literature on the topic of music history education, as well as, the Ontario Curriculum documents for The Arts. The purpose of this research was to learn how music teachers are approaching the teaching of music
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history in the classroom so that findings can inform professional preparation and development in this area of music education.

1.3 Research Questions

The main question that guided this inquiry was: How is a small sample of elementary music educators designing meaningful lessons that include music history as a component of their music education pedagogy?

Subsidiary questions included:

- What are the primary learning goals these educators want to impart upon their students by teaching music history to them and why do they feel these goals are relevant to students?
- What outcomes do they observe from students in terms of how they engage the performance aspect of music education?
- What range of factors and experiences have supported these teachers’ interest and capacity to do this kind of work?

1.4 Reflexive Positioning Statement

As someone who has been playing music since her elementary years and has had little exposure to music history education until her undergraduate degree, I have a vested interest and curiosity in learning how other teachers go about educating students on the topic of music history. I was exposed to very little music history instruction throughout my elementary, middle school, and high school years. It was not until my undergraduate degree when I double majored in Music and History that I had to study music history in greater depth. I was fortunate enough to study under internationally renowned violinist Jacques Israelievitch who developed a way to incorporate my love for history with my playing. Before learning to play a piece of music, Professor Israelievitch would have me look up the history behind the piece I was playing, including background on the
composer and the historical period. This was revolutionary to my personal progression and learning as a Violist. Not only was I able to capture the right type of emotion in my playing but I was able to connect with the pieces I was playing on a whole other level.

Studying under Professor Israelievitch made me begin to question as to why I was never exposed to this type of “dual teaching” before. Why is it that the history behind the music is not as valued as the playing? I began to do some preliminary research on the topic and to date there is a limited amount of research on the subject of music history education in general. There is a significant knowledge gap and new research will certainly be welcomed in this area. Especially for the general music teacher that may not be as musically trained as someone who has attained an undergraduate degree in music. The reality of the matter is that most elementary music teachers have had little or no prior training in the field of music (Hill Strategies Research, 2010). If anything, it is important that supporting resources be developed to assist these general music teachers so they are comfortable with the content.

Considering this, I would like to investigate if there are ways to improve upon the current teaching practices of music history in Ontario schools. This way students will have the ability to develop a strong background and understanding of how music history plays a role in their development as musicians. Furthermore, thinking beyond the public school system, if students were to go on and pursue an undergraduate degree in music, the implementation of music history in their public school experience can help prepare them better for their studies at the undergraduate level.

1.5 Preview of Whole

To respond to my research questions, I conducted a qualitative research study using purposeful sampling to interview four educators about their instructional strategies
for meaningfully integrating music history in classroom learning. In chapter 2, I review the literature in the areas of music education and how this affects the teaching of music history. In chapter 3, I elaborate on the research design. In chapter 4, I will report my research findings and discuss their significance in light of the literature, and in chapter 5 I speak to the implications of the findings for the educational community and for my own practice as a beginning teacher.
Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This review of literature will examine the research that has been conducted on music education and music history by analyzing the work that has been completed on the following subject matters: 1. Perspective of the Music Historian, 2. Professional Music Teachers and General Music Teachers, 3. Musicianship or a Diverse Music Experience: Can we have both? 4. Multicultural Music Instruction, 5. Music Instruction and Area of Study: Can students have a choice? 6. The Ontario Arts Curriculum. The research that has been produced in the fields of music education concerning: musical intelligences, importance of musical play, creativity in musical education, as well as, the developmental benefits of music instruction, will not be addressed in this review of literature in detail. These perspectives are valid and important but they do not pertain directly to the qualitative study I am pursuing.

The primary goal of this qualitative research study is to investigate and improve upon the current pedagogy surrounding the teaching of music history in Ontario elementary schools. The review of literature will aid in my exploration of best practice methods and will depict the research that has been conducted by a wide array of scholars and classroom teachers. The research conducted in the field of music history being taught in Ontario elementary schools is limited in the sense that there are no specific articles, books, or thesis’ addressing this topic in detail. Instead, the articles, books, and thesis’ that were chosen for this literature review include brief passages generally addressing the benefits of teaching music history in schools. These passages have been compiled and are presented in a way that argues for more detailed research in the field of music history education to be undertaken.
2.1 Perspective of the Music Historian

Wegman (2012) describes music history as a subject area whose authenticity has been continuously questioned and debated amongst scholars of music. The conflict surrounds the overall validity of music history. It begins with the historian and how their inclinations, biases, and predispositions are imposed upon the primary documents history has left behind for them to interpret. Secondly, the debate extends to educators, students, and other scholars inferences with the historian’s explanation of a past event. They too will bring personal criticisms to a piece of history based on their own knowledge and background, unconsciously perpetuating biases. Wegman states that:

In recent years, historical musicology has come close to critiquing itself out of business. Scholars have argued ever more vigorously that the pursuit of music history is driven- and its results contaminated- by the values, creative impulses, dreams, illusions, and neuroses of our time. Historical inquire, they concur, is fundamentally creative, expressive of who we are. Nor could it be otherwise (Wegman, 2012, p. 40).

This issue of bias in historical research is a problem found with all types of histories, studies, and research explored in any type of field. Wegman not only addresses this problem of bias but notes the beauty of personal interpretation. Studying the past can be an artistic process involving innovation, expression, and originality (Wegman, 2012). The past is essentially open to varying degrees of perspectives and outlooks (Ibid).

Wegman specifically states that it is the music historian’s duty to sort through and make sense of all of this in order to have an event “accurately” portrayed (Ibid).

Considering this, if given a solid framework, elementary music students can be engaging with historical material in the same nature as a historian. Children naturally attempt to make meaningful connections on a personal level with the majority of information they are presented with. Research conducted by Hash (2010) reveals that
students who have the chance to explore the history behind a musical composition of their choice, experience more intrinsic learning opportunities, than those who do not get this type of exposure. In turn, this can aid students in their overall comprehension of music and musical pieces (Propst, 2003).

However, the research shows that this type of elementary music experience is highly dependent on how much exposure a new teacher receives in music during their teacher education method courses in university (Propst, 2003). It has been discovered that, “classroom teacher’s perceptions of the usefulness of the experiences gained in music methods courses…have a direct impact on the types of music concepts and activities included in the classroom and the time spent engaging in these activities” (Propst, 2003, p.317). Research has also found that the majority of music fundamentals and method courses in teacher education programs primarily focus on educating new teachers on how to teach performance skills, notation, and music theory (Baker and Saunders, 1994; Kinder, 1998; Price and Burnsed, 1989).

Researchers Baker and Saunders (1994), Bryson (1983), and Stroud (1981) conducted studies asking elementary classroom teachers what they are comfortable teaching in music and in all three studies the majority of teachers answered: singing, listening skills, and basic rhythmic skills (Propst, 2003). The skills that these teachers stated they are comfortable in teaching directly align with what they were taught during their teacher education method courses in university. Not anywhere is music history mentioned as an essential learning component. Thus, based on the research conducted so far, it seems that it is a rarity to see educators integrating any sort of historical element into their elementary music classroom.
Finally, the results of a study conducted by Hash (2010) shows out of his 116 participants (all preservice elementary classroom teachers) most of the “respondents do not feel comfortable teaching music as a subject, believe music should be taught by a specialist, and disagree that classroom teachers should be capable of teaching music. Results also suggest that participants regard music as less important than other subjects…however, agree that music can improve achievement in other disciplines and are supportive of music integration [specifically in the study of history]” (Hash, 2010, p. 6).

In light of this research, the comfort level of teaching music is quite low amongst elementary teachers. Additionally, the concepts that most feel prepared to teach in a classroom setting are what they have learned in their music teacher education method courses. This means that elementary student’s exposure to music is limited, unless there is a professional music teacher working at the school. Although, the research states the comfort level is low amongst elementary educators teaching the subject of music, it is interesting to note that they do believe in its overall importance and its integration various subject areas, including history.

Considering this, Dahlhaus (1983) believes that music history is divided into two categories: historical facts and musical facts. A historical fact is a fact that is an integral part of a greater historical story. A musical fact is based upon individual identity.

Music historical facts…are subject to two basic conditions. As historical facts they are bound to serve the function of making up historical narrative or descriptions of historical structures; as musical facts…they are equally dependent upon the prevailing notion of a given age, region or social stratum as to what constitutes music…“History” [then], is simply whatever impinges significantly upon ‘Man’, whose nature is defined by the ‘three potencies’ – religion, culture, and the state… (Dahlhaus, 1983, p. 38, 51).
Dahlhaus’ definition of *musical facts* (which are closely linked to music history) are shaped by the origins and experiences of an individual and broader community. Both Wegman (2012) and Dahlhaus’ (1983) research agrees that history does become individualized, no matter what the circumstance. They both describe this in different ways but essentially they have come to the same conclusion. *Historical facts* lay the groundwork for personal interpretation. Knowing the date, era, and why a piece of music was composed are *historical facts*. If one digs deeper, however, into the composers life, researching his/her interests, habits, life choices, and the emotional reasons as to why a piece was composed. Fragments of the researcher will become infused with that historical material. Turning *historical facts* into *musical facts*. This cyclical process is dependent upon personal choice and what *historical facts* an individual gravitates to. By looking at music history through this type of lens, it is easy to see how integrating this method of teaching at the elementary level would be a beneficial learning experience.

Everist (1999) adds to the discussion of music history and historical interpretation. He states that music and history have always been intertwined: when one studies music, one studies the history behind the music. Everist makes an interesting contribution to the discussion of historical interpretation. He insists that the musical culture a composition has originated from should be taken into consideration when someone is studying a piece of music (Everist, 1999). Everist uses the term, *canonic*, this is referring to the Western Canon. The Western Canon consists of a traditional set of classical texts, including movements in music and art, that are deemed as the most significant literary an artistic phenomenon’s to have impacted Western Culture (Everist,
The history of these traditional classical artistic texts shape what is learned and played by musicians all over the world. Some examples are: Beethoven’s V, Mozart’s Requiem, and Handel’s Messiah etc.

Everist (1999) does not discredit the Western Canon and canonic teachings, instead he criticizes its overall value in today’s society, suggesting that elements should be added, in order to reflect the current state of the arts, specifically music (Everist, 1999). He argues that the canon needs to be re-evaluated. To determine whether what is included is something that resonates with the society of today. He also asserts that the inclusion of musical cultures in the canon is something that should be incorporated within it, in order for individuals studying music to gain a more multicultural perspective (Everist, 1999).

Wegman, Dahlhaus, and Everist, are prominent musicologists who study the historiography of music and their debates on music historical education, biases in history, individual perspectives imposed upon historical facts, and reflexivity in musical historiography, seem to co-align with each other. However, each scholar begins their discussion of music history in the same way: analyzing the factors surrounding the individualization of history. Wegman, Dahlhaus, and Everist do not regard personal connection and interpretation towards a subject of music history as negative. Instead, they embrace personal intrigue and examine the elements that could affect the historical integrity of a piece of history.

Since music historians are having these debates, public school music teachers should be cognizant of these issues as well. The study of music history is clearly connected to the study of music. These musicologists would not be researching the
authenticity behind the subject area if there was not a level of importance placed upon its study. The inclusion of music history in a teacher’s music program is a beneficial tool that can help students better understand why certain musical compositions are still learned and studied. In Meyer’s research (1989) he expresses that everyone, in some capacity, is a historian. Individuals naturally gravitate towards learning about their own history, whether it is their heritage, or something of personal interest to them. It is a pattern of human nature and Meyer states that culture effects the types of history an individual takes an interest in, as well as, the types of music they are attracted to (Meyer, 1989). According to Meyer, history is all about relationships, understanding past experiences, and using that information to better inform oneself of the past.

To understand the world at all, to know that something is an event or object- that is, to segment and select, classify and relate- is to interpret experience. In this sense, all of us are historians. We may be more or less competent. But like Socrates or Caesar, St. Francis or Leonardo, Newton or Beethoven, we pattern our present, which of course includes not only the immediate and remote past but the envisaged future as well (Meyer, 1989, p. 71).

The music historian’s perspective is an important viewpoint to consider when thinking about including more music history education into a public school system music program. Not only does it legitimize the connection between music history and the subject of music, but it also brings other issues of pedagogical practice to light (Dahlhaus, 1983; Everest, 1999; Meyer, 1989; Wegman, 2012). Including, biases in history, individual perspectives imposed upon historical facts, and reflexivity in musical historiography. These are matters that come into play when historical research is conducted. When conducting any type of research project, students will evidently take ownership over any new-relevant information that they encounter. As an educator, it is important to allow them to individualize their historical experience, while consciously
informing them on how historical interpretation effects the gathering of historical facts vs. musical facts. If implemented regularly, this will add a whole other level of exploration to music education.

2.2 Professional Music Teachers and General Music Teachers

There are several discussions in the world of public school music education surrounding the topic of professional music teachers and general music teachers. The argument surrounds who will provide the best quality music education to the youth of today. Most educators and parents believe that having a professional music teacher in an elementary classroom is obviously the better choice. The majority of the research done on this topic supports that belief. It has been found that, “Elementary teachers [including general music teachers] are often uncomfortable teaching music and generally accept less responsibility for doing so when a music specialist is available” (Hash, 2010, p. 7-8). Moreover, Berke and Colwell (2004) discovered within their study that elementary school teachers and general music teachers who have had the opportunity to partake in professional development days on music education felt more comfortable taking on more music teaching responsibilities than others (Hash, 2010).

It is clear then that the professional music teacher and general music teacher debate is very one-sided. The research is in favor of the professional music teacher; however, there are not enough music specialists available in the field of education for every elementary school to have one (Parkes and Jones, 2012). Thus, more pedagogical guidance and support is needed when it comes to music education. Whether that is from professional development days, books, articles, or just talking with others who are in the same field. Being an elementary teacher and a general music teacher is challenging, especially if one wants to deliver a quality educational experience, and has not had any
prior musical training. On the whole, there is a feeling of general discontent when it comes to who is teaching music education to children in schools.

Whyte and Mould’s research (2011) outline that a strong music program begins with the teacher. They have discovered that there are too many general music teachers in the public school system trying to teach music to students (Whyte and Mould, 2011). Whyte and Mould have found that having a music teacher with no musical background in the classroom is not beneficial to the musical development of students (Whyte and Mould, 2011). It diminishes overall student success and interest in music (Whyte and Mould, 2011). Music is a subject area where unfamiliarity with the content is not something that can just be learned immediately. It does take some time. 38% of Canadian schools that responded to the question, “Who teaches music in your school?” (Whyte and Mould, 2011, p.31) answered that their music teacher has had no prior training in music. The statistic provided for Ontario elementary schools is not any better. 58% of Ontario elementary music teachers are found to have no musical training whatsoever (Whyte and Mould, 2011, p.31).

Whyte and Mould point out what they think needs to be done to improve the overall musical education experience for students in Canada. They state that more qualified music teachers need to be in the classroom, the ministry of education should be providing more professional development days for individuals who do not have a lot of knowledge surrounding the subject of music, and universities/teacher’s colleges should have some sort of preparatory course in music for teacher candidates (Whyte and Mould, 2011).

There is another aspect that needs to be brought forth to this discussion and that is the fact that there are not enough professional music educators in the field of education to
begin with (Woodford, 2002). A lot of individuals who study music at the undergraduate level go on to pursue a professional career in music performance. Some take their own private students, here and there, but that is it. Woodford (2002) found that students who study music at the undergraduate level have been “socialized initially to develop identities primarily as musicians and less as teachers” (Parkes and Jones, 2012, p. 103-104).

Furthermore, Parkes and Jones (2012) conducted a study where 270 undergraduate music students, located across seven major United States Universities completed an online questionnaire. The questions that were asked specifically addressed student’s post-graduate intentions, on whether they would go on to become a professional musician or a music teacher after their studies were complete. Out of the 270 undergraduate students who participated, 65% were in favor of choosing a career in music performance (Parkes and Jones, 2012, p. 101). More than half of undergraduate music students who partook in Parkes and Jones study did not choose music education. Now, this is an American study, however it provides good insight as to why professional music teachers are difficult to come by in the education system. Another perspective to this, is that it is quite challenging to have a profitable and sustainable musical career, in general. This discourages people (even if they truly love music) to study it at the undergraduate level because they are concerned of what will happen to them afterwards (Parkes and Jones, 2012). All these different factors need to be considered when thinking about why the number of general music teachers in Canada and Ontario is so high to begin with.

Hayes (2013) points out that there are a lot of well-trained musicians in North America but for some reason they are nowhere to be found in the education system. She
does not understand why this is and ponders on how music educators can further strengthen a student’s connection to music so they can go on to study it at the post-secondary level.

There are millions of trained musicians in our country, who were inspired by professional music educators. But where have they gone? How can we reawaken the joy of making music that once was in the hearts of those children, who are now adults? What can we do as music educators to go beyond community bands and choirs—to create in our communities family/multigenerational musical experiences? (Hayes, 2013, p.1).

Hayes bring up an interesting issue concerning music education. There simply are not enough professionally trained musicians wanting to be music teachers. It makes sense then that the number of general music teachers exceeds the number of professional music teachers. Something definitely needs to be done in order to get students engaged in music in a more meaningful way—hence, incorporating the historical connection. By giving children a choice to choose the pieces they want to learn and discover the history behind them, this will make music more relevant to students. They can engage with material that is reflective of their own interests, designating more personal value and worth to the study of music.

The state of music in the public school system is not unpleasant by any means but it definitely is not the best it can be. However, this can be changed and it begins with the music teacher, general or professional. Students need to have a solid framework to work off of and once that is presented to them incredible things can happen. More needs to be done in the field of music and the incorporation of music history could really stimulate a life-long interest amongst students and even teachers.
2.3 Musicianship or a Diverse Music Experience: Can we have both?

Bowman (2001) has pursued research on the instructional methods that are used in post-secondary music education in Canada and presents how these methods should be improved upon. He addresses critical aspects of the public music education experience and brings forth the interesting debate of Musicianship vs. a Diverse Music Experience. Bowman found that Ontario public schools and post-secondary institutions focus far too much on the development of excellent musicians and musicianship (technical proficiency) versus encompassing a diversity of elements that may be unfamiliar to the classically trained music professor and or educator (Bowman, 2001). He continues to discuss how ethnomusicology (the study of music historically and culturally), popular music studies, world music studies, and digital media composition are all new strands of music that are being incorporated into post-secondary music education.

In music…the incorporation of ethnomusicology, jazz, and most recently, popular music studies into our curricula has cause us to re-assess once-comfortable understandings of music’s nature and value, introducing an element of uncertainty where stability and security once prevailed. These are turbulent yet vital times: disturbing, challenging, yet at the same time filled with exciting possibilities for growth and transformation (Bowman, 2001, p.9).

He discusses that the addition of these new strands of music study has the potential to inspire deeper connections amongst music learners. More and more universities are embracing these new musical subjects into their music programs, even providing majors in digital music production and ethnomusicology. Bowman asserts that in order to be educated musically one needs to be taught more than musicianship. The student should be able to actively be involved with the piece they are playing (Bowman, 2001). They should be aware of where the piece originated from, why the composer
wrote the piece, and figure out how the learning and the playing of this piece is relevant to them and their own lives (Bowman, 2001).

