Investigating Non-Specialist Elementary Music Teachers’ Self-Efficacy and Perspectives on Music Instruction

By
Nadia Kim

A research paper submitted in conformity with the requirements
For the degree of Master of Teaching
Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

Copyright by Nadia Kim, April 2017
PERSPECTIVES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF NON-SPECIALIST MUSIC TEACHERS

Abstract

The current situation of music education has many difficulties, one being an insufficient amount of qualified music teachers. As a result, many generalist teachers have to teach music with little to no musical background. In response to such disparity of qualifications, the aim of this present qualitative research study is to discover how non-specialist elementary music teachers are teaching quality music education to their students and how to learn from them what experiences and resources helped develop their confidence and competence for teaching music education. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with two elementary school teachers that are teaching quality music programs with little musical background. Based on these teachers’ experiences, four main themes have emerged: non-specialized music teachers produced meaningful learning by promoting an inclusive environment that is informed by a variety of professional resources, they addressed various challenges encountered when teaching music, they acknowledged drawing upon supports made available to them both within and outside the school setting, and they recognized their passion and creativity as key elements to strengthen their music program. The implications of these findings suggest that more support needs to be available for non-specialist music teachers, which may include the support of the principal.

Key Words: quality music education, non-specialist music teachers, confidence, self-efficacy
# Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................ 2

Table of Contents ........................................................................................................................ 3

Chapter 1: Introduction .................................................................................................................. 6
  1.0 Research Context .................................................................................................................. 6
  1.1 Research Problem ................................................................................................................ 7
  1.2 Purpose of the Study ........................................................................................................... 8
  1.3 Research Questions ............................................................................................................. 9
  1.4 Background of the Researcher/Reflexive Positioning Statement ....................................... 9
  1.5 Overview/Preview of Whole ............................................................................................... 10

Chapter 2: Literature Review ........................................................................................................ 11
  2.0 Introduction ........................................................................................................................ 11
  2.1 Historical Context ............................................................................................................... 11
  2.2 Benefits of Music Education ............................................................................................... 13
    2.3 Current Status of Music Education ................................................................................... 14
      2.3.1 Barriers ....................................................................................................................... 15
        2.3.1.1. Funding ................................................................................................................ 16
        2.3.1.2. Time .................................................................................................................... 17
        2.3.1.3. Support ............................................................................................................... 18
      2.3.2 Specialization .............................................................................................................. 19
        2.3.2.1. Confidence .......................................................................................................... 20
        2.3.2.2. Identity and self-efficacy .................................................................................... 21
      2.3.3 Response ..................................................................................................................... 23
  2.4 Conclusion ............................................................................................................................ 25

Chapter 3: Research Methodology ............................................................................................... 26
  3.0 Introduction ........................................................................................................................ 26
  3.1 Research Approach & Procedures ....................................................................................... 26
  3.2 Instruments of Data Collection ......................................................................................... 27
  3.3 Participants ......................................................................................................................... 28
    3.3.1 Sampling criteria ......................................................................................................... 28
3.3.2 Recruitment ............................................................................................................................................ 29
3.3.3 Participant bios .......................................................................................................................................... 30
3.4 Data Analysis ................................................................................................................................................ 31
3.5 Ethical Review Procedures ........................................................................................................................ 31
3.6 Methodological Limitations and Strengths ................................................................................................ 32
3.7 Conclusion ..................................................................................................................................................... 33
Chapter 4: Research Findings .......................................................................................................................... 34
4.0 Introduction .................................................................................................................................................... 34
4.1 Non-Specialized Music Teachers Produced Meaningful Learning by Promoting an Inclusive Learning Environment That is Informed by a Variety of Professional Resources... 35
  4.1.1 Non-specialized music teachers prioritized developing a positive student-teacher relationship in the classroom ......................................................................................................................................................... 35
  4.1.2 Non-specialized music teachers acquired lesson material from a wide range of informative sources when preparing and planning lessons in hopes of creating a quality music education ........................................................................................................................................ 37
  4.1.3 Non-specialized music teachers incorporated a variety of teaching methods when carrying out their lessons to create a meaningful learning environment ................................................................................... 38
4.2 Non-Specialized Music Teachers Addressed Both External and Internal Challenges Encountered When Teaching Music ............................................................................................................................................ 40
  4.2.1 Non-specialized music teachers voiced a lack of available resources when trying to create a quality music program ............................................................................................................................................ 40
  4.2.2 Non-specialized music teachers addressed a lack of professional support when teaching music for the first time ................................................................................................................................................. 42
  4.2.3 Non-specialized music teachers had to overcome personal reactions of uncertainty and anxiety when teaching music for the first time ...................................................................................................................... 43
4.3 Non-Specialized Music Teachers Acknowledged Drawing Upon Supports Made Available to Them Both Within and Outside the School Setting When Teaching Music ............................................................................................................ 45
  4.3.1 Non-specialized music teachers affirmed having continuous relational support from others in the school throughout their music teaching .............................................................................................................. 45
  4.3.2 Non-specialized music teachers reported having access to resources within the school to support their quality music program ................................................................................................................................................. 46
  4.3.3 Non-specialized music teachers reported accessing popular and multicultural forms of music to enhance their music program ................................................................................................................................................. 47
4.4 Non-Specialized Music Teachers Recognized Their Passion and Creativity as Key Elements to Strengthen Their Music Program. .......................................................... 49