According to Bowman, music is more than just playing notes. Music is the embodiment of originality, inventiveness, and personal creativity. This should be fostered and nourished amongst the youth that are playing music. Once again, we come back to the concepts of choice, personal interest, and history. In order to make music meaningful students should have an abundance of choice regarding the pieces they are learning. The study of the history behind the pieces they are playing should be integrated in some way shape or form. Music is not just about the performance. It is about the multitude of learning opportunities before, in between, and after someone performs a composition. University experiences in both music and teacher method courses educating new prospective teachers in music, have a profound impact on what will be taught in the classroom (Baker and Saunders, 1994; Hashm 2010; Kinder, 1998; Price and Burnsed, 1989; and Prospet, 2003).

Moreover, if universities are adopting these new programs (ethnomusicology, popular music studies, world music studies, and digital media composition) elementary and high school educators should consider integrating some of these topics into their music programs. By incorporating aspects of these new strands of music into Ontario schools, student’s will get the chance to see the human side of music (Bowman, 2001) by experiencing different cultures, history’s, forms, and genres. Bowman states that:

Music education needs to be the place where all music’s subdisciplines converge on matters educational, instructional, pedagogical, and curricular. We need to learn to conceive of music education as that discipline whose concern is the preparedness of musicians to teach and communicate about their art, meeting the pedagogical, instructional, curricular needs of all musicians, and of amateurs and non-musician listeners as well (Bowman, 2001, p.11).
This type of differentiated music instruction ties in very well with the inclusion of multicultural music instruction in public school systems where the learning of a cultures history ties in quite closely with the playing of the music.

2.4 Multicultural Music Instruction

In her qualitative study, Edwards (1998) assesses how elementary students would react to the teaching of multicultural music in their elementary music classroom, specifically American Indian Music. This study spanned over 6 weeks, including 12 lessons of multicultural music instruction, where Edwards collected qualitative data from the students (student written paragraphs based on their experiences with this type of musical genre). From Edwards observations and her collection of data over this 6-week time period, she noticed that Content Knowledge, Cultural Awareness, Cultural Sensitivity, Cultural Valuing, and overall student engagement had elevated tremendously from the normal music teaching routine. Edwards states that at the end of this 6-week period:

(a) all four treatment groups learned (or perceived that they learned) content and skills related to the multicultural music instruction received; (b) all four treatment groups indicated positive attitudes toward the multicultural music instruction; (c) a wide range of responses was revealed for all four treatment groups, differing in terms of breadth and depth, particularly when compared to the small quantity and relative shallowness of control group responses; (d) all four treatment groups revealed varying levels or depths of cultural awareness, sensitivity, and valuing; and (e) each of the treatment groups elicited unique responses related to their particular instructional treatment, particularly the class who worked with the Indian guest artist and the two classes that worked in small-group learning centers. (Edwards, 1998, p.76).

Edwards conducted this research study because she felt like there was a gap in the research regarding multicultural music in schools. From a Canadian Perspective, her research is quite useful. It shows that the student’s responded extremely well to this type of music instruction and that this approach to music education should be done more
often. Canadian schools could definitely benefit from this immensely because of the wide-array of nationalities residing in Canada. Furthermore, history is directly involved with the learning of multicultural music because a lot of students need context surrounding the music’s origins. Most students will be unfamiliar with the music; thus the learning of history while encountering new music’s is a natural course of action for an educator to take.

Abril’s (2013) study discusses his observations of a general music classroom where the music of Peru was being taught to students. He takes notice of maps, pictures of Peru, folk instruments, musicians and song names, placed all over the classroom. The music teacher used various strategies to teach this multicultural unit, including the incorporation of history, in order for students to better understand the culture this music has stemmed from. Overall, Abril was impressed with the level of commitment this general music teacher had to teach the students of Peruvian music with such proficiency.

On a visit to a general music classroom, I was intrigued—but not necessarily surprised—by a bulletin board titled “Music of Peru,” which included a map of South America, images of the Andes and folk and popular instruments of the region, names of songs, and pictures of Peruvian musicians and folklorists. The music teacher explained to me that her fifth-grade students were in the middle of a unit on music of Peru. Students were learning to sing “El Humahuaqueño,”…building Siku-style panpipes, performing Orff arrangements of “Mi Palomita” using panpipes and assorted percussion instruments, and contextualizing the music culturally and historically. (Abril, 2013, p. 6).

This study of Abril’s is American, which is something that needs to be taken note of, because he goes on to describe multicultural music instruction in schools. Deeming it as something that is visible in most “general music textbooks, resources, workshops, and classroom practices” (Abril, 2013, p.7-8).

Over the years, many efforts have been made to help teachers select music of diverse cultures thoughtfully…to contextualize the music by making inter- and interdisciplinary connections… and design culture-specific and cross-cultural
units…This seems to have become the norm, as evidenced in general music textbooks, resources, workshops, and classroom practices. The culture-specific unit on Peruvian music is a prime example, with visible markers of culture—songs, images, history, geography, and recordings—serving as the primary content (Abril, 2013, p.7-8).

Bearing this in mind, in his thesis Rinaldo (2001) states that music has the ability to connect to multiple subjects throughout the curriculum because music is all around us in our lives, whether we are cognizant of that fact or not. Additionally, he concludes that if students are involved in a well-planned music program they naturally will have experienced learning about a multitude of different musical genres and musical cultures. Rinaldo believes that this appreciation towards different types of music’s is something that students will carry with them for the rest of their lives. Promoting further involvement in musical activities outside of the school system.

The study of music is essentially cross-curricular in nature involving language, math, science, social studies, physical fitness, and art. It is an exercise in both the cognitive, and affective domains, allowing the student to not only know and do, but to feel. Throughout our lives we are surrounded by music: whether we are listening to the radio, CD player, record player, watching television/videos at the movie theatre, or walking through a mall; music is used to enhance the desired mood. By participating in music programs, students can develop an increased sensitivity toward music of all kinds, through exposure and involvement (Rinaldo, 2001, p. 28-29).

In essence, Bowman, Edwards, Abril, and Rinaldo all agree on the fact that there is more to music than just learning how to play an instrument or a sing a song. It is extremely multi-faceted with several layers a part of the experience. It is up to the music educator to decide on how much depth in content they would like their students to encounter.

Multicultural musical units is something that needs to be done more in Canadian schools, in addition to, studying the historical background and significance of a piece that is being learned. A well-thought out music program is one that ensures students are
receiving a musical experience that reflects “the whole.” Meaning, playing and performance is not the predominant goal of the music program being delivered. Instead, creating personal connections, promoting emotional responses, and ultimately developing a love for all that is music, is the goal. This can easily be achieved if a music program is made up of numerous different components that appeals to all different types of learners. With regards to the sources that have been discussed about thus far, it can clearly be seen that there are multiple different musical strands that students can be exposed to and explore.

2.5 Music Instruction and Area of Study: Can students have a choice?

Ginocchio (2001) discusses his journey to create a popular music class for the students of his school. It all began with a student approaching him and making him aware that it would be really great to have a class where rock music could be learned and performed. At first, Ginocchio was not for the idea at all and completely rejected it, telling the student that there was no way this could happen. After this encounter, Ginocchio began to reflect on his response to the student and realized that it was because of his own fear of the unknown that he blatantly told this student that a rock music class could not be done.

Upon this realization, Ginocchio went to the Principal and proposed that a popular music class, where rock music could be studied and played by students, is something that should be offered at the school. The Principal thought this was an excellent idea and happily supported it; thus Ginocchio started to develop his program. Ginocchio began with the history of music. He started researching major historical events that took place in rock history and designed assignments surrounding these events.
Ginocchio also chose performance repertoire that had both political and social meaning that was relevant in the past but also related to the present.

When I began planning a curriculum for the class, I became concerned that, without specific units and projects, the class could regress into chaos. The ideas came slowly, but only at the outset. Transcription projects led me into rock history, which led me to music videos, composition, and performances...Eventually, I had to make a choice concerning which projects were the most important. Keeping in mind that students would be able to take this course two or even three years in a row, I chose to focus on transcriptions, basic rock history, and composition (Ginocchio, 2001, p.42).

The big project for this rock music class was of personal choice to the students, Ginocchio just provided the framework. The students in the class could choose to study the lives of any rock musician that interested them. Discussing their history, background, musical influences, how they became famous, and any other information that they found relevant. Additionally, transcriptions of famous rock tunes were done frequently, in order to incorporate the theoretical aspect of music into the classroom. After the first year of teaching this rock music course Ginocchio reflected upon the experience stating that:

I considered what I had learned from my first year of popular music performance class: Great musicians can be found in many unlikely places and groups. To teach music is truly to teach a student to think, to feel, and to communicate. It does not really matter what style of music we choose to teach, whether baroque, romantic, avant garde, jazz, or rock. We can teach madrigals, oratorios, or big band vocals. We can teach about Bach, Beethoven, Dizzy Gillespie, or Led Zeppelin. Even as we are teaching music, we are teaching students about life and about the world in which they live. The more different ways we approach music education, the more students we can touch with all the things that music has to offer. Through traditional music study, coupled with the study of popular music, every student can be a musician. Isn’t that what we as music educators are striving for? (Ginocchio, 2001, p.44).

This is a great article because it shows how one teacher responded to the needs of a student body. A student came up to him, requested a rock music class, and this teacher delivered. He was definitely uncomfortable with the idea but he took a chance
and in the end he not only experienced personal growth as a music teacher but he provided a new opportunity for “unlikely musicians” to come forth and get a musical education. Ginocchio incorporated lots of musical choice and freedom in his popular music class students. He also relied heavily upon educating his students about the history of rock music, integrating this within his everyday lessons, as well as, major projects that were assigned.

A lot of rock musicians were actually inspired by classical composers such as, Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart. Learning about rock music does not necessarily mean that the music teacher is deviating from the study of the traditional composers or repertoire. If anything, discovering that some rock musicians have been influenced by the classical genre, is just another layer for students to uncover, which will be surprising to some. In essence, Ginocchio’s approach to music education promoted interest and intrigue amongst his students. His outlook on music education really does coincide with the perspectives brought forth by all of the authors included in this review of literature thus far. Ginocchio allowed the students in his school to study the music that they wanted, inspiring musical enjoyment and lifelong appreciation.

To add to this discussion, in their article Bartel and Cameron (1996) share three personal accounts of individual’s experiences with music in the public school system, as well as, community orchestra settings. All three accounts, in some shape or form, discuss the rigidness of music education. They state that playfulness, creativity, choice, and freedom of exploration, need to be a part of the music education experience. The music teacher should be a facilitator of choice not someone continuously instructing students on how to do something. Social and fun aspects should be integrated in music learning, in order to make music meaningful and resonate with the youth of today. Furthermore,
Bartel and Cameron believe that music is both an individual and group experience. Therefore, an importance on meeting the needs of the individual (differentiated instruction) is something that educators should take into consideration. Performing a piece of music to perfection should not be the goal. Helping a student understand what they are playing emotionally, musically, and academically should be the ultimate aspiration. However, it is important to be cognizant of the fact that there is a significant pressure from principals and communities that school music groups perform well. Teachers and entire school music programs are often criticized if students play poorly and funding is usually pulled if patterns of poor performances ensue. There is an evident conflict here concerning performance perfection versus love of performance.

The question "How can we help students learn?" is still not asking the question quite correctly. That question would be, "How can we help Jim learn?" "How can we help Yolanda learn?" "How can we help Gagan learn?" If we see only the class we are not seeing the ones who learn. Individuals learn. Real people learn. Each person will extract different learnings from the situation. [It is] Especially easy in performance-oriented music is to see only the class or only the ensemble. Directions are given to the ensemble or section and if one person is not playing the correct notes the whole performance is marred -- the music suffers and since perfect performance of the music is the goal the group fails and the teacher's disappointment and maybe even anger is justified. No! No!! No!!! There are only individual people in the room and in the ensemble -- people with differing goals and needs and desires and motivations. People are the focus of teaching, not perfect performance! (Bartel and Cameron, 1996, p.4).

Now, this article is a bit dated, however some really interesting experiences are recorded. This is a valuable source because of the final conclusions made by the authors. Music education needs to be a meaningful process, in order for someone to stick to it and continue to enjoy what they are doing- for the long term. If a music program is too concerned with playing and performance quality, students will miss out on all the underlying intricacies that make music beautiful. Experiencing music at its essence can be achieved if a music program promotes personal exploration. This can be achieved by
integrating the history and various musical cultures into the learning, in addition to, valuing individual student’s voices and choices. Students should be able to have a say in their education and educators should consider the suggestions made by students.

2.6 The Ontario Arts Curriculum

The music curriculum from grades 1-6 tells the educator a lot about how music history education is valued in Ontario. The music curriculum is heavily focused upon music performance and obtaining a basic literacy in music theory. There is not much to be found in the realm of music history. There are one or two expectations stated at each grade level that surrounds the general theme of music history. Some expectations, like the ones outlined for grade 2 and 3, are exactly the same as each other. Not once, is the word history used, until grade 6. The following are expectations that come closest to creating opportunities for teaching and learning about music history:

**Grade 1**

C3.2 identify a variety of musical pieces from different cultures through performing and/or listening to them… (Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p. 71).

**Grade 2**

C3.2 identify, through performing and/or listening, a variety of musical forms or pieces from different communities, times, and places… (Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p.81).

**Grade 3**

C3.2 identify through performing and/or listening, a variety of musical forms or pieces from different communities, times, and places… (Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p.91).

**Grade 4**

C3.1 identify the role of music in a community today and compare it to its role in a community of the past… (Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p.105).
C3.2 demonstrate an awareness, through listening, of the characteristics of musical forms and traditions of diverse times, places and communities… (Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p. 105).

**Grade 5**

C3.2 demonstrate an awareness of the use of music and musical instruments in various traditions, from early times to today… (Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p. 116).

**Grade 6**

C3.1 identify and describe ways in which awareness or appreciation of music is affected by culture and the media (Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p. 127).
C3.2 compare some aspects of the music of one culture and/or historical period with aspects of the music of another culture/and or historical period… (Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p. 127).

Now, music class is not a regular day to day experience for most elementary school students. There usually is one music teacher per elementary school, meaning that this teacher has to visit every class, grade 1-5, and does not get a whole lot of time with the students. Considering this, the vagueness and lack of specificity in the music curriculum, pertaining to music history education, does have some merit. Firstly, a music teacher wants to focus more on the performance aspect than the history because that is something that is generally considered to be more fun. By making the music history curriculum expectations broad, this gives the music teacher the freedom to “fit it in” when he or she has the time. It is one or two expectations amongst twenty or so others and it is easy to see how something like this could be overlooked.

Beatty (2007) discusses in his research that the Ontario music curriculum is, “organized around three foci: knowledge of elements, creative work, and critical thinking…involv[ing] actions such as singing, playing instruments, listening, creating and analyzing...the document identifies four areas of achievement in [music]: understanding of concepts; critical analysis, appreciation, [and] performance…” (Beatty,
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2007, p. 12). Beatty further outlines in another research study that the majority of Ontario music educators will try to cover the “big expectations” more closely related to the actual playing and performance of music rather than the theoretical (Beatty, 2001). Nowhere in the Ontario Music Curriculum is there a high level of emphasis placed on the importance of music history education. Therefore, it is oftentimes omitted from an elementary student’s music education experience.

Furthermore, Montgomery (2000) discovered that in order for there to be improvement in the teaching of elementary music education teacher’s need to realize that, “the musical sounds in 21st century children’s lives most likely will be quite diverse. Thus, music content as well as experiential practice should be reflective of this reality” (Montgomery, 2000, p. 136). It is clear that the musical content that is being taught in the classroom should be reflective of the student demographic, in order to captivate student interest and provide direct real-life linkages that students can relate to. In order for a music educator to successfully educate students in this manner, they need to include some historical background in their teaching or students will be confused and begin to question why they are participating in an Indian Drumming unit for example. Including opportunities for students to learn about the history behind the music is very important to their overall musical development and understanding. However, the Ontario music Curriculum does not frame the learning of music history as a priority.

Furthermore, it is clear that the Ontario music curriculum needs some re-structuring around the integration of the concept of music history. The way it is framed at this moment in time is not well-thought out or conducive for educators to teach it well. One or two vague expectations per grade, is definitely something that could easily be avoided by music educators and they are not a fault either. Why spend time on
something that is only mentioned once in the curriculum, when there are several other coinciding expectations that can be covered?

2.7 Conclusion

Through the research that has been presented here, several areas in the realm of music education have been analyzed and compared. The subject areas that have been discussed are: the music historian perspective, professional music teachers, general music teachers, musicianship, the diverse music experience, multicultural music instruction, student choice in music instruction and study, and finally the Ontario Arts Curriculum. Each piece of research that has been included within this review of literature is valuable in the sense that most authors agree that the study of music history is closely connected to the study of music. However, no piece of research specifically explores the ways in which an elementary music teacher and general music teacher could incorporate music history within their elementary music program. By conducting semi-structured interviews with educators that are knowledgeable in the field of music history and have used it in their classrooms, I hope to address this concern and add to the overall discussion.

Additionally, music history education at the elementary level is not something that is widely written about or something believed to be “an urgent concern” that needs to immediately be addressed in the public school system. However, its incorporation in the teaching of music really does aid in the learning, level of student engagement, and overall understanding of a piece of music. There is a definite need for more research to be done in the subject area of elementary music history education and that is why I have chosen to pursue my qualitative research study in this field.
Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the framework that has been followed in which qualitative data has been collected for the purposes of investigating my main research question: How is a small sample of elementary music educators designing meaningful lessons that include music history as a component of their music education pedagogy? The data that has been compiled to respond to this question was gathered through conducting semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, this chapter outlines the research approach and procedures, the instruments that have been used to collect data, participant criteria and recruitment, how the data has been analyzed, ethical procedures, and methodological limitations and strengths.

3.1 Research Approach and Procedures

I applied a qualitative approach to this inquiry. The qualitative research method has several advantages that appropriately align with my main research question and overall purpose for conducting this research project. Firstly, the qualitative method allows the researcher to converse directly with participants (Creswell, 2013). Having this face to face experience with the participants gives them a chance to voice their opinions on an issue in a safe environment and their views have the potential to better inform the researcher on the topic being explored (Creswell, 2013).

The issue of the integration of music history in elementary schools is a topic with limited research and literature. Therefore, using the qualitative method was beneficial to this inquiry because interviews were the main form of data collection when using this method and more information on the topic needs to be gathered. The interviews that I
conducted were semi-structured and the data from these interviews were the primary sources of information that I used to draw conclusions for this study.

Another advantage to using the qualitative approach is to be able to “develop theories when partial or inadequate theories exist” (Creswell, 2013, p.48). As previously stated, the amount of research available on elementary music history education is limited. By conducting a qualitative study, more data can be collected in this field of education. Resulting in the development of a better informed decision on the overall usefulness of this music education practice.

Additionally, characteristics of grounded theory methodology were applied to discover patterns within the research during the process of coding the data. Grounded theory allows the researcher to develop a theory on a topic where both the research and literature on the issue is minimal (Creswell, 2013). This was done by collecting data, primarily through interviews, and memoing (the researcher records ideas related to the memoing approach as data is gathered and analyzed) (Creswell, 2013). These two particular aspects of grounded theory methodology directly applied to the type of research that I pursued.

Finally, I conducted elements of a curriculum analysis in order to compare what is written about music history education in the Ontario Arts Curriculum with the data collected from the interviewed sample group. Education curriculum analysis is useful because the researcher has the experience of becoming familiar with how a particular government views a certain subject area by seeing how the curriculum is structured and written. There are several advantages to doing this type of work, however the most relevant to this inquiry are: efficiency, availability, exactness, and stability (Bowen, 2009). Curriculum analysis is efficient because the researcher has the ability to choose
what specific documents will be analyzed to further strengthen their research (Bowen, 2009). I chose to analyze the Ontario Arts Curriculum (only the sections dedicated to music education) because I wanted to discover if there was or was not a sufficient amount of expectations dedicated to the teaching of music history education. The findings from this exploration not only complement what is written in the literature about elementary music history education but further affirms the opinions expressed by the interviewed sample group.

Moreover, the overall availability, exactness, and stability of curriculum document analysis is advantageous because the Ontario Arts Curriculum is a document that is in the public domain (Bowen, 2009). What is written in the curriculum is “exact” in the sense that all details, names, and references are that of which are approved by the Ontario Ministry of Education (Bowen, 2009). The Arts Curriculum is a document of “stability” because it has been created as a guideline by the Ontario government for all Ontario music teacher’s to follow when developing their own music education program (Bowen, 2009). Thus, the investigation and review of this curriculum document is useful to this research inquiry because it aids in strengthening the data collection, coding, and analysis processes.

3.2 Instruments of Data Collection

I conducted interviews using a semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix B). This protocol includes thirteen interview questions. The answers to these questions were audio recorded on a smart phone device. The interview protocol that was used first concentrated on getting to know each participant. The second-part of the interview protocol was geared towards answering my main research question by focusing on questions surrounding the topic of music history. Using the face-to-face interview
method as the primary form of data collection for my research has proven to be the best
technique for finding data specific to my research question. I was able to conduct semi-
structured interviews and veer off this script as needed to pursue avenues of spontaneity
that arose within the conversation with the interviewees.

Qualitative data collection often involves one-to-one interviews where a pre-
determined set of open-ended questions are created by the researcher to be asked
(Creswell, 2008). Open-ended questions allow the interviewees to share their opinions
and thoughts by having a choice in the way they would like to respond (Creswell, 2008).
The semi-structured interview process allows the researcher to create an environment that
gives the participants freedom on how they would like to share their experiences
(Creswell, 2008). Therefore, there is a certain type of value when the participant and
researcher do divert from the interview protocol to address an issue related to the research
inquiry and then find their way back on script (Creswell, 2008).

Additionally, one of the interviews conducted for this inquiry was through E-
Mail. The interview protocol was E-Mailed to the participant and she answered the
questions accordingly in a word document. E-Mail Interviews are a good form of
gathering qualitative data when the participant is unable to meet face-to-face or there are
geographic restrictions (Creswell, 2008). Another advantage is the transcription is
already completed for the researcher and all that needs to be done is the coding of the
data. However, protecting the participant’s privacy through the use of this electronic
medium is a bit more challenging because the E-Mail that contains the confidential
interview information is backed-up onto a server somewhere (Creswell, 2008). Even if
the E-Mail is deleted by the researcher it may still exist in another electronic form.
Additionally, there are limitations to scripted responses because there is no opportunity
for the researcher to ask the participant to clarify something that was said, elaborate on an idea presented, or ask for any additional information (in respects to a certain issue that may arise within conversation) it is quite restrictive. Finally, I found that the amount of data collected through the E-Mail interview was smaller in information when compared to the face-to-face interviews.

Furthermore, both the face-to-face interview and E-Mail experiences allowed me to investigate the personal initiatives taken on by this sample of group of teachers regarding elementary music history education. These educators’ efforts have informed my own teaching practices and hopefully will do the same for other teachers in the field of music as well.

3.3 Participants

This section of the chapter will discuss how the participants were selected to be a part of this research inquiry. The sampling criteria, sampling procedures, and participant bios will all be addressed and explained within this part of the chapter.

3.3.1 Sampling Criteria

The sampling criteria that was chosen to find participants for my research was selected based upon the research that has been presented within the review of literature and my main research questions. I wanted to interview four music education specialists that have had experience teaching music at the elementary level. Two out of these four music educators ideally were to be Beginner Teachers (2-6 years of experience). The two other participants were to be Experienced Teachers (25 years + or Retired). This sampling criteria was chosen because I wanted to compare the pedagogical approaches taken towards the teaching of music history education from both the perspectives of beginner music teachers and experienced teachers. The reason why I required this
variance in age and experience is because I wanted to document how Music Education Specialists have been taught to teach Music through both their undergraduate music and teacher’s college experiences (see Appendix B). I also wanted to come to an informed conclusion on how educational experiences and personal interest directly affect these teacher’s choices to include music history education into their classroom practice (see Appendix B).

3.3.2 Sampling Procedures

Purposeful sampling and convenience sampling was used to find participants to partake in my research. Both these sampling strategies have proved useful. Purposeful sampling allowed me to make decisions on who would be sampled and how many individuals would be sampled at a time (Creswell, 2013). Convenience sampling gave me the ability to sample and select participants through my previous associations and relationships with individuals and music organizations (Creswell, 2013).

The sampling procedures that were taken to find participants to partake in my research mainly transpired through face to face conversations. I am fortunate enough to be a part of community orchestras based in both Brampton and Kitchener, Ontario. As a result of these memberships, I have made announcements to these orchestras about my research and shared my sampling criteria with them and eligible participants came forth. Additionally, the two retired music teachers that agreed to be interviewed taught members of my family located in the Kitchener area. I also made a point to connect with the music teachers at my practicum placement schools and they kindly directed me to eligible participants as well. That is where I found one of my beginner teacher participants. The final participant, who has been a long-time music teacher in the
Kitchener Waterloo area, was discovered through connections of the two retired music teachers participating in my research.

### 3.3.3 Participant Bios

Four educators participated in this research study. One participant is a beginner music teacher, the second is a long-time music teacher, and the last two are retired music teachers. Pseudonyms have been assigned to each participant for confidentiality purposes.

**Beth**

Beth had been an occasional teacher with the Peel District School Board since 2009, primarily supply teaching in the Brampton-Mississauga areas. In 2010, she acquired a yearlong Long Term Occasional teaching position at an Elementary school in the Peel board teaching Music from Kindergarten to Grade 5. She had taught music to elementary students and during one of my practicums I got to witness her integrating elements of music history when she supplied in the Kindergarten class I was placed in. Unfortunately, her busy schedule did not allow for us to have a face-to-face interview but she kindly did answer my interview protocol through an E-Mail.

**Julia**

Julia was a grade 6,7,8 French, Music, and English teacher. She had been teaching for the Waterloo Region District School Board in the Kitchener Waterloo area for the past 18 years. She was a part of four semi-professional orchestras/chamber ensembles in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, where she played the Violin and sometimes the Viola. She strongly believed that young musicians should be educated on the history behind the music they are playing. Her passion for music history education was very
strong and she explained to me that throughout her career in education she had always
made an effort to expose her students to the historical teachings of music.

Carrie

Carrie was a retired music teacher. She was a teacher for the Waterloo Region
District School Board in the Kitchener Waterloo area for 30 years. During her time with
the WRDSB she had the privilege of teaching music from Kindergarten to Grade 8. She
had helped create multiple additional resources to help aid in the teaching of the music
curriculum and how to effectively integrate music history education into one’s classroom.
She played classical Bass in two semi-professional Orchestras, one in Kitchener, and the
other in Stratford. She believed strongly in her students developing an awareness of
music history and how it connects to their playing and the world around them.

Brad

Brad was a retired music teacher. He was a teacher for the Waterloo Region
District School Board in the Kitchener Waterloo area for 35 years. He had taught music
from Grade 6 to Grade 12. He had been a part of several music education committees,
arts councils, and curriculum development projects throughout his years with the
WRDSB. He also had partnered up with the Godiy Music Institute, aiding in the training,
educating, auditioning, and conducting of student choirs during their annual Kitchener
concerts. Additionally, he also played Violin and Viola in multiple semi-professional
orchestras and chamber orchestras in the Kitchener Waterloo area. He has always had a
strong love and interest for the subject of music history. When he became a certified
music teacher in 1980 one of his personal goals was to try and integrate the teaching of
music history into his classroom as much as possible. Thus, began this long career of
trying to make music history relevant and relatable to his students.
Overall, all of my participants were carefully chosen following the sampling criteria and procedures previously developed. Each teacher selected has a strong affinity for educating young musicians in the field of music history and their participation in this inquiry is greatly valued.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by listening to the recorded interviews and transcribing the data as a word document through the use of a laptop. This same action was completed for all three face-to-face interviews. The interview that occurred over e-mail did not require transcription. After transcripts of all four interviews were completed, I began coding the data. The procedures that have been taken to analyze and code the data are influenced by Creswell’s “Data Analysis Spiral” (Creswell, 2013, p.183).

The first thing that I did was electronically organize the transcriptions on a laptop (Creswell, 2013, p.182-183). This was done by developing four folders, each titled after the participant’s pseudonym. All folders contained two pieces of data: the audio recording of the interview and the word document transcription. The next step that was taken involved me reading and memoing the data (Creswell, 2013, p. 183). I read each transcript multiple times and highlighted key points, ideas, and recurring themes. I then jotted down notes next to each highlighted section. Most notes pertained to statements read in the literature, personal experiences, and making connections between all four different interviews.

After this was completed, I then began describing, classifying, and interpreting the data into codes, categories, and themes (Creswell, 2013, p.184). Several short lists of codes were developed to uncover repetitive text within each interview (Creswell, 2013, p. 184). For example, some of the codes and categories chosen were: Music History,
Benefits, Personal Motivators, Time, Background, etc. After these codes and categories were created I counted how many times the data codes appeared in each transcript in order to keep a record of how recurrent each code was. I also organized the codes, categories, and themes into one cohesive data collection chart. Where I was able to make comparisons between different sections of the participant data, to better visualize the patterns appearing in the research. Once this was completed, more concrete themes began to emerge within the data and these themes will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. Overall, analyzing the data collected from the interviews by using these multiple approaches really aided in identifying recurring themes within the data.

3.5 Ethical Review Procedures

Prior to conducting each face-to-face interview, I emailed all four participants a consent letter outlining the goals of my research and the procedures that would be taken during the interview. I decided to do this before meeting with each participant so they had sufficient time to read and understand what was written in the consent letter. Each interview took place at a time and place of the participant’s choosing. Before interviews began I went over the consent letter with each participant, re-stated my topic of research, and explained that the interview would be audio-recorded for academic purposes only. An explanation was given to each participant that the audio-recording would be used to create a transcript of the interview. A completed transcript would be shared with each participant for approval. Once the transcripts had been approved by each participant the audio-recording of the interview would immediately be destroyed. However, it was made clear to the participants that the data of each interview would be stored on my laptop for a maximum of five years from the date of the initial interview.
I also made the participants aware that I would share the transcripts with them to ensure their accuracy (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Member-checking is an essential part of the qualitative research method (Creswell and Miller, 2000). It gives the researcher the opportunity to re-affirm specificities of the data collected during the interview process (Creswell and Miller, 2000). I explained to the participants that after the transcriptions were completed I would share the data with each interviewee. By doing so they would have a chance to review the data and confirm the validity of their statements shared (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Keeping the participants involved and informed during the research process allows for them to continuously share their opinions on ideas that have been uncovered, which aids in the overall strength and accuracy of the data being presented within this research inquiry (Creswell and Miller, 2000).

I also assured each participant that they could revise and alter their answers at any point in time. It was also made clear to them that if for some reason they no longer wanted their responses to be used as data for my research they had the right to withdraw from the process at any time. I then reviewed with the participants the semi-structured interview process. However, if some questions did not apply they could be skipped and if other topics of interest arose during the interview, veering off script is permitted. It was also explained to each participant that they had the right to refuse to answer certain questions at any point in time during the interview. After all of this was explained, each participant signed a copy of the consent letter (see Appendix A) and a second copy was given to each participant to keep for their own records.

I made it clear to each participant that they would remain anonymous throughout the entire process of my research project and would not be referred to by name. Pseudonyms would be assigned to each participant and any identifiers would be deleted.
The only other person who would have access to the interview transcripts and other documents concerning each interview would be my course instructor. The role of the research supervisor is to help guide me in my research and this was expressed to each participant. It is important that each participant was assured of their anonymity during this process and what would be done with the information they had provided to myself, the researcher. Moreover, I expressed to the participants that there are no risk factors involved in being a part of this research inquiry. The expected benefits related to being a part of this inquiry will allow participants to share their experiences and knowledge in the field of music history education. It is also another avenue for each participant to continue to educate the music education community on the importance of integrating music history into a student’s classroom music experience.

3.6 Methodological Limitations

The authenticity of the findings that emerged within the data may have some limitations. The first limitation is the size of the interviewed sample group. The guidelines for this research project clearly state that a minimum of three individuals should be interviewed. If one wants to exceed this number that is acceptable but three interviews need to be undertaken in order to meet the requirements of this research project. Considering this, since this is a major research paper and not a thesis, the opinions and claims made by the four participants, no matter how valid, cannot be said to be representative of the views within the music education community. Thus, the findings of this inquiry are not generalizable because not enough participants could be included. Another limitation to this research inquiry is the constraint in time. This research project needed to be complete within 2 years, and was undertaken concurrently together with a teacher certification program. As a result of this, strict guidelines have been developed
limiting the amount of participants allowed to partake in the inquiry (which effects the sampling of the interviewees), and the research methods used.

The last limitation to this research inquiry is the fact that one of the interviews conducted was an E-Mail interview. E-Mail interviews are not particularly ideal. It is difficult for the researcher to make a meaningful connection with the participant through email. It is also challenging to gather enough data as well. I found that the E-Mail interview that was conducted was not as lengthy as the face-to-face interviews.

### 3.7 Methodological Strengths

This research inquiry has several methodological strengths. The primary ones that I will address are: participant expertise and experiences, the strengths of interviews as a research method, the overall quality of the interview protocol, and the type of data I was able to gather. The participants that have agreed to partake in this research inquiry are all music specialists and most have been teachers in the public education system for over 25 years. Therefore, these teacher’s shared experiences in the field of music education are greatly valued. Their views on particular music pedagogical practices (specifically music history) are rich in content and have taken place in various educational contexts. Therefore, the data that has been collected through each participant’s interview is informative to both the researcher and the music education community as a whole.

Taking this into consideration, gathering qualitative data primarily through face-to-face semi-structured interviews is quite advantageous. The semi-structured interview process allows the researcher to have a set of pre-determined questions prepared that directly relate to answering the main research question of the inquiry. However, both the researcher and the interviewee have the advantage to veer of this script as needed to
address other issues that may arise in conversation. Being able to do this has its benefits because certain opinions and thoughts have the potential to come up in conversation that the researcher may have not thought to ask in their pre-determined set of questions.

Another methodological strength is the overall quality of the interview protocol. The interview protocol was carefully designed to address a broad set of issues in the field of music education. Questions concerning the benefits of music history education, pedagogical approaches towards music history education, curriculum coverage on the topic, and school board professional development on the subject, have all been addressed within the interview protocol. The kind of data that I was able to gather was directly affected by how I designed the interview protocol. I purposefully created particular questions in order to be able to effectively answer my main research question. There are a lot of similarities present within the data that has been collected. I believe that this has successfully occurred because of the careful decisions and choices taken towards the interview protocol.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has covered the methods that have been followed in which qualitative data has been gathered for the purposes of exploring my main research question: How is a small sample of elementary music educators designing meaningful lessons that include music history as a component of their music education pedagogy? Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data to respond to this question.

Moreover, this chapter has explained in detail the strategies that have been taken towards this inquiry. These strategies have been addressed under the following headings: Research approach and procedures, the instruments that have been used to collect data, participant criteria and recruitment, how the data has been analyzed, ethical procedures,
and methodological limitations and strengths. The significance of the methods that have been used to gather the data for this research inquiry are important because these approaches directly influence how the findings will be presented in the Fourth Chapter of this project.
Chapter 4: FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter I report and discuss the findings of the collected data in correlation with pre-existing literature on the topic of Music History Education, reviewed in Chapter 2. This section highlights the primary themes uncovered in the coding stage of the research process speaking, to each participant’s professional pedagogical outlooks, beliefs, and experiences regarding music history education in elementary schools. An analysis of the significance of the collected data will be assessed in respects to how it contributes to the existing literature on the topic and what it means for music education as a whole moving forward.

This chapter is organized by themes that were identified during the data collection and coding stages. There are six themes and six sub-themes. The order of these themes have been selected based on the issues reviewed in Chapter 2, beginning with knowledge of subject matter and pedagogical strategies, and ending with curriculum issues and the position of the overall value of music at the school board level. In essence, the information reported in this chapter will hopefully inspire further research and pedagogical consideration amongst scholars, teachers, and school boards, when contemplating the future programming, hiring, and the overall benefit music can have for students, when taught in an all-encompassing way.

4.1 Participating teacher’s believed that successful integration of music history in Ontario public schools relies on the teacher’s knowledge of the subject matter

An educator’s knowledge of historical concepts in music greatly influences the chances of them integrating teachings of music history into their music program (Sefzik, 1984; Goodman, 1986; and Bresler, 1993). The reality is that music history is one of the
first items to be excluded from a child’s music education because of its vague almost “non-existent” representation in the Ontario music curriculum. As a result of this, most students are not being exposed to an aspect of music education that could be very beneficial to their overall development as musicians (Propst, 2003).

Carrie (a retired music teacher who has 30+ years of experience) believed that the music curriculum does not provide enough support and information for a generalist music teacher to embark upon teaching music history to students. In part, this was because music history is not something that can be taught to elementary students in a straightforward way. The literature shows that successful integration of music history depends on how relevant and relatable the historical content is to a teacher’s lesson and student’s own lives (Hash, 2010). Carrie strongly believed that it was important for elementary music teachers to include aspects of music history education into their practice, however, she had witnessed that when an educator does not have the appropriate training and or education in music, it is much more difficult to see something like music history education incorporated into their music program.

Brad, also a retired music teacher, shared his thoughts on this issue:

You should as a music teacher be comfortable teaching a little bit of everything. There’s a real problem with some people that say they don’t teach any history because the students are just bored when I teach history… Well then you’re doing it wrong or you’re not showing your passion for it… You have to really show that it’s something you believe and are interested in because otherwise they are not going to buy into it at all.

In this section of the data, Brad specifically talks about music history engagement with high school music students. He stated that students will not recognize the value of music history education if it is not introduced to them in a thoughtful and meaningful manner. Brad expressed that music teacher’s who have negative attitudes towards music
history often choose to believe that it is of no interest to their students. Thus, he has seen this aspect of music education purposefully omitted from their teaching. Or when the history is taught it is integrated in a dry and insignificant way.