4.4.1 Non-specialized music teachers believed their passion and love for music could ignite a similar response within students’ desire to learn music ....................................... 49

4.4.2 Non-specialized music teachers pointed to their personal creativity and openness when learning how to teach music ............................................................................. 50

4.4.3 Non-specialized music teachers acknowledged the transferable skills of their past teaching experiences at the start of their music teaching career ........................................... 52

4.5 Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 53

Chapter 5: Implications .............................................................................................. 55

5.0 Introduction .......................................................................................................... 55

5.1 Overview of Key Findings and their Significance .................................................. 55

5.2 Implications .......................................................................................................... 58

5.2.1 The educational community ............................................................................. 58

5.2.2 My professional identity and practice ............................................................... 59

5.3 Recommendations ............................................................................................... 60

5.4 Areas for Further Research .................................................................................. 62

5.5 Concluding Comments ......................................................................................... 63

References .................................................................................................................. 64

Appendix A: Letter of Consent .................................................................................... 70

Appendix B: Interview Protocol .................................................................................. 72
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Research Context

Music is known as a universal language for many. It serves multiple purposes, such as for religion, healing, career, hobby, and has various impacts on individuals and communities. More specifically, music education has been known to have various benefits in an individual’s development. The Coalition for Music Education (2010) has reported some of the many benefits of music education. From this survey, principals and teachers have indicated a strong sense of music’s ability to build students’ self-esteem and confidence, develop self-discipline, understand and appreciate a variety of musical expressions, and the ability to express self musically.

Furthermore, research has supported the development of similar characteristics from music education. Music has been found to increase self-esteem in children of low economic status (Costa-Giomi, 1999), social inclusion (Ings, Jones, & Randell, 2000), and self-esteem and a sense of identity (Harland, Kinder, Lord, Stott, Shagen, & Haynes, 2000).

Recent research in music has connected to neuroscience. Through the study of the brain, neuroscientists are able to understand how the brain processes music and the influence it has on other areas of development, such as improvement in memory (Degé, Wehrum, Stark, & Schwarz, 2001; Jonides 2008), language acquisition and syntax (Damman, 2009; Patel, 2009), executive function (Hanna-Pladdy & MackKay, 2011; Posner, Rothbart, Sheese & Kieras, 2008), brain plasticity (Hannon & Trainor, 2007). Thus, it has been found that music education can positively impact the emotional, cognitive, and physical development of students.

The historical context of music education in Ontario is important to observe as it has changed and shaped how the program currently operates. Prior to 1995 when The Royal Commission on Learning abolished Grade 13, many performance-based programs, such as
orchestras, choirs, and bands, were flourishing. As a new curriculum for the arts (1998) was developed and a newly elected Conservative government commenced, many changes were made to the music education program. These changes negatively impacted the quality and delivery of music education in Ontario.