Furthermore, Brad raised the issue of student perception and understanding. It is very apparent to a student when a teacher is not interested in the content they are teaching. All four participants agree and have explained that student disinterest and disengagement towards music history education can be prevented when the teacher makes an effort to make the content relevant to the students. When an educator models indifference towards a subject area, unfortunately the students will follow in that same manner. Therefore, each participant has seen instances where music history education is oftentimes avoided by both music specialists and generalist music teachers because of the belief that students will not respond positively to the content.

Julia believed that music history played an essential role in student’s overall musical understanding and appreciation. She stated that exposing students to elements of music history as they are learning a new musical piece, style, or technique can be extremely beneficial to their development as musicians. It was explained that student’s can have a very challenging classroom music experience if they have absolutely no background knowledge of composer biographies, major musical influences, and the societal values, norms, and customs, of the time period the music was being written.

Julia believed that all of this historical information is essential for students to be cognizant of because it provides them with “the story behind the music.” It allowed them to make valid connections to the past while relating it to their own life experiences as beginner and intermediate musicians. The participants and I believe that there definitely is a place for music history education in the elementary classroom but it’s required of the
music teacher to have that historical knowledge and want to willingly integrate it into their practice. Beth, a beginner music teacher, shared her view on historical influences in music:

The goal is to inspire your students and plant a musical spark within them. Music is such an essential element of life. It’s a language that is spoken and understood world-wide. Everything kids listen to today were inspired by something or someone of the past, whether it be a cultural ritual, a creative musician pushing musical boundaries or a person simply creating music from his/her everyday chores. Teaching your students, a little bit about music history, just makes sense to me.

According to Beth, music history integration can be used as a tool to motivate students about the music they are learning. She articulated that all music had been influenced by something that had transpired in the past. It is significant then, that students have some education on what/who these influences were and how they contributed to the making of the music (Bowman, 2001). The literature shows that providing historical context to young musicians means that the educator is extending the musical content beyond the classroom (Bowman, 2001). The music teacher is actively bringing in different stories and experiences from around the world by discussing these historical connections to the music (Montgomery, 2000). In turn, these conversations supply the students with necessary background knowledge to help them progress and advance forward in their musical abilities. However, ignoring music history education has the potential to limit a young musician’s successful progression in music. Brad asserted that,

I can’t understand the teachers that say I don’t teach history. I just hope they’re teaching history and… [are unaware that they are]. The…[Music Teachers], that have…no knowledge base or…interest…in it… You’re ripping off the kids. And you’re ripping off the next year and the next year after that…
Brad strongly believed that music teachers who are not including historical teachings into their music program are putting their students at a disadvantage. He shared that students have the right to have a quality music education and this cannot happen when aspects of the music curriculum are actively avoided or excluded from a child's musical experience. When looking at the Ontario music curriculum, it is clear that there are specific expectations related to the teaching of music history (Ontario Music Curriculum, 2009). However, the literature shows that when a music teacher does not have the knowledge or capacity to include this type of teaching into their music program, it is quite easy to overlook and miss these specific expectations in the elementary music curriculum (Beatty, 2001). The truth is there are not very many indications in the music curriculum that there is a historical component to teaching music; therefore, when a teacher has not been musically trained or has not had any extensive professional development sessions in music education, they would not be aware of the music history piece (Bowman, 2001).

As Brad pointed out, not integrating teachings of music history can be very problematic to a student’s musical development and overall commitment to continuing on with music education. Children need a reason to learn; context is key to student engagement and understanding. Each participant and I believe that when students do not know why they are learning how to play a piece of music, why would they put in the time to learn it? Carrie's personal experiences with music history as a high school student showcase how powerful of an impact music history education can have:

I went down to the Toronto Music Library and I signed out the album (Trinity on the victims of Hiroshima)...and the score...And... you were talking about the research...and digging into that and finding out why it was written. And realizing that the words that were being used...were words that people...[were saying] after [the] bomb dropped...it’s a very harsh piece. And to listen to the harshness...
in that… was absolutely gut-wrenching and tormenting because I knew the world history that went along with what Schaefer had written.

Digging deeper into a musical piece or a composer of interest is not something that a child would be willing to do when it is not fostered from a young age. Carrie was fortunate to have a wonderful music teacher as a young girl and her musical experiences kept getting better and better as she moved forward in her schooling. This example looks at an opportunity Carrie was given to explore a musical piece, learn the history behind the piece, and then share her findings with her other classmates. Trinity on the Victims of Hiroshima by Andre Schaefer is a composition filled with very strong worldly connections. As Carrie pointed out, she went down to the Toronto Music Library, obtained her resources, and initiated a learning experience that she still speaks about today because of the sheer power of the content she was engaging with. This example comes out of the high school context, however Carrie would not have had such an exceptional interest in music history if it was not introduced to her at a young age.

In relation to Carrie’s experience, Julia pointed out that elementary students do not have an intrinsic interest in music history education. Instead, she has encountered that student fascination with this subject area is something that has to first be fostered by the music educator. Julia shared that it would be quite a rare instance if an elementary student asked a music history related question on their own accord, without any teacher introduction. She made clear that this type of student inquiry is something that would simply not happen unless the music teacher made it a priority to integrate music history into their classroom practice.

Nevertheless, according to Julia, students do respond very positively to music history education because it gives them a different way to connect and engage with the
music they are learning. She explained that, students will oftentimes approach her and ask her genuine questions of interest, relating to historical content previously brought forth in her class. Bearing this in mind, it is shown in the literature that the music teacher truly does set the precedence on student intrigue in respects to music history education (Baker and Saunders, 1994; Hashm 2010; Kinder, 1998; Price and Burnsed, 1989; and Prospet, 2003). When music history is taught to students with a high degree of thoughtfulness the students benefit because their music experience is more than just clapping rhythms. They are beginning to make connections with the world beyond their classroom walls.

4.1.1 Teachers believed that music history education depends on the teacher’s passion for the subject and their specialty knowledge base of the topic

Incorporating historical teachings of music into one’s classroom practice is determined by the teacher’s devotion and specialty knowledge of the subject matter (Whyte and Mould, 2011). Music history is an aspect of music education where teacher knowledge and understanding plays a large role in its success rate and ability to reach young students (Whyte and Mould, 2011). At the undergraduate level, music history classes are required to be taken by all music students. Thus, musicians who are university trained should have some background knowledge on this topic. Generalist music teachers do not receive this type of specific training. There definitely are additional qualification courses and professional development sessions that can be taken but music history is not at the forefront of what is learned at these sessions.

Brad believed that, “the benefit of teaching music history is to give them a basis of where the music came from…” He goes on to explain, that as an educator who teaches students how to play String instruments, knowing a little bit about the developments that
have happened in different eras of music (Baroque, Classical, Romantic etc.) is significant because sharing that knowledge with students can better inform their musical choices. Brad stated that history has had a huge influence on how music has progressed over the years. Taking the time to show students the historical linkages between their instruments, the music they are studying, and how these connect to musical cultures all over the world, can be a very powerful and meaningful approach. Brad explained that students need to be aware that the instruments that they are playing have a rich historical background and can be found all over the world.

Considering this, when there is a specialist in the classroom that is passionate about delivering a high quality music program to their students, historical teachings of music will inevitably be an intricate part of that program (Dahlhaus, 1983; Everest, 1999; Meyer, 1989; Wegman, 2012). Brad’s statements are a clear representation of the type of background knowledge a music specialist can offer. His pedagogy is rooted in historical understanding because he believes that knowing where the music comes from is vital for students to be aware of (Bowman, 2001). He has a variety of reasons for this but the one he specifically mentions are instrument origins; where did they come from, how were the instruments used, what was their purpose, what impact did they have on the musical world, and what does that mean for us today as musicians.

Both Brad and I believe that addressing any one of these historical issues is a great entry point for students to build a meaningful knowledge base around their instrument, its connection to the past, and its relationship to other instruments. Brad’s extensive knowledge of music history developments gives him great flexibility in his teaching because he can draw in little tidbits of information here and there to give his students some context (Whyte and Mould, 2011). Only a music specialist can provide
this type of cosmopolitan educational music experience. Carrie explained her view on
the benefits of music history education. Once again the level of historical detail and
knowledge weaved into her response is abundant:

I think…there is a benefit to it because it gives kids a greater depth of
understanding…If you are trying to relate something to a kid… When they find
out that Mozart was a bratty little brother and you are playing a piece of music [by
Mozart] …[Y]ou can talk about Mozart and his Sister and about how they were
prodigies playing on the piano together and…show how that is reflected in the
music as it is being played. I am thinking about [the piece called] …Contradance
…it was a back and forth little Rondo type of a thing and the kids got it! Because
they had something to link it to that was in reality.

Here is another example of what a music specialist can offer a public music
education program. Carrie’s extensive knowledge surrounding historical developments
in music is quite evident by her response. She prefaces her Mozart example by stating
that student awareness of a compositions origins, specifically composer backgrounds, is
an excellent way to build relationships between the past, the present, and the student’s
life. She is convinced that being able to bring in historical information that appropriately
connects to the elementary music classroom can be a real benefit to students because it
elevates the experience for them. They are not just learning how to play an instrument or
sing a song, they are having opportunities to create an inveterate link between where the
music came from and their playing.

The literature states that the absence of historical knowledge in a child’s music
education experience is influenced by the teacher’s interest and understanding (Propst,
2003). When the teacher does not have a basic understanding of how to teach music to
students it is unfair to expect that they will go beyond the call of duty and integrate
additional elements like history into their teaching (Whyte and Mould, 2011). Each
participant and I have concluded that the only way teachings of music history are going
to occur in an Ontario public school music program is if the designated music teacher is interested in teaching the history behind the music or the music teacher is in fact a music specialist and believes that music history is important. When both of these pieces are missing, having a music specialist in the school lacks purpose.

Each participant and I believe that whoever is teaching music needs to have a vested interest in providing the best quality music education experience they possibly can and that means teaching the history. Music specialists definitely have an advantage over a generalist music teacher, in terms of being able to integrate historical teachings in a seamless way because they have had the training (Parkes and Jones, 2012). However, if they are disinterested and do not see the value in music history, they will omit it from their program just like so many others do (Beatty, 2001). Brad displayed his passion for music history education through this anecdote:

So much of the String repertoire is from the Baroque and Classical era. And so much music is Church music. Why not teach them about the Reformation? And the fact that all the music was Catholic until 1517. When Martin Luther posted his...[theses] on the door...the protestant religions appeared in Germany...England...Scotland...Switzerland almost all at the same time...Why did they appear all at the same time?...you know so... Church music is such a huge...part of the music vocabulary...

Brad’s experiences are rooted in the high school music context but a lot can be gleaned from what he is bringing to the discussion of teacher passion and specialty knowledge. Once again, the amount of historical learning Brad is able to offer his students is profound. Students being cognizant of the fact of how integral church music was for composer livelihood, as well as, the type of progressions that were being made in string repertoire (as a reflection of the Reformation) is valid information for students to be learning. Especially when they are playing music that was composed during the Reformation.
Brad believes that it is really interesting for students to know that the music they are playing has been around for hundreds of years and there was a very purposeful reason behind why it was composed at the time that it was. Moreover, the literature shows that including historical teachings of music really adds an extra layer of understanding for the students (Bowman, 2001). As stated earlier, this type of all-encompassing approach to music education can only take place when the teacher has committed themselves to doing this type of work and has the background knowledge to support what they are doing in the classroom (Whyte and Mould, 2011).

Julia also discussed some strategies on how progressions with church music can be related to students learning. She conveyed that students listen to popular music all the time. It’s practical then to make the connection between the music students are listening to and the music that they are playing at school. Julia suggested that one way to do this is to introduce students to the concept of sacred and secular music. Julia and I both believe that this is a great approach towards meaningful historical integration because the distinction between sacred and secular music is a significant concept for students to be aware of. It also presents students with the opportunity to dissect the popular music that they are listening to now and see how it differs from music that was considered secular in the past.

In essence, the participant data and literature shows that it is the music teacher’s job to try to provide students with an educational experience that encompasses all these different types of musical developments. It is difficult to cover everything but taking the time just to say a few things before playing a piece in class really does make all the difference because it is giving them something more to latch onto, separate from
technique and performance practice (Montgomery, 2000). Students should be able to have a quality music education experience that has some substance to it.

When Carrie was a child she had the experience of being taught by a music specialist and she still recalls the things that she learned from that teacher. Obviously she had an aptitude towards music at a young age because she went on to be a music teacher. Nevertheless, the early years of music are so crucial for students to develop a firm foundation and overall love for this subject area. Carrie communicated that,

[In grade 7 and 8 we had this old dragon of a music teacher from Australia Mrs. MacNamara. And she had learned the Kerwin method as compared to Kodály…Instead of ticka ticka or teeree teeree… It was toffy tiffy. Toffy tiffy! …She had these big store-made charts. We learned Sorcerer’s Apprentice and the Hall of the Mountain King. We had to sing them all in syllables. We learned the stories that went behind them we learned a little bit about the composers and that stuck.

Here we have another formative experience shared by Carrie exhibiting the high quality of education a music specialist can bring to the table. Her teacher, Mrs. MacNamara, made a point to teach her students the stories behind the music because she clearly felt there was some value in it. Carrie still remembered Mrs. MacNamara’s teachings to this day because the history that was being taught connected to the music that was being learned in the classroom. Music history integration can definitely have positive and long-lasting effects on a child’s music education, it just needs to be taught.

To reiterate, Carrie has 30+ years of experience being a music teacher. So this story that she is sharing is not something that has happened recently and that in itself is unfortunate. Both Carrie and Brad are retired and Julia could retire in the near future if she would like to. What does that mean to the state of music education in our schools? Music history is not something that is being taught regularly or is a part of the day to day routine for a music teacher, that is the reality of the situation here. The research shows
that 58% of Ontario elementary music teachers are found to have no musical training whatsoever (Whyte and Mould, 2011). This is a hidden crisis and when the music specialists are gone only then will the impact of their absence be able to be fully understood and assessed.

4.2 Teachers believed that music history education needs to be context specific and should be inspired by what the students are learning in the music classroom

It is essential that students are receiving context specific music history instruction that directly is associated with the content being taught in the music classroom. The data shows that when incorporating historical teachings into a music program it is imperative that there is a purpose for it being done. Integrating music history in a successful manner takes a lot of planning on the teacher’s end. They need to know ahead of time what learning goals they have for their students, what they would like their students to gain through the knowledge they are imparting upon them, and what type of content they have the time for.

Certain musical concepts can definitely be taught in a more efficient way when the history is made a part of the learning experience. However, the music teacher needs to know when it is suitable and appropriate to include this type of information in a lesson, in addition to being able to be versatile with the content being covered. Sometimes the only way historical context can be taught is through an impromptu fashion at the beginning or end of a lesson. Carrie explained her approach to music history education by emphasizing the importance of having a plan that correlated with the repertoire being taught:

I generally will look at what pieces of music… I am going to work on and what concepts are going to be taught through that…At the grade 7 and 8 level there is such a limited amount of time to teach the kids how to play… [their] instrument…there is not a lot of scope for doing in depth history lessons. So let’s
say for example...if I was teaching the Habanera...because I wanted to teach chromatics...Chromatics was the point of the lesson...[and] Habanera was the piece...we can talk a little bit about Opera...we can talk a little bit about Carmen, and we can talk a little bit about Bizet...

Carrie's method towards music history education is very practical in the sense that she is aware that she does not have a lot of time with her students. She stated that getting the students to learn how to play their instruments is a more realistic approach than focusing in on both the history and the playing. At the end of the day parents want to see their children playing their instrument with some level of efficiency, not presenting history facts to them. With this being said, she still sees the value of incorporating the music history piece into her teaching practice because it is a tool that can aid students in learning and understanding new musical concepts.

Carrie strategically introduced her students to small bits of music history through the pieces she had chosen for her classes to learn. The Habanera example that Carrie provided is great because it shows that through her structured lessons there is a balance between the practical (playing) and the more abstract (the history). With the Habanera, her primary goal for her students is to understand how chromaticism works and can be played on their instruments. She also made a point to teach her students the historical stories that are specific to the Habanera because she believed that having a knowledge of the history is significant for her student’s overall understanding of chromaticism. Each participant and I believe that infusing context specific historical examples with what students are learning to play on their instruments is quite effective because it further supports and builds upon their knowledge base as young musicians. Beth's tactics towards music history education is quite similar to Carrie's in the sense that context is key:
I feel that the best approach is to have the children explore and partake in the experience. For example, when I taught a bit of jazz history, I showed the students visual/auditory examples from key moments (key musicians) of that genre, along with giving them the opportunity to experience a form of jazz by learning to sing a jazz standard. If I still taught music today, I’d most likely expand that into a simple theory lesson, wherein students could create their own jazz piece, or what they interpret as jazz, based on our history lessons.

In this part of the data Beth is speaking about her long term occasional music teacher position. Everything Beth is referring to in respect to the historical content being taught to students is context specific. Beth’s strategies on the topic of jazz history is very accessible for both generalist and specialist music teachers because she focused on specific figures that contributed to the success of a genre and then she pairs that with students learning how to sing a jazz standard. Here we have a beginner music teacher already integrating some history into her teaching and making it relatable to students by getting them to sing a jazz standard based on the styles created by some of those key jazz figures. As a music educator, being able to bring the history in and connect it to a musical activity that the students are doing is a wonderful way to empower students. If they are interested in the history, they will make a point to take some initiative and start learning more about these things on their own but the teacher needs to introduce this to them in an engaging way. Music history is not something a young child will happen to discover and study on their own, without no previous instruction.

Brad’s attitude towards teaching music history to students coincides with both Carrie’s and Beth’s stance on the issue. His approach towards music history education involves including historical teachings that directly are related to the repertoire being learned in the classroom. He never actually taught a whole class dedicated to music history. According to Brad, that is not something students would respond positively too. Instead, he would have his pieces that he wanted his student’s to learn and as they are
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working on them, he would sprinkle in some historical background here and there, to complement what they are doing on their instruments. Brad believed this is the most effective way to teach student’s music history without disengaging them and it seems the rest of the interviewees that participated in this research inquiry do so as well.

As stated earlier, music history is not at the forefront of music education because student’s rather learn how to play their instruments. Each participant has shared that oftentimes students do not really care about where the music came from and why a composer decided to write a specific piece. Nevertheless, each participant and I believe that when the history is brought into a student’s musical experience with care and small enough portions, the students can find it really interesting. Students do not need to know an entire biography of a composer, but knowing something like Beethoven was completely deaf when he wrote the ninth symphony, can be very intriguing to students. Brad goes on to explain his context specific practices towards music history education:

So if we’d do a movement from a major symphony…or minor symphony…Romantic Opera Overture or a Classical Opera Overture…[Y]ou’d talk about things like the structure of the music…what an opera is and all the different components of it…I’d try to relate…[the history] to something that we were doing…so it makes logical sense to talk about it. To teach it. Not that…today we are going to study history…[which]… has nothing to do with anything else we have done before…

Brad and other participants have explained that music history is not something that a teacher should spend a lot of time on. First of all, there is not enough time dedicated to music education classes to begin with and there is only so much a teacher can do with the time that they already have. In light of this, each participant has expressed that teaching music history needs to be done briefly and should have a meaningful connection to what is happening in the music classroom, music history is not a “stand–alone” subject area. The successful integration of music history relies on its
relationship to the repertoire that is being learned and that is what Brad has stated here. Context specific music history education is how teachers should be including historical music education, just like Brad does with his symphony repertoire. Both the participant data and the literature show that teaching students about the historical background of a musical piece is great when it is done with a clear-cut purpose and is something that the students can immediately identify with.

Julia’s perspective on how to practically teach music history education to students echoes that of the other interviewees opinions. She incorporated pre-planned sessions devoted to music history, in addition to, a context specific approach that corresponded with the repertoire being learned. As it can be seen, Julia does not spend a lot of time teaching music history to her students; a couple of history lessons out of a whole school year, that is not very much time. However, she gets most of her historical teaching done by including brief snapshots of what occurred in the past, while her students are learning to play specific musical compositions. Julia feels that a little bit of history can come a long way.

Julia and I both believe that taking the time to say a few words before the students get to the playing portion of the class can really help them make that connection between the music and how the history is related to it. As she revealed, there are so many different factors that have to be taken into consideration before the history piece can be actively incorporated into a teacher’s lesson. Student’s attention span, as Julia shared, is one very big factor, especially for the primary and junior grades. They really just want to get to the activity as quick as possible, especially when it has to do with music because it is fun for them. Carrie explained an instance of context specific teaching that she did with her students when they were learning the song, Colours of the Wind:
I know when I taught the kids how to play The Colours of the Wind [from Pocahontas] … I found out that…The Native Flutes- are based on a minor pentatonic scale…[and] the song Colours of the Wind…[is actually] based on that scale of that Native Flute. So whoever composed that piece of shloppy pop music for Pocahontas- had some knowledge of that. So you can bring in stuff like that.

Here we have another example of how a music teacher can cover some music history content, while relating it back to what is being done in the classroom. When Carrie was teaching The Colours of the Wind she discovered that the song is based on the tuning of a native flute. This is something she would tell her students when they were learning this piece of music because she thought it would be useful for them to know. Also, Carrie owns a native flute, which she would bring in, and play for her students. She did this so her students could create a more concrete relationship between what Carrie was telling them and the music they were singing.

Overall there are so many different ways that music history can be integrated in a public school music classroom. However, the data clearly shows that the best way to approach historical teachings in music is by rooting it in what the students are learning in the classroom through context specific lessons that are brief in nature.

4.2.1 Teachers observed that student engagement is at its highest when a relationship can be made between Music History and a student’s own lived experiences

Music history education can be very appealing to students when a connections are made between the historical content and a student’s own lived experience (Bowman, 2001). When an educator is able to extend the content that is being learned in the music classroom to events that have happened in the past; this has the potential to get students to start thinking about the fact that what they are learning actually has some solid meaning behind it. It can be very inspiring for a student to know that the music they are
learning in the classroom has stood the test of time and was something that was played by children just like them hundreds of years ago.

Being able to expose students to those types of historical connections is an important aspect in respects to delivering a high quality music education experience. To reiterate, it is essential that when history is taught in the music classroom that the choices are age appropriate, interesting, and something students can relate to. When any one of these pieces are missing the teacher will lose the interest of their students. Beth explained that the teacher’s approach towards music history education is very significant in terms of developing an overall standard of interest amongst the students that the music teacher is educating:

How students react or engage in music history or in any aspect of teaching is definitely in the approach from the teacher. You need to keep students interested and wanting to learn. As far as music history is concerned, you need to relate it to what that age group is musically exposed to – culturally and mainstreamed culturally.

Beth’s beliefs surrounding the inclusion of music history education in her teaching practice is that it should be student-centered. Both the collected data and the literature show that the teacher has to have an awareness of the demographic of students they are teaching and that will in turn inform them of the choices they will make in terms of the historical content (Edwards, 1998). Certain historical information will resonate better with different types of students; it depends on who you are teaching, what prior knowledge they are bringing into the classroom, and what experiences they have with music in general. Beth also stated that it is important for music teachers to familiarize themselves with the popular music of the age and how they can make connections between what their students are listening to now and the music of the past. Music is one of those specialty subject areas where connections can be made between any era or genre
of music because they all are intertwined and influenced by one another, which is quite advantageous for the music teacher.

Julia addressed the reality of the situation when it comes to music students engaging with historical content. Her outlook is grounded in her own experiences as a music teacher and affirms the point that brief contextual information plays a pivotal role in overall student intrigue with music history:

They don’t care about what happened in the past. They care about what is going on right now. I think if you make the connection with the music they are playing. That really helps for them to get that understanding…Just the fact that they are playing a piece from a composer you just talked about. Or working on a technique or style from that period. That is what is engaging for them.

Both the literature and the data shows that building a relationship between the music students are playing with the coinciding historical content, is an effective way to teach music history (Abril, 2013). The truth of the matter is students are not typically interested in what occurred in the past. It has been expressed by each participant that music history is not something that is of importance to a primary or junior level student because they will not have had much historical exposure (it is not really taught efficiently until high school). Moreover, the data shows that introducing students to small bits of historical information, that relates to what they are playing in the classroom, is a great way to expand student’s historical knowledge base, without overloading them with too much information that they will find unnecessary. Brad explained a short history lesson that he would commonly do with his high school students. It’s important to take note of the fact that this lesson could easily be transferable to any grade level:

There is an interesting lesson that you can teach about how the double bass is from the Viol family…And, until you draw that to their attention they don’t think about the fact that the double bass looks different. The way the neck joins and everything else. And then you can talk about how the Viols were played, the type of music that they played, and how they sounded in comparison to the
Violins…How long did it take me to teach that? Not very long. So you can relate that to the instrument versus these instruments that you are playing now.

This history lesson that Brad has done with his String students directly connects to the instruments his students are learning to play. He focused on introducing his students to the similarities and differences in shape, size, and tone. Then he pointed out to his students that the double bass is from the Viol family which actually differs from the Violin family because the Viol family is something that goes as far back as the Baroque period in music. By doing this, Brad has opened up a new avenue of learning for his students to explore the differences between modern day instruments and the instruments that were used in the Baroque period. As Brad mentioned in his statement this did not really take him very much time to teach. Plus, it is something that the students can instantaneously relate to because it has to do with their instruments. Carrie mentioned that she created a resource for the city of Guelph’s performing arts centre (River Run Centre); where she connected the history, to the music the students were playing, and tied it in with the old music curriculum as well. She stated that:

I developed a resource for… the River Run Center…Where I went through the old curriculum and set up…a concert program from grade 1 to grade 8, three concerts a year. And linked it back to the curriculum. And there were specifics about…[teaching students about events that happened in]…the Romantic Period, the Classical Period, the Baroque Period. And if you got some of that [historical information]… that you can link. Then…you can branch out from there. But if it’s- “The teacher can develop…” “The teacher will do this…” If the teacher doesn’t know… or doesn’t care… It’s not going to get taught. And the kids lose out.

Carrie’s contribution to the discussion once again is related to the qualifications of the music educator and the present music curriculum. She and I both believe that students that are learning music are not going to receive context specific historical teaching (that is relevant to their own lives) when the music teacher does not have the
necessary knowledge in that subject area to do so. Carrie explained that the present music curriculum is very vague in the sense that the language that is used is passive, there is not much direction given on how to teach an expectation, and there are not many expectations in the elementary music curriculum that has to do with music history. She communicated that all of these factors play a large part in how someone is going to interpret the music curriculum and deliver it to the students of a school. It is interesting that Carrie created a source where she purposefully included within its contents how the music in the concert series connects to the different musical periods, Baroque, Classical, Romantic etc. It is unfortunate that the current music curriculum does not offer that type of information and support for those teacher’s (generalist and specialist) who are teaching music.

4.2.2 One way participating teachers incorporate music history is by connecting it to historical world events.

The majority of music that is composed (past or present) is usually a reflection on an incident that has happened in a composer’s life, whether that is a personal experience or a comment on a worldly event (Meyer, 1989). There is always a story that can be found behind a musical composition and it is very rare for one not to be present. Introducing students to some of the reasons why compositions were created is another strategy that both generalist and specialist music teacher’s can use in their teaching practice and it also fits in with the context specific approach to music history education. Providing students with some knowledge on how issues that were happening in the world effected a composer’s musical choices (when it came to writing their compositions) is a strategy that is quite accessible. This is something that can easily be related to today’s
musicians because as stated earlier, most songs have a story behind it, and teaching students about these stories is in fact music history!

When Brad used to teach the high school guitar class he assigned a favorite guitarists project. During this inquiry, Brad showed a series of ten videos on the history of Rock and Roll. Where students got to see actual video footage of some of their favorite guitarists and groups that they were studying. Brad explained that his students always enjoyed doing this project because they would usually learn something interesting that they never knew before about the music industry and their favorite musicians. Brad shared that, “When some people think about teaching History they maybe are not thinking about music from the 50s or 60s…[counting] as History.” Brad’s example here is very concrete, showing how a teacher can creatively incorporate music history education into their practice. Brad’s experiences are coming from a high school music teacher perspective; however, he has shared some interesting outlooks.

What can be taken away from this data is that anything can be considered “history,” whether a teacher is focusing in on orchestral music, the beginnings of jazz, or even the pop music revolution of the 1980s, all of this is history. It does not always have to be centralized around white European composers. Brad explained that seeing how the students engage with this material is very interesting because it actually helped them interact with the music in a different way, rather than just learning how to play music composed by these Rock and Roll guitarists. Here is another example provided by Brad specific to a piece he would commonly do with his high school string orchestra:

The Karl Jenkins’ Palladio. The Diamonds are Forever thing…It’s an interesting history lesson because it was written in 1995…But it…[sounds like a] Baroque piece. The fact that it’s [a] Concerto…sort of the style…but it’s got more of a 20th century vibe to it. So you know, when you play that in orchestra you’re not going to talk for an hour about that. But at least 2 minutes! Say something
about…[when it] was written…Sometimes I’ll just…[ask students to take a moment and] look at the date this was published…[and then ask them]…what does this sound like?

Here is another instance where Brad’s expertise aided him in his choices when it came to repertoire selection for his orchestra. He already knew that this piece was composed in the 1990s but it sounded like a composition out of the 1600s because it encompassed several elements of the Baroque genre and style. Brad stated that exposing students to that type of information was something that could be done in a brief manner and it was very intriguing to see student reactions and make them aware that this was not a Baroque piece, even though it follows the standard conventions of one. Jenkin’s, Palladio is a modern day composition that is influenced by the Renaissance architect, Andrea Palladio, hence Jenkin’s stylistic choices. Moreover, all of these historical elements are things that the teacher can bring into the classroom but it needs to have a purpose. Carrie’s stance on teaching students about composer influences is something that she is very passionate about. She conveyed that:

I want them to see how everything is all linked together. And see how…you can listen to Bach and then listen to Stravinsky and…listen to some of the chord structures from one composer and then realize that the influences are there… I think the more you know about something the more interesting it becomes. Not to sit down and be able to do an analysis. But just to know where it came from…To play with more understanding.

It is very important to Carrie that her music students have the ability to make a connection between the music they are learning and their own lives; whether that is a historical, stylistic, or theoretical relationship, it does not matter, as long as the connection is made. With this being said, she had shared that being able to show students how cyclical the nature of music making is, in terms of composer influences, is something that students will benefit from as they get older and continue on with music.
They will begin to see that this person’s work influenced that person’s work and vice versa. Music follows patterns and there is a natural reconstruction of these patterns, where composers are influenced by bits and pieces of past musical works, which in turn helps fuel their own inspiration and growth in their music making. Giving students a sense of this process can have a significant impact on their development as musicians.

Carrie’s experience learning about Poulenc’s Dialogue of the Carmelites as a university music student, illustrated the importance of context specific history lessons, as well as, being aware of the stories that go along with the composition:

And the last song in the Opera when the nuns are going off to be killed. If you just hear the music and you hear the Hhhhhhhrriiiip of the guillotine coming down. It’s in the music… this sound… it doesn’t make any sense. But if you know the history and you know that Yes- there are nuns that are being executed as this is happening. It makes the whole thing more poignant and more interesting to listen to.

The Dialogue of the Carmelites is not something that is appropriate for elementary students but what can be learned from this excerpt is that context plays an important role. This opera written by Poulenc is based on the Reign of Terror that took place during the French Revolution, so there actually is the sound of the guillotine being emulated within the music itself. Without being aware of the historical context beforehand, it would be quite difficult to decipher that this “noise” being played by the orchestra is actually the sound of a guillotine coming down on a nun. Knowing the story behind the music assists with the overall understanding of a piece of music.

Brad described an instance where he had a student of his who composed a concerto. He believed that a part of his student’s success was due to the fact that he had a good understanding of the historical conventions and types of styles that went into a concerto. Brad’s student had the ability to compose a concerto for cello because he had
some level of understanding of the concerto traditions. His student knew that a concerto consisted of a solo instrument, accompanied by an orchestra, and it is commonly broken down into “movements” or “parts” of varied speed; that knowledge alone is rooted in historical compositional practices. Finally, it is evident that having an awareness of how history has influenced composers and their music can be an asset to students, when it is taught in a thoughtful and conscientious way.

**4.3 Teachers believed that exposure to incidental and brief teachings of music history can promote a deeper musical understanding amongst young musicians**

Music history education has the capacity to support and help students with their overall musical comprehension when it is incorporated into a teacher’s practice in a brief fashion. The data shows that students respond positively to “short snippets” of music history education, rather than a full lesson. The historical content needs to be carefully woven in with the playing aspect in order for it have any relevance with students; this way the history the students are engaging with is directly applicable to the pieces they are learning in the classroom. By framing the historical content in this manner, the teacher begins to set the precedence that there is a value to knowing the history behind the music. Having an understanding of the history has the potential to make students more conscious musicians because it provides them with an explanation that can inform all aspects of their playing, beginning with technique all the way up to performance interpretation.

Brad discussed his strategies towards incidental teachings of music history in this excerpt:

So you can pick a piece of music and then you can talk a little bit about the time period, … [the] composer, or talk about performance practice… I think the historical context of where the music came from and the way the composers were employed is important… When we look at how Bach was employed by the Church and how he wrote his Church music- versus- Haydn that was a more secular composer…And then Beethoven where he started to work privately and
tried to make his own living on writing compositions for specific people rather than a regular patron. I think that gives them a really good context of how the music develops.

Brad had the flexibility to be able to include aspects of music history education into anything that he decided to teach his students. His extensive knowledge of historical music developments allowed him to have versatility in his teaching, which is optimal when trying to actively fit in brief elements of music history. With Brad’s music specialist background, he had an advantage because he knows the major music developments that have occurred and can describe them with ease whenever he needs to. This is another moment where the generalist music teacher would have difficulty incorporating the history because most would not be able to talk in a spontaneous like manner about a historical connection before a piece were to be played by students, the knowledge base is just not there. Julia took the same approach as Brad when it comes to music history education because she felt it is most effective when it is done in an impromptu manner. Her students respond better to short two minute historical anecdotes rather than a full forty-minute lesson.

She shared that if her students were learning how to play a Minuet, for example. Julia would take the time to inform them that a Minuet is a musical dance piece from the Baroque era and that it was common practice to hear Minuet’s playing in the Kings court, hence the light bow and the moderate tempo speeds because people needed to be able to dance to this type of music. That is important for students to know, especially if they are having difficulty learning the minuet style of music. In essence, Julia is very mindful of how she integrated music history education into her classroom practice; her strategies are succinct, efficient, brief, and context specific.
Julia asserted that elementary and junior level music students do not need to receive a full music history lesson. Instead, taking a few moments to make them aware, for example, that Beethoven’s Ode to Joy influenced pretty much every Romantic composer from Brahms, to Bartok, to even Dvorak, or taking the time to explain why a minuet is played at a moderate tempo with a light bow on the string. Small things like that is what Julia believed will make the history appealing to young music students and actually help them understand that there are certain ways to approach playing specific pieces of music.

Furthermore, the literature shows being aware of that background knowledge and understanding the developments in music is really important for the overall progression of young musicians (Hash, 2010). Julia also talked about the significance of listening to pieces of music with her classes and having a discussion about what her students are hearing by trying to relate the listening portion back to the historical stories; even that is a wonderful strategy that would not take up too much class time. Successful music history education is all about keeping the students engaged and the best way to do that is by keeping the historical teachings very brief. Carrie added to the conversation by sharing her experiences of being a Kindergarten music teacher. She stated that:

I taught Kindergarten Music for two years…and it was wonderful. I was doing solfege with them, and rhythms, and movement, and I would always tell them a story but the story would always have a music hook in it somewhere that related to the historical developments…I taught them music twice a week…Kindergartners!

Carrie had the opportunity to teach music to Kindergartners and she began building their musical foundation with them right from the beginning. She read them picture books that related to music and connected to the historical developments in some way. Most music teachers would not even bother to do something like this with
Kindergartners. She even taught them solfege (which is a pitch and sight singing method out of the Kodály system) and is something that is not commonly started until grade 1 or 2. As Carrie shared, it really depends on the comfort level of the music teacher and what they would like their students to get out of their classroom music experience.

The Ontario Music Curriculum states that solfege should be introduced by the music teacher in grade 1 (Ontario Music Curriculum, 2009). However, the concept of solfege is only mentioned in the curriculum twice and that is at the grade 1 and grade 3 level (Ontario Music Curriculum, 2009). There is also a page in the back of the curriculum that shows the teacher the hand signs associated with solfege (Ontario Music Curriculum, 2009). That is the only guidance and instruction provided in the Arts Curriculum document. Once again the music specialist has the upper hand because they have been trained to teach students using the Kodály method. This observation addresses the realistic notion that music history is not going to be taught to students when the music teacher does not have the basic background knowledge to teach music. Both the participant data and the literature show that the curriculum does not adequately provide enough support for generalist music teachers to be able to deliver the music curriculum in an effective way, which is a major concern.

As a result of Carrie’s music specialist background, she knows how to make certain elements of music education, like the history, appropriate for specific age groups. She’s not going to stand up in front of a Kindergarten class and teach a history lesson to them; however, reading them a picture book that incidentally highlights some historical content, is a practical approach, that Kindergarten’s can easily latch onto. The problem here is that the literature shows that there are not many music specialists in Ontario classrooms anymore and the students are missing out on the opportunities an expert can
bring to their musical learning (Whyte and Mould, 2011). My participants and I believe
that it is important for music history to be taught to students in small snippets and
integrated in with their playing. However, every school’s situation is different and it’s
difficult to know if a generalist music teacher would actually teach the students some
music history, even if they had some professional development in that area.

**4.3.1 Teachers observed that having an awareness of the origins of a musical piece can aid in a student’s performance practice knowledge, stylistic choices, and overall musical literacy**

Having an understanding of when a musical composition was created can assist in
a student’s choices when it comes to performance practice techniques. There are specific
musical standards that are attached to certain pieces of music. For example, stylistically a
composition written by Mozart greatly differs from something composed by Beethoven.
A violinist would play Mozart using light, staccato (short) like bow strokes. Vibrato
(String technique that produces a rich tone) would be used in a minimal and tasteful
fashion because it was not common practice to use a lot of vibrato as of yet. Vibrato was
something that just started to become popular amongst string players during the Classical
era of music. Where Beethoven wrote music in the Romantic era and there was an
apparent shift in style that occurred from the light to the dark. Meaning the music that
was being composed had melodies that were very rich and thick, so a heavy bow with
lots of vibrato would be used by a violinist to be able to emulate that type of emotion.