1.1 Research Problem

Despite the many benefits music education has on students, the change in government and curriculum has created barriers from the development of quality music education. Ontario’s curriculum states high expectation for the music program yet the reality to execute such a curriculum is challenging due to multiple factors. One of the most significant barriers music educators encounter in Canada is a lack of funding (Coalition for Music education in Canada, 2010). Funding for specialist music teachers is based on certain criteria that the board decides, such as the number of students. This becomes a concern for smaller schools as they have a lower likelihood of having a music teacher. In addition, principals play an important role in determining how the funds are to be disturbed throughout the school (People for Education, 2015). Therefore the support of the principal is essential for the development of music education programs. A study conducted by Abril and Gault (2006) found that there are remarkable differences in the views of principals and music educators concerning the importance of music education. This differentiated view contributes to a lack of support being experienced by some music teachers. In addition to the support of the principal, there seems to be a diminished support from school boards by 34% (Coalition for Music Education, 2010).

On top of all that has been said, the lack of time has contributed to the delivery of music education programs. Both preservice and inservice music teachers have experienced a restraint in implementing music in their teaching (Coalition for Music Education in Canada, 2010). In
PERSPECTIVES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF NON-SPECIALIST MUSIC TEACHERS

particular, preservice teachers experienced limited time to learn and develop musical understanding and skills during teacher education training in music (Kraay, 2013). As a result, this led to a decrease of incorporating music intentionally within the teaching practice (Kraay, 2013).

The problem of developing quality music education becomes more prominent when considering the access to music specialist teachers. According to the Coalition for Music Education (2010), Ontario schools have experienced a decrease in the amount of specialist. 56% of Ontario elementary schools have a music teacher in relation to the national average of 71%. Moreover, Ontario has the highest rate of percentage on using general classroom teachers with no musical background to teach music (58%). Studies have shown a decrease in confidence in teaching music as this subject area is considered “specialized” (Hennessy, 2000; Holden & Button, 2006; Russell-Bowie, 2009; Seddon & Biasutti, 2008). In response, many non-music specialist teachers express a lack of confidence, a sense of inadequacy, and low self-efficacy when teaching music (Battersby & Cave, 2014; Kane, 2005; Kraay, 2013). As a result, the response of many music educators ranked the necessity of hiring more specialist music teachers (Battersby & Cave, 2014; Kane, 2005; Kraay, 2013). Although it would be best to hire more specialist music teachers, the reality is that due to the lack of funding and support, this may not happen in the near future. A possible way to connect the gap between the expectations of the Ontario music curriculum and what is currently available, would be to equip non-specialist music teachers with the support needed to develop quality music education programs.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

In view of this problem, the purpose of this qualitative study is to discover how non-specialist elementary music teachers are teaching quality music education to their students and to
learn from them what experiences and resources helped develop their confidence and competence for teaching music education.

1.3 Research Questions

The primary question guiding this study is: How is a sample of non-specialist elementary teachers in Ontario creating a meaningful music education program for their students? Subsidiary questions to further guide this inquiry include:

- What do non-specialized music teachers report doing in their music program that produces meaningful learning?
- What challenges do these teachers encounter and how do they respond to these challenges?
- What range of factors and resources support these teachers?
- How did these teachers become interested and prepared to teach music? What kind of experiences helped them to reach a successful music education program?

This project aims to raise awareness of the importance of music education and equip non-music specialist teachers to develop quality music education program for their students.

1.4 Background of the Researcher/Reflexive Positioning Statement

Music has always been a part of my life. I grew up participating in a choir for a decade and played the piano since the age of 7. Although I had a rich musical experience, I grew up in an elementary school where there was a lack of support for music education. Incorporating music became almost non-existent to the point of having my grade 6 music mark based solely on singing *O Canada* every morning. Luckily, most of my musical experiences came from being involved in extra-curriculars. Even though I was able to have a diversified musical experience, there were countless others who did not receive the same privilege.
Throughout my undergrad I studied music education, particularly elementary education. I soon became an advocate for implementing music education for every student, not just for those whose parents can afford it. At the start of this project, I was not sure where to start in advocating for music education. I wanted to be specific in how I could advocate for music education to bring upon change. As I researched about the current status of music education in Canada, I soon discovered a gap between the expectations that the Ontario music curriculum called for and the reality of a lack of music specialist teachers. In addition, I have a friend who recently became an elementary teacher and had to teach music with little musical experience. Being put into an unfamiliar setting challenged her competency and view of herself as a teacher. Her experience was another component that propelled me to discover how non-specialist music teachers are implementing quality music education, in hopes of equipping other non-specialist music teachers who are experiencing difficulties so that quality of music education greatly improves.