Considering this, students need to have an awareness of how to appropriately
interpret pieces of music that they are playing. Once again, full history lessons are not
needed but it is important for students to know a bit of the historical developments in
respects to style. Having that knowledge will help student’s make appropriate choices
when it comes to learning a piece of music. Julia’s beliefs towards knowing the historical style of a musical piece are strong. She communicated that:

Understanding the style of that period is probably the most important thing for their performance…the Baroque style is a lot different than the Romantic style…Staccato (short) versus legato (long) for example…The way you bow a piece of music depends on the style of that period…I think it’s really important for them to kind of understand what the overall style of that period was like and what techniques were used to achieve that style. And that helps them on their instrument.

According to Julia and the other participants, knowing the types of playing styles that were used during the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modern eras of music is another form of music history that can be brought to the attention of students. Julia wanted her students to have some knowledge of the overall style of a musical period so they can use that information to help them with their playing. Learning how to play an instrument for the first time or even singing a song in tune, can be a very challenging and discouraging process for young students because mastery is not immediate; it takes a lot of time to become a proficient player or singer. Julia shared that there is a lot of background knowledge that a student needs to know and simultaneously apply to their playing of an instrument or singing. Trying to make that process enjoyable and as easy as possible for students is a goal of Julia’s and she believes that it should be a general goal for music teacher’s everywhere. Keeping this in mind, it makes sense for students to be aware of the style because that is one less thing for them to figure out on their own and it can be really helpful. Carrie has elaborated more on this same point by explaining that:

To understand that when you are playing a piece of music that you don’t play Baroque music like Classical, you don’t play Classical like 20th century music. And there is a reason for that. Because of the developments… Maybe the instruments are different, maybe its different types of bows that were being used at the time…maybe different instrumentation was available… Just… Knowledge. Knowledge is Power!! How many times has that been said?
Carrie emphasized that there is a significance for students to be cognizant of the fact that every musical piece is unique. Having a little bit of knowledge about the different musical styles and progressions helps students “play with more understanding” (Carrie, 2015, p.5). It gives students a general idea of how a piece of music is supposed to sound like, which can help them when they are practicing. Carrie indicated that students will know, for example, that when they are playing a piece by Mozart, using heavy full bow strokes is not appropriate because it does not fit in with the Classical style. Brad added to the discussion by talking about how he would make it a priority to show his students that each musical period has its own distinctive sound because of the different performance practices that were being used. He also believed in the importance of students having an awareness of the meaning of the musical markings on a piece of music, which ties in with both the history and having that musical literacy piece in place.

Brad explained, he did not focus too much on performance practice but he ensured that his students had some level of understanding on how to create a specific sound to fit the style of a time period. Through Brad’s brief context specific history lessons, his students had a sense of what type of developments were happening and when; resulting in his student’s capacity to be able to make informed choices about what techniques they were going to use to try and reproduce the musical style of that time period. Additionally, each participant and I believe that as musicians having an understanding of the dynamic markings, articulations, bowing indications, etc. is also an important element of performance practice. Therefore, teaching students about the meaning of these musical markings is also a form of music history education and is something that can be taught incidentally. In essence, there are a lot of different components to music history education and being able to expose students to some of the
key elements can help them in their overall musical literacy and performance practice decisions.

4.4 Teachers enact culturally responsive music pedagogy as one strategy for integrating historical teachings and making them relevant to students

Culturally responsive music pedagogy is an effective method that can easily be tied to both music history education and a student’s lived experiences. The literature supports that including music repertoire and content that reflects the demographic of a school is a great strategy that students respond very positively towards because historical and cultural musical content are closely associated with each other (Everist, 1999). The data that has been collected shows that it is very difficult to teach music history without discussing the type of culture the music originated from. As mentioned before, the culture of a time period has a direct influence on the type of music that is being composed (Everist, 1999). With this being said, planning lessons that are reflective of the different cultures in the classroom, does not only elevate student engagement, but it connects with them on a personal level as well.

Brad integrated culturally responsive music education into his practice by exposing students to world music, hand drumming activities, and assigning music projects where cross-cultural musical relationships was a requirement. Brad taught music in the Kitchener-Waterloo area for his entire teaching career. The demographic of students that he was working with were primarily Caucasian. He did not have the ability to do as much culturally responsive teaching as he would of liked because he did not have access to a very diverse population of students. However, he acknowledges the overall importance of being aware of the different types of cultures that are located in certain cities in and around Ontario. Brad asserted that, as a music teacher, if the demographic
of your school population is primarily Indian, then it only makes sense to lead a unit that is focused on a particular genre of Indian music.

One thing that the Ontario Arts Curriculum has done a good job of is its overall emphasis on the importance of students experiencing a multicultural arts education (Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009). Considering this, it is required that students be introduced to different types of music from various cultures. It makes sense then for the music teacher to choose music that represents the cultures of the classroom or school. By doing this the teacher is educating students about different musical practices, as well as, providing them with a little bit of information on the culture. Building upon these details, Beth shared her approach towards teaching culturally relevant music lessons:

I feel that you are always going to teach more to the social milieu of your school, however that does not mean you should be exclusive to that or those cultures. The year I taught music, I exposed my students to Greek Music, South Indian, North Indian Music, Turkish Music, the Didgeridoo from Australia, Djembe and African Drumming…Did I teach the history of all those cultures? - No, but I briefly mentioned an aspect of the history of each…

Beth introduced her students to multiple different cultures and genres of music when she was a music teacher. She included teachings that reflected the school’s population but she also tried to incorporate other cultural lessons as well. Beth believed that when a music teacher has taken a culturally responsive approach to music education they should have tried to touch upon a broad range of cultures. In addition to this, planning units that dealt with culturally specific repertoire allowed Beth to talk to her students about where the music came from, aspects of performance practice, and some reasons as to how the musical styles are reflective of the values of the culture. Once again, Beth did not spend a lot of time telling her students about the history of these cultures but she made sure that they had the necessary information that they needed in
order to be able to play and learn the music. That is one of the reasons why bringing in the different musical cultures into the classroom can be so effective and inspiring for young students (Edwards, 1998). Julia has taken a different approach towards culturally responsive music pedagogy. She lets the students dictate what type of musical cultures the class is going to learn about through project based work. She affirmed that:

The only thing that I find is that including culturally responsive pedagogy kind of depends on the teacher...So if I really have no knowledge of that type of music or culture then that becomes difficult. Usually, by grade 7/8 the way I approach it is by letting the kids do a project where they can pick a style of music and I encourage...students to tell us about their culture and the music and where it comes...

First and foremost, the literature shows that culturally responsive music pedagogy is challenging to do when the music teacher does not have a broad musical knowledge base to draw from (Baker and Saunders, 1994; Hashm 2010; Kinder, 1998; Price and Burnsed, 1989; and Prospt, 2003). Here is another place where having a music specialist in a school is advantageous. Furthermore, Julia’s student-centered approach, regarding the teaching of different musical cultures, is one that is very accessible to the generalist music teacher. By allowing students to do their own projects about a particular style of music or musical culture, the students are inadvertently digging into the history themselves.

There is a shift in roles that is happening, where Julia sits back and acts as the learner, and the students become the experts. Julia explained that this is a great way to enact student agency in the music classroom and cover a lot of different information in a short time frame. It also is significant to note that students may not view this type of work as “history” they may just see it as “music.” Therefore, that is when the music teacher can step in and point out that what they have been learning through this project is
in fact music history. Beth raised an important concern regarding culturally specific
music and teacher-student open-mindedness. She conveyed that:

Having an open mind to different genres of music allows you as an educator to be
more welcoming to new concepts, ideas, and approaches to your music program.
Music is ever-evolving, and so your music program should be too. Students need
to learn how to embrace and explore their creative mind, and why not explore and
push those boundaries in music class. Learning about different musical cultures
can be a starting point…

Teaching students about different genres of music makes them more aware of the
world around them. Beth shared that it gives them the ability to see that the world is
made up of all different kinds of people, ideas, thoughts, places, and cultures. She also
stated that being able to address any one of these subject areas through a musical medium
is a wonderful way for students to start exploring these ideas and can be connected to a
wide-array of curricular areas, not just music. Brad described an interesting group
project that he would often do with his grade 9 students, where linkages were made by
students with places all around the world:

They each had to pick a family of instruments…One group did Strings, one group
did single reeds…one group did double reeds…one group did percussion…They
had to pick at least five instruments from five different areas [around the world].
And…talk about why they were a part of the family. So…why is this a
zither?...What makes...[it] a zither? And what types of zithers are there in
Western Europe...India or China?...Now, that’s not exactly history. But it does
gives them the idea that these instruments have appeared all over the world, in
similar forms, and have been used for centuries... So that was a really neat project
to talk about not just Western European History but World History and World
Music.

Brad had provided his grade 9 student’s with a variety of different learning
opportunities by doing this instrument project with them. First of all, he had his grade 9
students learning about world history in a fun and interesting way because it is centered
around instruments; so that in itself can be really engaging for students. Furthermore, his
students got the opportunity to explore the instrument families and discover what specific
features made an instrument fall into the Strings family, or the Double Reeds family, or the Percussion family. They also had the chance to discover how different places from around the world used specific instruments and further investigated the role that these instruments played in that culture’s music. Finally, they learned a little bit about the history of these places the instruments originated from because that would be something that would naturally come up within their research. Not to mention the fact, that with today’s advances in technology students would probably be able to find a video on the internet of people playing these instruments from their culture of origin. On the whole, culturally responsive music pedagogy is one approach that can be used to integrate historical teachings of music in the classroom.

4.4.1 Teachers bring in experts to educate students about specific musical genres as a strategy for enacting culturally responsive music history pedagogy

Inviting musical experts into the classroom, that specialize in certain ethnic musical genres, is an authentic approach towards exposing students to culturally responsive music pedagogy and history. The data shows that when the music teacher is not able to cover specific aspects of the music curriculum (whether that is due to lack of experience or unfamiliarity with a topic) being able to bring in an expert who can teach your students about a particular musical concept is a good strategy to use. All the participants interviewed for this research inquiry are music specialists; however, most have mentioned instances where they have brought in a guest from the musical community to help them teach a musical concept to their students. Julia is a music educator who really has enjoyed inviting other experts into her music classroom. She believed that their visits have nicely complemented the music program that she was delivering. Julia explained that:
I try to rely on getting in different types of performers…if I feel like there is someone I know who would do a really good job on an Indian Music Unit. We will try to do an assembly. In the fall… I am having a lady from Laurier who teaches there and she is a percussionist with the symphony as well…So she is coming in to do rhythm workshops with the kids. I’m hoping that it’ll encourage them to talk about African Rhythms for example. So I try to do it that way. If I don’t have that experience myself…

Bringing musical guests into the classroom to assist with a teacher’s music program is very resourceful. Evidently, Julia communicated that this cannot be a regular occurrence that happens on a daily basis in a public school. However, she was adamant on sharing that relying on experts to come into the classroom and educate students on specific styles, musical cultures, or genres that the music teacher is not comfortable teaching, or does not have a lot of experience with, is a great learning opportunity for both the teacher and the students. Firstly, the excitement level and overall engagement of the students will automatically be present because there is a guest in the room who has a special talent. Secondly, having someone who is from a specific culture actually speaking about the musical practices and developments of that culture, provides the students with a tangible and realistic connection to that culture’s music. Julia even mentioned how having an expert in the classroom, like the percussionist from Wilfred Laurier University, had the ability to inspire students to begin to ask questions about certain rhythmic concepts because the students knew there was a percussion expert in the room. Brad had also invited music experts into his classroom. He stated that:

Twenty years ago I had a CD of Afghanistan music and then who’s to think that ten years ago it would have actually been major new headlines- Afghanistan. And a bunch of my students had already listened to percussion pieces from Afghanistan. And I brought in a group… a Middle Eastern group. Things like that…I tried to be rather eclectic…

Here is an occasion, where Brad decided it would be worth the time to invite a group of experts into his school that his students can engage with in a live setting. Brad
had a good knowledge of Middle Eastern music but there were certain elements that would be more effective coming from an actual expert in that particular field of music than himself. By bringing in a Middle Eastern musical group to play for his class, this exposed his students to other techniques of this culture, such as teachings of the maqam system. Brad explained that oftentimes new information that is being provided by these musical experts will usually be received in a positive light by most students because it is coming from a different source other than the primary teacher. With this being said, having the ability to experience a live musical performance is a wonderful opportunity for students. Julia elaborated a bit more on this fact by recounting another moment where she had brought a musical expert into the classroom:

So last year I got my conductor from the KW Chamber Orchestra to come in… I was telling him the challenges of my music program and he said you know what I am going to come to your Christmas concert… He came to the concert and we had the grade 5s and 6s playing recorder together. So I said do you want to come up and meet them? So I take him upstairs… he… grabs a plastic recorder and starts playing for these kids. They ask him- Can you play the Little Mermaid? Plays it. Can you play Star Wars? Plays it. And then he was telling them stuff about the recorder and the history of the recorder. And it ended up being this amazing 30min workshop.

This story shared by Julia is very inspiring because it showcased the conductor of the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Orchestra teaching a handful of student’s at Julia’s school an impromptu recorder lesson. Matt Jones performance and short history lesson on the recorder was not a planned affair. Instead, this was something that organically transpired and Julia’s student’s got the opportunity to experience that. This type of spontaneous performance definitely would not have happened if Matt Jones was not a trained musician and did not have some background knowledge on the history of the recorder. Consequently, both Julia and Brad believed that being able to expose students to different types of musical experts can be a formative learning experience for them.
These two music educators have also shared that that having musical experts in the classroom, who specialize in culturally specific genres, can act as a form of professional development for the teacher as well because they have the chance to observe the way these experts are teaching, which can in turn inform their own practice.

4.5 *Music History education is challenging to incorporate into a public school program because of the lack of school board supports, music specialists, designated class time, and insufficient specificity surrounding the Ontario Music Curriculum expectations*

The Ontario music curriculum expectations have been purposefully written in a vague fashion so that the curriculum can be accessible to any teacher, generalist or specialist. Carrie, Brad, and Julia have pointed out that the curriculum expectations that need to be covered have so little substance to them that it is very difficult for someone who has no musical background to receive some concrete support from this document. These three participants have also stated that the curriculum lacks specificity in direction and that in itself is a problem because there are no clear-cut instructions as to how to go about teaching a musical concept. Take for example expectation C3.2 out of the grade 2 music curriculum:

> Identify through performing and/or listening, a variety of musical forms or pieces from different communities, times, and places (e.g., “O Canada”, an Iroquoian lullaby, Indian classical music, Obwisana from Ghana)...(Ontario Arts Curriculum, 2009, p.81).

There is a lot of information missing from this expectation that a generalist music teacher would definitely need to know in order to teach an accurate lesson to their students. For example, what is a musical form and what types of musical forms are being referred to here, because there are multiple different kinds. Also, the “examples” that are provided in the curriculum document are laughable. Indian Classical Music is a very large and complex genre; how would a teacher, who has no musical experience, be able
to select an easy enough piece for Grade 2 students to learn, if they have not had extensive musical training. The way the current Ontario music curriculum has been written makes it seem that music specialists are no longer needed in schools and the research conducted by Whyte and Mould (2011) supports this claim. Carrie stated her outlook on this matter, connecting it back to music history education:

The music history curriculum as revised in 2010 is so loosey goosey that it ceases to be a music curriculum. It can be taught by a generalist that knows absolutely nothing about music which negates its usefulness as a music curriculum…

Carrie has had a great deal of experience teaching at the Elementary and Junior levels. Thus, for her to willingly express that the music history curriculum is essentially useless is very important to take note of. She is very passionate about delivering a high quality music education experience to students of all ages and she is adamant on the fact that the current music curriculum is not providing educators with enough information to be able to do that; especially music teachers who are not experts in the field of music.

Brad expands on Carrie’s point by explaining that:

I’m not sure if the descriptions that are [in the music curriculum] …make it easy to teach. Because when you read the way they are described you kind of think to yourself how the heck do I teach that? You really have to get your mind over the fact that they’re just trying to make a description that is fairly generic. They’re not going to tell you that you have to teach…[things like music history]…they have made the curriculum so vague that a classroom teacher can do anything and call it Music Education…And to me that’s totally wrong. I think that music is one of those specialties that should be taught by someone that knows how to teach music. And I’m just totally appalled at how little music education some of these kids are getting…

Brad’s contribution to the discussion is very valuable in the sense that it reaffirms the fact that music education in Ontario is moving towards delivering a “music appreciation” curriculum. There is nothing wrong with teaching students how to appreciate music; however, there is so much more to music than admiration. Carrie,
Brad, and Julia have communicated that students want to be able to create and play their own music; how will they be able to learn how to accurately play an instrument if they are not taught and guided by someone who is a music expert? It is challenging, for a music specialist like Brad, to know that the music curriculum has been deliberately written in a vague manner to accommodate the needs of the planning time teachers, who are often expected to cover music and have no actual music experience themselves. Julia conveyed that:

In the school systems right now what’s going on especially in Elementary- is you become a planning time teacher. And Visual Arts, Gym, and Music are all things you could be given to teach…it’s about Art Appreciation and Music Appreciation. Rather than really having a music specialist. The specialists are dying. There aren’t many of us left. I have 5 years left and I can retire. We are a dime a dozen.

Julia emphasized the fact that there are not many music specialists anymore and there are two factors that play into this according to her experiences in schools. One, the school boards are trying their best to make elementary music education as generic as possible to eliminate the need of a music specialist. Secondly, there are not enough musicians who want to be public school music teachers. Parkes and Jones (2012) discovered through their research that out of 270 undergraduate music students who participated in an online questionnaire, 65% were in favor of choosing a career in music performance. (Parkes and Jones, 2012, p. 101). More than half of these students did not want to pursue a career in music education. All of these issues play a huge role in the recent developments and changes that have been made to the Ontario music curriculum, as well as, the ideologies surrounding who should be teaching music in our schools. Julia, shared a shocking anecdote that sums up the music curriculum discussion quite well. She communicated that:
At our school the one year. The principal made a point of praising this teacher who was not a music specialist. For her wonderful music program. Because the kids made instruments out of everyday materials that they could find…And I’m thinking…oh okay I’m teaching kids who have no music background to play instruments and they are playing pieces by the end of grade 7. And you’ve never talked about that. Why is this so cool? That’s an art project! They didn’t even play the instruments when they finished it.

This story embodies everything that has been discussed thus far in terms of the vagueness of the Ontario music curriculum and what can be considered “music education.” It is great that these students had the opportunity to make their own instruments out of everyday materials, nevertheless is this something that can realistically be considered a form of music education? As Julia expressed, what these children were doing can be better related to the visual arts curriculum than to the music curriculum, yet this teacher was praised for having developed an excellent music program. Making guitars out of kleenex boxes and rubber elastic bands cannot seriously be deemed as a “music program,” unless there is a clear underlying musical connection. From the information, that Julia has provided here it does not seem that there was any distinct relationship made to music other than the fact that they created their own instruments.

Overall, the collected data shows that the Ontario music curriculum expectations lack specificity and direction, which makes the curriculum difficult (especially for generalist music teachers) to deliver. Consequently, music history education is not something that this curriculum supports very well, which evidently means that this aspect of music education is often overlooked and omitted from a student’s music education experience (Beatty, 2001). The reality of the situation is that this curriculum has made it acceptable to not have music specialists in Ontario schools (Whyte and Mould, 2011). With the absence of the music specialist, elements such as, music history education, are sacrificed.
Through a number of different actions carried out by the Ontario school boards, in relation to music education, it is clear that this subject area and the professional development of its teachers, is not a priority. Each participant had explained that there used to be more than one specific consultant/resource teacher assigned to the subject of Music; unfortunately, the school boards decided that there was no longer a need to have a subject-specific consultant. As communicated by each of the participants, there is now only one Arts consultant that is responsible for providing support for every subject that is contained in the Ontario arts curriculum. Carrie, Brad, and Julia had also shared that through their experiences being in publically funded schools, there is not much professional development provided by the school boards for music educators. Instead, teachers need to seek out professional learning opportunities on their own and often times needs to pay for it themselves. They also had stated that the school boards have not made it easy for someone who does not have a music background to get the necessary coaching, guidance, and support, so they can teach music with some level of proficiency.

Carrie reported on the current state of music education development in Ontario:

They’ve taken away the consultants…They’ve taken away the number of classes per week. There is rarely any PD on music. If you belong to The Ontario Music Educators Association, which has nothing to do with the school boards or the government, you can go and learn about all sorts of things. If you want to go [the] Kodály Institute you can learn about teaching vocal music, which has nothing to do with the Ontario government or the local school boards…I feel that the school boards and the government have let Music down big time! They’ve cut down on the number of classes… And I’ve said this many times… They’re expecting us to grow trees but we’re not letting them get growing roots. Here- we want you to have the same product that you’ve always had- but we’re not giving you time to develop it.

As shared by Carrie, there is really not very much support provided by the Ontario school boards to grow and develop the subject of music. It is not at the forefront of what the school boards are interested in expanding right now, especially with all the
new campaigns surrounding the 21st century learner and outfitting schools with the latest technology; music is viewed as “less important” than other subject areas and it is treated as such. As explained by Carrie, music teachers, both generalist and specialist, are not going to get the support that they need to succeed. Julia added to the discussion by expressing that:

That’s an area that really needs development (Music P.D.). I don’t think that we are getting that quality music instruction anymore. We don’t have the specialists…It’s not as valued. If you take a look at the curriculum and what schools focus on it’s all about Math and Language…And it’s sad to see because…all those studies that show how valuable music is [for] brain development and all these other things…

Julia, who is still an active music teacher, believed that the school board’s need to have more professional development opportunities for their music educators because there really are not many being offered. She also brought up the fact that students are not being taught by high quality music educators anymore because the music specialists are so few in number. According to both Julia and Carrie, music is not a subject area worth growing and building upon right at this moment, therefore its overall value at the school board level is low. When Brad was on the board with the Ontario Music Educators Association, he tried to convince the other board members that music should be recognized as a different discipline in Primary and Junior; this way whoever is teaching music would actually have to have the proper qualifications. Brad outlined that:

When I was on the [board for the] Ontario Music Educators Association…one of our biggest pushes…was to try and get Music recognized as a different discipline in Primary and Junior. So that you actually had to have a Music Part 1, or a Kodály course, or something, to teach…music. And they wouldn’t go for it…It doesn’t make sense. It’s a completely different language. Like French…and to me Music is the same as French. It’s a language. It’s got its own History. It’s got its own theory. It’s got its own notation. Its own language in that way. The notation language is something completely different than everything else. And it should be taught by a specialist.
Brad believed that it is important for music educators to have the appropriate certifications in order for them to be able to teach music in an Ontario public school. As Brad so eloquently conveyed, music has its own literacy, history, notation, and performance system, it makes logical sense for educators that are teaching music to have some knowledge about each of these aspects. Unfortunately, there is a limited amount of research conducted on the overall effects a music program provided by a generalist music teacher has on a child’s musical education. Based on the data that I have collected; it is overwhelmingly apparent that music specialists provide a higher quality music education experience. They also have the flexibility to be able to include, areas like historical context specific to the music being learned, where a generalist would not be able to do this with the same degree of efficiency. Brad raised another excellent point in respects to music education teacher qualifications:

Even now your specialist can be done online. I don’t know how you can get your music specialist online. How can they tell if you’re a good teacher online? How do you know if the person can actually conduct, or play, or sing or whatever? I guess it doesn’t matter…

Educators who would like to obtain their music specialist have the ability to take a course in person or online; music is not something that should have an online option. As Brad mentioned, how does the ministry of education know that this person is actually a good music teacher? What concrete evidence has been accumulated through an online medium that this educator has exhibited the necessary traits to be called, “music specialist?” Carrie, Brad, and Julia have each shared that this is just another layer that shows that the ministry of education and the Ontario school board’s truly do not care who is teaching music in the elementary school system. Julia wrapped up the conversation by explaining in a little more detail what has happened with the school board consultants:
We don’t have a Music Consultant anymore…We have an Arts Consultant. She’s not a musician, she’s not an artist, but she is the consultant for the Arts and also Core French…She’s all the grades. Elementary all the way up to Secondary…She’s Music, she’s Art, Phys-Ed…Anything that is in that Arts document. She’s the consultant. One consultant for all those subjects…It’s such a huge job…

The question that needs to be asked here, is why is there one consultant overseeing so many different subject areas and who decided that this was the best alternative to having subject-specific consultants? As stated by Brad, Carrie, and Julia it really puts all of these different subject areas in a bad position in terms of teacher development; having a school board consultant that has no musical background is pointless. How are they going to be able to accurately help and assist generalist music teacher’s in developing their classroom music practice? This is yet another factor that showcases where the school board’s priorities lie.

To reiterate, music education is not at the forefront of the school board’s agenda. As a result of this, most students are not receiving the best music instruction. There are a variety of noteworthy studies that have been conducted by researchers, Giles and Frego, 2004; Hagen, 2002; Koops, 2008; Morin, 2004; Whyte and Mould, 2011; Wiggins and Wiggins (2008), that support this viewpoint. However, there has never been any research that specifically deals with generalist and specialist music teacher’s in Ontario and how the school board’s agenda impacts their classroom practice. From the data that I have engaged with, it is evident that the decisions made by the Ontario school boards, in relation to music education, have had major influence on the type of music instruction students are receiving.

The data that has been collected shows that as a result of the lack of school board supports, music specialists, and designated music classes, it can be quite difficult to
incorporate music history education into a public school music program. Carrie, Brad, and Julia have shared that historical teachings of music will not occur in the classroom when the teacher does not have the proper support system to help them develop their musical knowledge base and expertise. In addition to this, they have expressed that the Ontario elementary music curriculum does not have many expectations dedicated to the teaching of music history; thus, it is not an area of music that most would consider important to teach. Furthermore, Ontario elementary students typically receive two forty minute periods of music instruction per week. That is not a lot of time to develop their musical playing skills, let alone mix in some history lessons. In essence, it is challenging for both music specialists and generalist music teachers to integrate historical teachings of music into their practice because of all of these different impeding factors. Carrie explained that:

You need to get them playing at a certain level. So they lose a lot of time for doing creative compositions, they lose their time for history, they lose their time for any music theory backup. It’s all taught incidentally. And it’s a crime and a shame. And it’s very very important to kids learning…There is not adequate backup given at either the board or ministry level for music.

Carrie is speaking from an elementary/junior string teacher perspective and the issues that she has discussed are important to take note of. According to Carrie, Brad, and Julia, the Waterloo Region District School Board used to offer grade 6 students a choice between taking instrumental music, which included band and string instruments, or continue on with regular music instruction that is more vocal based. Now, students do not get the option of instrumental music instruction until grade 7 in the WRDSB and grade 13 no longer exists anymore. Essentially (as shared by Carrie, Brad, and Julia), what that means is music teachers have six years between grade 7 and grade 12 to get students playing their instruments with some level of competence.
Six years is not a lot of time for students to learn how to efficiently play an instrument. With this being said, each participant has stated that teaching students how to play their instruments definitely ranks higher in priority over exposing students to music history education. Carrie does not like the fact that music history has to be taught in a brief and incidental fashion because she believed that it is a significant component that should be included in a student’s music education experience. However, there is not enough time to do justice to it and that in part has to do with the decisions the school boards have made regarding music education. Brad contributed to the conversation by conveying that:

They dropped grade 6 music. They dropped the OAC. So all of a sudden you got 6 years. The difference between 8 years and 6 years is huge…when you’re trying to learn an instrument. We’re teaching a skill that takes time to acquire. Young people now are looking for instant gratification. If you’re computer takes two minutes to load what are you doing – oh my god it’s so slow. Have you ever learned how to play a Viola in 2min? Or how many kids come out of grade 8 saying they can play 5 instruments because they can play a scale on 5 instruments…

As shared by Brad, there are visible implications to not having instrumental music begin until grade 7. Carrie, Brad, and Julia have strongly expressed that learning how to play an instrument takes time and there is only so much that a music teacher can cover with two forty-minute music periods a week. There really is not enough time dedicated to music education in the public school system and this is very unfortunate. Each one of the participants have shared that this is one of the primary reasons music history education has to be context-specific and limited to a couple of anecdotes here and there. The reality is there is not a lot of time for it in elementary school music classes and that is because of the way the system is set-up.
As shared by Brad, Carrie, and Julia there are additional qualifications courses offered by the ministry of education in music. Theoretically a generalist music teacher could enroll in one of these courses to learn more about music and how to teach the subject. However, these additional qualification courses are usually only six to eight weeks long at the most. Julia had expressed that receiving that type of training is better than having no training at all, but it does not compare to the amount of hours that a music specialist has put in. There is nothing wrong with having general music teacher’s in elementary school’s educating our students. The problem with the “generalist music teacher” (as explained by each one of the participants) is the fact that the school boards and the ministry of education do not care enough to develop these teacher’s skills and overall musical knowledge, there is rarely any professional development available to generalist music teacher’s. Carrie, Brad, and Julia have discovered from their experiences that the Arts consultant/resource teacher is not a musician and they have multiple different subject areas that they are in charge of as well. Finally, each participant has shared that the music curriculum is very generic and kind of confusing, which does not adequately support the learning of a teacher who does not have the necessary background knowledge to teach music. The question still remains with all of these issues in relation to music education as a whole, is there actually time for music history?

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have reported and discussed the findings of the collected data in association with the pre-existing research on the topic of Music History Education. Since this is the first research of its kind to specifically delve into the issues and pedagogical strategies surrounding the topic of music history education in Ontario elementary schools,
I did not make as many connections as I would have liked to the pre-existing literature on this topic of research because there really was not anything that I could specifically relate my findings to. Consequently, the research in the field of music history elementary education is very limited and more concrete studies need to be done in order for an accurate conclusion to be made regarding this topic of research.

Based on the data that I have engaged with, music history integration in the elementary music school classroom does in fact happen. However, as shared by Carrie, Brad, Julia, and Beth, it is done in an incidental manner and is usually only taught by music specialists who are passionate about historical developments in music and feel that their students need to know this information. It has also been discovered through the information provided by Carrie, Brad, and Julia that because music is not a subject of priority for Ontario school boards, the overall professional development of its music teacher’s is compromised. This directly effects the type of music education students are receiving in Ontario public elementary schools and undermines the chances of students be educating in aspects of music history.

Additionally, it has been expressed by each of the participants that the elementary music curriculum does not emphasize the importance of music history education, which means that the few history-related expectations that are featured in the music curriculum are often overlooked by the music teachers. Furthermore, there are several different strategies and approaches towards elementary music history education that have been documented throughout this chapter. These examples demonstrate how elementary music history education can be taught in an engaging and meaningful way when the music educator actually cares about delivering a cosmopolitan music education program.
Through documenting the different strategies and approaches that can be taken towards music history education, it also has been discovered that students can respond very positively to the historical side of music. Teachers reported that knowing the history actually has aided students in their overall understanding of a musical piece and helped inform their performance practice choices as well. Finally, teachers observed that there are copious amounts of General music teacher’s in Ontario Elementary schools. As a result of this, they believe that students are not receiving the best music education experience because there is a knowledge gap and the school board’s are not committed to developing their generalist music teachers. Thus, including elements such as music history education is not something a generalist music teacher would know how to do, unless they have had extensive musical training. In essence, I hope that the information that has been reported in this chapter will inspire further research and pedagogical consideration amongst scholars, teachers, and school boards when contemplating the future programming, hiring, and the overall benefit music can have for students when taught in an all-encompassing way.
Chapter 5: DISCUSSION

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss and summarize the key research findings that have been discovered throughout this inquiry process. The overall significance of these findings will be addressed focusing on two areas in the field of education. The first section of concentration is the implications these findings will have for the educational research community. The second area of conversation is the importance of these findings for teacher pedagogy, educators who teach music in the Ontario public school system, and for my own practice as a future educator.

Furthermore, recommendations based on the findings and what I have learned as a researcher with respect to this inquiry will be constructed. I make recommendations for: pre-service teacher education, ministries of education, school boards, professional development, and teacher practice. Finally, I identify areas for further research a discussion regarding areas for further research. This is where unanswered questions will be raised and suggestions concerning where educational research scholars should direct their attention to next will happen. My hope for this chapter is that it will influence further research to be undertaken in the field of music history education in elementary schools and inform educators’ understanding of why music history education is a significant part of a student’s musical learning and should not be omitted from their public music education experience.

5.1 Overview of Findings and Their Significance

There are five central findings that I identified this research process. The first is Participating teacher’s believed that successful integration of music history in Ontario public schools relies on the teacher’s knowledge of the subject matter. Through each
participant’s experiences in public schools, they had witnessed that educators who made an effort to incorporate music history education into their classroom practice have had extensive training in the field of music and are oftentimes music specialists. In addition to this, the data collected shows that each participant believed that it is important for students to know the historical developments that have happened in music and that was why they aspired to include elements of music history into their pedagogy.

Consequently, participating teachers had expressed that it is unlikely for someone who has no music background to be aware of the fact that there are elementary curriculum expectations dedicated to the teaching of music history and the literature supports this claim (Baker and Saunders, 1994; Bryson, 1983; Propst, 2003; Stroud, 1981). They had also shared that this aspect of music education is something that is not at the forefront of most educator’s minds when developing music lessons for a group of elementary students and not having the musical knowledge to support this type of teaching does not help the situation.

The second finding is that Teachers believed that music history education needs to be context specific and should be inspired by what the students are learning in the music classroom. Through the data provided by each participant it was consistently mentioned that elementary students respond well to context specific music history teachings. They had signified that when music history is taught in a way that is related to the work that is being done in the music classroom, students can become interested and engaged with the material in a meaningful way because it is something they can connect to. The literature shows that this type of historical integration is dependant on the teacher’s overall knowledge base on the subject of music history and how efficiently they can weave in specific elements into their teaching (Hash, 2010).
The third discovery is that *Teachers believed that exposure to incidental and brief teachings of music history can promote a deeper musical understanding amongst young musicians.* Each participant had stated that when music history is taught in a brief and incidental manner (either a few minutes before, after, or in-between a lesson) students were found to retain that information better than experiencing a full forty-minute lesson devoted to music history. They had explained that there is a greater chance that elementary students will remember incidental music history teachings rather than a full lesson because it usually directly related to the music students are learning and playing. There also is an element of moving back and forth from the “practical” and the “theoretical.” The participating teachers had shared that having elementary students engage in the physical playing of an instrument and then incorporating a short discussion on the historical ties behind the music, is a more “kid-friendly” approach to music history. It has been discovered through the data that primary and junior students are not intrinsically interested or motivated to learn any type of history. Therefore, each participant had communicated that when music history was being included in a teacher’s practice it had to be done in a thoughtful and meticulous manner. In essence, the data shows that being exposed to historical teachings of music in an incidental way is a relevant and valid approach to promoting student interest and intrigue in the subject matter of music history.

The fourth finding is that *Teachers enact culturally responsive music pedagogy as one strategy for integrating historical teachings and making them relevant to students.* Each participant mentioned several strategies on how they incorporated teachings of music history into their music program and the majority of these techniques are culturally responsive, signifying that the music history these educators taught in the classroom
reflected the demographic of students they were teaching. They also actively introduced students to the music of different cultures in hopes of promoting awareness that there are several different genres of music in the world that do not fall under the common Western European canon.

Participating teachers conveyed that educating students in a culturally responsive manner, when it comes to music history, was an approach that worked. The literature supports that historical background knowledge is so closely linked with culturally responsive music pedagogy that students definitely would need a little bit of historical context in order to have an understanding of what they were listening to, learning, and were attempting to play (Abril, 2013; Bowman, 2001; Edwards, 1998; Rinaldo, 2001). Furthermore, each participant had shared that incorporating culturally responsive music pedagogy into a teacher’s practice is an accessible way to educate and introduce elementary music students to the history behind the music because it is inexorably intertwined.

The final discovery is that Music history education is challenging to incorporate into a public school program because of the lack of school board supports, music specialists, designated class time, and insufficient specificity surrounding the Ontario music curriculum expectations. According to participating teacher’s experiences, the current Ontario music curriculum has purposely been written in a vague and generic manner; this way any educator can access the music curriculum with ease and essentially would be able to deliver its contents to students in an adequate fashion. As a result of this, each participant had encountered through their classroom experiences that it is no longer a requirement to have music specialists in the elementary music classroom. The data collected shows that there has been a push towards educating students in a “music
appreciation” centered way, rather than focusing on developing a basic musical foundation surrounding the playing of instruments and vocal work.

This shift in music education is very problematic. Firstly, each participant had communicated that not having a music specialist in the elementary classroom is troublesome. Participants believed that music specialists have a grand knowledge base to draw from when it comes to educating students in music and they have the ability to expose students to a wide array of musical techniques, methods, and information. Unfortunately, participating teachers conveyed that generalist music teachers do not have as comprehensive of a background and students will inevitably not experience certain aspects of music education when taught by a generalist.

Consequently, the data shows that one of the first components to be excluded from a student’s music education experience is music history because there is not much representation in the music curriculum regarding the subject area of music history. However, there are a few expectations per grade level outlined in the curriculum but these would not be at the forefront of a generalist music teacher’s agenda. Each participant had shared that through the generalization of the elementary music curriculum, students are receiving a less than ideal music education experience because there is only so much a generalist music teacher can provide them with. As expressed by the participating educators, music specialists are valuable assets to have in public elementary schools because they are able to educate students more holistically, infusing additional elements like, music history into their classroom practice, in order to heighten student’s overall musical comprehension. Regrettably, participants had shared that music specialists are few in number in Ontario and that is a direct result of the shifts that have happened with the curriculum and the school board’s goals.
It has been discovered, through each participant’s experiences, that providing students with a high quality music education is not something that Ontario school boards are willing to embark upon at the moment. Participating teachers explained that there are rarely any meaningful professional development sessions offered for generalist and professional music teacher’s to further expand their knowledge base and skills. The data also has revealed that there is not a school board consultant dedicated to Music Education either. Instead, there is an Arts consultant, who is in charge of providing educational aid for all the subject areas contained in the Arts curriculum and some of these consultants even oversee the development of second languages too.

In addition to this, participating educators have shared that if teachers would like to develop their musical skills further it is actually better to take an additional qualification course in music or seek professional development opportunities elsewhere than what the school board is providing. Unfortunately, there are not many instances where support can be received regularly for music education development through the Ontario School Boards. As a result, music teachers need to seek out their own professional development. Therefore, it has been expressed by participating teachers that the quality of music education that Ontario elementary students are receiving really depends on who their instructor is and what type of background they have in music, generalist or specialist. At this point in time, music education is not at the forefront of the school board’s agenda for development.

5.2 Implications

I will provide a description of the implications that this inquiry will have for practice through both a researcher’s and teacher’s lens. The first area of discussion concerns the educational community and where the findings of my qualitative research
study fits in the grand purview for this body of learners. The second area of conversation will be more personal, focusing on how these findings will impact my personal pedagogical approach to education, as both a teacher and a researcher.

5.2.1 Broad

Elementary music history education is a subject area that has limited representation in the field of educational research, the Ontario arts curriculum, pre-service teacher training, school board supports, professional development, and general classroom practice. As outlined in the key findings section, when music history is thoughtfully incorporated into a teacher’s pedagogical practice it has been found that students will respond positively to this type of teaching. Nevertheless, it is a rare occurrence to actually witness music history education in practice because it is not emphasized as an area of significance in educational curriculum documents. Furthermore, the inclusion of music history in elementary music programming depends heavily on the teacher’s background and expertise in the field of Music.

With this being said, there is an insufficient amount of scholarly research concerning the benefits this type of approach to music education can have on student’s engagement levels and overall understanding of certain musical concepts. The research that I have read and included within the second chapter of this study reports the range of benefits for primary and junior students when they have the opportunity to learn music history. Research conducted by Abril (2013), Bowman (2001), Edwards (1998), Rinaldo (2001), express that students have an innate curiosity when it comes to their education and what to know why they are learning particular concepts. Educating students on the history behind the music has been found to help students better understand the origins of the musical pieces they are playing. It also provides students with a reason as to why
they are learning a song by a specific composer; this especially reigns true when a
culturally responsive approach is taken to music education because the music being
learned by students is reflective of the classroom community.

The findings of the research cited above is all theoretical in the sense that it
discusses the benefits of music history education using the terms “if” and “when,” in
relation to classroom practice. Research that has been undertaken by Byo (1999), Giles
and Wiggins and Wiggins (2008), reveals that the majority of general classroom teachers
feel extremely uncomfortable when it comes to teaching their students music. These
scholars also discovered that pre-service training in music education does help boost
teacher confidence. However, most education faculties do not provide their beginner
teachers with music education courses that span a full year. Therefore, general music
teachers (which includes classroom teachers) are likely going to provide their students
with an experience that aligns with their musical comfort level.

In the grand scheme of things, music history education does not really have a
place in this generalized model of public school music education. Music specialists are
perceived as no longer needed in elementary schools because of the shifts that have
happened with the curriculum and the vagueness in which the expectations are described.
The findings of my research inquiry indicate that there is a lack of knowledge and
passion towards educating primary and junior students in field of music history. There
are two reasons for this, the first is that many educators are unaware that there are
historical expectations outlined in the elementary music curriculum and the second is that
many educators do not have the proper training to be able to educate their students in the
subject of music. As it can be seen, this discussion around elementary music history
education is very complicated. Pre-service music education training, school board music consultant support, and professional development in the subject area of music, is scarce. Elementary music history education, in theory, is a good idea. However, improvements need to be made concerning the level of support provided for music educators and then advances in pedagogy and classroom practice can be looked at.

5.2.2 Narrow

The main research question that has shaped this qualitative study is: How is a small sample of elementary music educators designing meaningful lessons that include music history as a component of their music education pedagogy? Therefore, one of the primary purposes of this research inquiry was to discover the strategies music educators are using surrounding the topic of music history education. I strongly believe that elementary music students should know a little bit about the history behind the music. Both the participant data and the literature shows that sometimes the history and the music are so inexorably linked that it is difficult to introduce a new piece of music to students without telling them a little bit about its origins. As a future educator, I could not see myself ignoring this side of music education, regardless of my students ages.

Furthermore, educating primary and junior students about the past can be a challenging endeavor. Realistically, elementary students may not be that interested in history and some of them have difficulty conceptualizing and differentiating the past from the present. Nonetheless, as each participating educator has conveyed it is important to provide students with this extra bit of knowledge because it can help them have a deeper understanding of what they are learning. Each one of the participants that partook in this research study have summarized strategies that they have used towards the
inclusion of music history in their pedagogical practice. The approaches that they have shared are not far-fetched, unattainable, suggestions either, they are very practical.

The strategies that these teachers used in an elementary music setting, regarding the integration of music history are: incidental teaching, context specific teaching, culturally responsive music pedagogy, inviting musical experts into the classroom, and linkages to real world events. I believe that the difficulty level surrounding each one of these classroom practices is quite low and if I ever become a music teacher I would definitely try out all of these strategies in my music classroom. Moreover, incidental historical teachings of music, requires the music educator to have a pretty good understanding of how the music and the history are connected; however, if that knowledge base is there and has been developed, it could take less than a minute to preface the beginning of a music lesson with a little bit of information about where the piece your class is playing originated from. A quick internet search is also something that a general music teacher could do, in order familiarize themselves with the history and be able to speak to that aspect of music when relevant.

Inviting musical experts into the classroom is another strategy that the participants in this research inquiry found to be successful, regarding elementary music history education. There are moments in music education where bringing in a guest musician can be a very valuable learning experience for students. Knowing both your strengths and weaknesses as a music educator is essential. For example, I teach in an area where the demographic of students are predominately of Indian and Sikh origins. Therefore, it would make sense for me to teach my students about Indian and Sikh music. I have had some training in Indian Classical Music when I was pursuing my undergraduate degree but I am definitely not an expert in this field. If I was a public school music teacher, I
would seek out musical experts from the Indian and Sikh communities and invite them to come into my classroom to administer a workshop for my students. They could likely speak to the history and musical genres of their culture, in a more authentic way, than I ever could.

In essence, the strategies that each participant has shared with respect to music history education are not overly strenuous to implement by any means. As a music educator, there needs to be some level of passion and commitment to want to provide elementary students with a music education that has some substance to it. It is unlikely that you will have a student in the primary and junior grades inquiring about where Beethoven lived, why Bach played the organ, or why Tabla’s are the primary percussion instrument used in Indian Ragas. As the participating teachers have explained, music history is not something that children will inherently develop an interest in, it needs to be introduced to them.

The findings of this research inquiry show that most educators that are expected to teach music at the elementary level are not adequately prepared for the task at hand. The participating educators have experienced that generally teachers do not have the proper musical training and background to be able to confidently program for a group of elementary students. They have also seen that teachers do not have adequate support from the school boards because there is usually only one school board consultant assigned to all of the different subject areas contained in the Arts curriculum. It has also been shared by the participating educators that there are rare opportunities for professional development days in music to occur at the school board level because developing music educators is not a prime concern of theirs at the moment.
Through researching the topic of elementary music history education, I have discovered that my area of interest is negatively affected by the lack of supports available for music teacher’s, general and professional. In order for elementary music programs to have a component of music history education, the school boards need to invest in their educator’s musical knowledge. As a future educator, I will definitely include aspects of music history in my elementary music classroom practice. If any of my colleagues show interest in my approach to music education I will share my knowledge about this subject area with them. I will talk to them about the research that I was lucky enough to pursue here, at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and mention the strategies that I have discovered during this inquiry. I would also like to share my research findings with the Ministry of Education and school boards by making my research accessible to them through a condensed report. Finally, another goal of mine is to try and publish this research inquiry in an Ontario academic music journal so music educators across Ontario can be aware of my research and findings.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research inquiry, I have some recommendations regarding areas that require improvement in the field of public school music education. It has been discovered that at the elementary music level, lack of teacher knowledge, training, and passion, has significantly contributed to the omission of music history education. In order for music history to successfully be integrated in a music teacher’s pedagogical practice additional supports, development, and resources need to be made available to educators, so they can deepen their knowledge and understanding about music education as whole.
Pre-service teacher education, in the subject area of music, needs to be rethought and improved upon. Most faculties of education in Ontario require their elementary teacher candidates to have a minimum of twelve hours of pre-service instruction in the following subject areas: Music, Visual Arts, and Health and Physical Education. Music is a speciality subject where knowledge, understanding, and mastery takes years to acquire. Speaking from the perspective of a teacher candidate, researcher, and musician, twelve hours of music instruction is not enough time to develop one’s musical ability. It also communicates to teacher candidates that after a single short course they are prepared to educate a group of students in the subject area of music. My recommendation for elementary pre-service teacher education is to include more course time to the development of teacher candidate’s musical abilities. The findings of my research inquiry show that music education is a subject of discomfort for a lot of teachers because they feel like they have not had enough training to be able to educate students in this subject area. Pre-service teacher education programs in music should span a little longer than twelve hours so generalist music teachers can feel more comfortable about teaching music if they are ever put into that situation.

Consequently, advancements in elementary music instruction at the pre-service education level are directly influenced by the values of the Ministry of Education and school board’s in Ontario. Participant data has shown that the subject of music is not a field that the Ministry of Education and school boards are interested in developing at the moment. As outlined in the fourth chapter of this inquiry, it is not considered a priority by the ministry and the school board’s to expand teacher knowledge, understanding, and expertise in the subject area of Music. The participating educators have communicated that the Ontario elementary music curriculum is a direct reflection of this because of its
generic expectations, poor teacher prompts/examples, and its overall emphasis on music appreciation. In addition to this, they have also shared that the school boards have an “Arts consultant” that is responsible for providing educational aid for all the subject areas contained in the Ontario Arts curriculum and in some cases, are accountable for second language development, as well.

For there to be any significant changes to how educators approach and teach music in Ontario, I recommend that the Ministry of Education and school board’s show the public and its teachers that music is a valuable subject area and that it has a place in our schools. It has been discovered through my research that there really is not much advocacy for music at the ministry and board levels and this negatively effects teacher development. Therefore, my recommendations for the Ministry of Education and school board’s is that they need to show the educational community that music is a valuable subject area. This can be done by assigning one or two school board consultants dedicated to the sole development of music education and nothing more.

In addition to this, publicly advertising the importance of music education through media outlets or elsewhere, could be very beneficial for acquiring parent support in music development. Finally, alterations to the elementary music curriculum should be considered, focusing on improving the specificity and guidance in the teacher prompt/example section of the curriculum. Something that I believe would be useful for the Ministry of Education to invest in is the development of a music education resource book for classroom teachers. I think this would be a great way to have a compilation of strategies, methods, and lesson ideas all in one place. This would also be an excellent place to mention the benefits of music history education and provide examples of what this would like in the elementary music classroom.
My final recommendations pertain to the areas of professional development and teacher practice. Based on my research findings, it is difficult to find offerings of professional development in the field of elementary music education. The participating teachers have expressed that music educator’s often have to seek out and pay for their own development, when it comes to any sort of supplementary musical training; thus, I believe that more professional development days are needed in music. Keeping this in mind, each recommendation that I have made has to do with improving teacher-training in music education. I believe that if improvement in teacher-training can be made music education in Ontario will flourish. Educators will actually feel confident about teaching this subject area and hopefully even be excited about it as well.

To put it simply, a lot of elementary classroom teachers are not properly trained to teach the subject of music and that is primarily the reason why certain musical concepts are not taught to students. I am not sure if having more music specialists in elementary schools is necessarily the solution to this problem. What I do know is that there needs to be a shift in the way music education is taught and thought about in Ontario. Once elementary teachers are properly supported and trained to teach music education than expanding their knowledge base to areas like, music history education can occur. Music history education will not happen at the elementary level unless teachers are aware of its benefits to students and how to properly integrate it into their pedagogical practice. Changes need to be made at the Ministry, Board, and Pre-Service levels, regarding how Music is taught to our future elementary teachers, current elementary teachers, and most important of all, our students.

5.4 Areas for Further Research
Some questions that were raised throughout the commencement of this research study include:

- What are general elementary teachers’ beliefs about the value of music education and why?
- How are teacher education programs with a music cohort preparing teachers to understand music history?
- How are elementary teachers accessing supports for music education in the context of funding cuts to music education?

These three questions are areas of concern that continuously arose within the collected research data. I think it is important for these questions to be critically examined and possibly even researched because none of these questions can be answered easily and with clarity. There is not enough evidence in my own findings to be able to accurately provide a clear-cut response associated with each question that has been raised. I have presented my findings to the best of my abilities in relation to each one of these questions; however, further research should be pursued.

Furthermore, the interviewed sample group for this research inquiry consisted of four educators, all music specialists. Considering this, I would like to see a similar study to the one that I have pursued but done on a grander scale. Four educator’s experiences and viewpoints is not enough information to speak to the needs of an entire province and or country when it comes to music education in Ontario or Canada. There is very limited research that has been conducted in the field of elementary music history education in Ontario and there simply needs to be more of it, only then can real change in our education systems ensue.

Another possible research study that could be done, is one where researchers go into the elementary music classroom and document student progress, when exposed to
historical teachings of music. I believe that this would be a fascinating study to pursue and that some really great findings would be discovered linking student improvement and music history. This research inquiry could also focus on effective pedagogical strategies for enhanced student engagement levels, concerning the subject area of elementary music history.

Overall, research on the topic of elementary music history education is sparse. In order for this field of education to get some attention, awareness, and advocacy, more research needs to be conducted. I believe that this is the only way for elementary music history education to get some actual recognition by the Ministry of Education, School Board’s, and the educational community as a whole. I encourage future researchers who are interested in this topic to pursue their own inquiry in this field because only together can we make a difference.

5.5 Concluding Comments

The key research findings that have been uncovered throughout this inquiry have been summarized and explained within this chapter. The findings that have been discovered are as followed:

*Participating teacher’s believed that successful integration of music history in Ontario public schools relies on the teacher’s knowledge of the subject matter.*

*Teachers believed that music history education needs to be context specific and should be inspired by what the students are learning in the music classroom.*

*Teachers believed that exposure to incidental and brief teachings of music history can promote a deeper musical understanding amongst young musicians.*

*Teachers enact culturally responsive music pedagogy as one strategy for integrating historical teachings and making them relevant to students.*

*Music history education is challenging to incorporate into a public school program because of the lack of school board supports, music specialists, designated class time, and insufficient specificity surrounding the Ontario music curriculum expectations.*
These findings have been critically examined and their implications for the educational research community and my own practice as a teacher-researcher have been conveyed. Recommendations based on these findings have been made. Paying particular attention to the areas of pre-service teacher education, ministries of education, school boards, professional development, and teacher practice. Finally, conversation ensued where areas for further research were suggested and a list of unanswered questions that arose within my research were stated.

The research that I have conducted is significant because it is the first of its kind that specifically focusses on the topic of elementary music history education in Ontario schools. I carefully framed my research study around the question of “best practice” because I wanted to acquire some concrete strategies that could be used in the classroom today. This way educators that happen to come across this research study can possibly take away some interesting methods that can be easily applicable to their own pedagogical practice. The other issues that arose within this inquiry concerning teacher training, knowledge, and passion are a result of a fragmented education system.

Publicly funded elementary music education in Ontario will never amount to anything great unless this province’s education system invests in its educator’s musical knowledge. It is important that we provide our students with a holistic music education. I hope that the discoveries of my research will help inspire further studies in this field of education and better inform teacher pedagogy, concerning the integration of elementary music history education.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of Consent for Interview

Date: ___________________

Dear _______________,

I am a graduate student at OISE, University of Toronto, and am currently enrolled as a Master of Teaching candidate. I am researching the topic of Music History Education in Ontario Elementary Schools for the purposes of investigating an educational topic as a major assignment for our program. I think that your knowledge and experience will provide insights into this topic.

I am writing a report on this study as a requirement of the Master of Teaching Program. My course instructor who is providing support for the process this year is Dr. Angela MacDonald-Vemic. The purpose of this requirement is to allow us to become familiar with a variety of ways to do research. My data collection consists of a 40 minute interview that will be audio-recorded. I would be grateful if you would allow me to interview you at a place and time convenient to you.

The contents of this interview will be used for my assignment, which will include a final paper, as well as informal presentations to my classmates and/or potentially at a conference or publication. I will not use your name or anything else that might identify you in my written work, oral presentations, or publications. This information remains confidential. The only people who will have access to my assignment work will be my research supervisor and my course instructor. You are free to change your mind at any time, and to withdraw even after you have consented to participate. You may decline to answer any specific questions. I will destroy the audio recording after the paper has been presented and/or published which may take up to five years after the data has been collected. There are no known risks or benefits to you for assisting in the project, and I will share with you a copy of my notes to ensure accuracy.

Please sign the attached form, if you agree to be interviewed. The second copy is for your records. Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Researcher name: Georgia Gianarakos

Phone number, email: 647-919-9248  georgia_gianarakos@hotmail.com or georgia.gianarakos@mail.utoronto.ca
Consent Form

I acknowledge that the topic of this interview has been explained to me and that any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can withdraw at any time without penalty.

I have read the letter provided to me by ________________________(name of researcher) and agree to participate in an interview for the purposes described. I agree to having the interview audio-recorded.

Signature: _____________________________________________

Name (printed): _________________________________________

Date: __________________
Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Introduction:

The goal of my research is to investigate and improve upon the current pedagogy surrounding the teaching of music history in Ontario Elementary Schools by compiling information on Best Practice methods. Considering this, the interview protocol has been carefully selected in order for me to gain more knowledge on how elementary music educators design meaningful lessons that include music history as a central component. In addition to, how students respond to this new-found historical knowledge and how this knowledge influences their personal progression as musicians.

By agreeing to partake in this interview your expertise on the subject at hand will aid me in my investigation. As a reminder, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, as well as, choose not to answer particular questions if need be. The interview will be 40 minutes in length and will be audio-recorded.

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in this research study.

Protocol:

Personal Questions:

1. How long have you been a music teacher? What grades of music have you taught and where?
2. What were the primary influences that led you to becoming a music teacher?

Benefits to Teaching Music:

3. What are the benefits of teaching music?
4. Are there any benefits to teaching music history?

Music History Specific Questions (Including Pedagogical Strategies):
5. Have you taught music history to students in your classroom, Why or Why not?
6. What type of pedagogical approaches do you take to the teaching of music history in your classroom?
7. What do you observe from students in terms of how they engage with the music history curriculum?
8. What range of factors and experiences support your interests and capacity to include music history into your music program?
9. What are the primary learning goals you would like to impart upon your students by teaching music history to them?

**Student Centered Questions:**

10. How does the teaching of music history enhance a student’s abilities to progress and improve on their performance abilities on their instrument(s) of choice?
11. When including music history into your music program- do you consider histories that are more broadly culturally responsive? For example, teaching a unit on elements of Indian Music, Turkish Music, and Jazz Music etc.

**Curriculum and School Board Centered Questions:**

12. Are you comfortable teaching all parts of the Music Curriculum? If not, can you explain which parts you might alter?
13. How is the Ontario Ministry of Education and the school boards throughout the province assisting in the professional development of music education amongst both general and professional music teachers?