1.5 Overview/Preview of Whole

To respond to the research questions I will be conducting a qualitative research study using purposeful sampling to interview 3 non-specialist music teachers about their instructional strategies and experiences in implementing a quality music education program for their students. In Chapter 2 I review the literature in the areas of the historical context, benefits, and current status of music education. Next, in Chapter 3 I elaborate on the research design. In Chapter 4 I report my research findings and discuss their significance in light of the existing research literature. Finally in Chapter 5, I identify the implications of research finds for my own teacher identity and practice, and for the educational research community more broadly. I also articulate a series of questions raise by the research findings, and point to areas for future research.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter I review the literature in the areas pertaining to the history, benefits, and current status of music education. More specifically, I discuss themes related to music education in Ontario. I begin by reviewing the literature in the area of music education history in Ontario and considering the impact that individuals and the government have in shaping and changing this program. Afterwards, I examine the benefits that music has on the development of a person in order to establish the necessity for music education. From there, I consider the current status of music education in Ontario in comparison to Canada and other countries to demonstrate various barriers preventing music education from flourishing in Ontario. Finally, I present some of the solutions that have been suggested to improve the delivery and quality of music education.

2.1 Historical Context

Music education has been implemented in Ontario’s education since the 19th century. Over the course of many years, it has been developed and largely influenced by prominent individuals and governmental policies. In reference to Williamhan and Cutler’s (2007) overview of music education, Ontario’s education first became public under the School Act of 1871. Prior to the commencement of this act, Egerton Ryerson was considered the main builder of the Ontario School system. He was an important figure in advocating for the inclusion of the arts in the curriculum. In 1848, Ryerson established music education in the public school curriculum. Ryerson’s plan was to have generalist classroom teachers teach music in the same manner as that of other core subjects. However, since many teachers did not have the knowledge or training in music, his plan was either opposed or ignored by many. Consequently, his plan to bring music to the classroom failed (Orford, 2007).
During the 1880s, another individual, Alexander T. Cringan, started to influence music education in Ontario. He focused on bringing music to larger communities which required the hiring of music specialists. This, in turn, became costly and placed music education under the impression of a “frill” (Orford, 2007). As the years progressed, The Robarts Plan of 1962 changed Ontario Secondary Schools by creating an academic choice for students who tended to drop out of school. Music, then, became an elective for academically-streamed students. Following The Robarts Plan, an official government report, Living and Learning (1968), established a certain number of credits required to graduate. The only problem with this system was that students could graduate without English or mathematic courses. In response to this criticism, the government decided to implement a requirement of four credits in English and two in Canadian Studies. During this time, many performance-based programs flourished and the participation in orchestras, choirs, and bands increased.

When The Royal Commission on Learning abolished Grade 13 in 1995, other changes to the operation of Ontario schools resulted from a new Conservative government. These changes negatively impacted music education. Many strong music programs suffered from a discontinuation of administrators. Standardized testing, such as the EQAO, became the new focus of outcomes-based education. It should be noted that the arts were never included in the EQAO provincial testing, implying the unimportance of the subject. As the new arts curriculum (1998) was developed, it guaranteed a tangible arts program. However, the necessity of implementing the new policy was no longer needed as there were resources to support the curriculum. In fact, the new curriculum muddled together all forms of art and made the content rather confusing to understand.
As a result of this change, there was a 32% decrease of music teachers in elementary schools (Coalition for Music Education, 2010). Up until the 21st century, fundraising to support and continue music programs became more common among elementary and secondary schools (Coalition for Music Education, 2010). Presently, many elementary preservice teachers continue to receive little instructional time in music (Coalition for Music Education, 2010). A three-session Additional Qualification (AQ) course is made available for teachers, without any music training, to become specialists. Also, having a full specialist qualification guarantees a successful music class. In short, music teachers are required to have a healthy balance of competence, confidence, courage, and calling to teach quality music education programs.

2.2 Benefits of Music Education

Music education provides various benefits in a person’s development. Of the many different impacts music can have on individuals, the Coalition for Music Education (2010) delivered a survey across Canadian schools. Respondents of this survey, including administrators and teachers, had to rank how important they felt about 13 potential benefits of music education for students. The top four responses that were ranked as “very important” were: building students’ self-esteem and confidence, developing self-discipline, understanding and appreciating a variety of musical expressions, and the ability to express one’s self musically. The remaining benefits listed in order of importance were: creating community within the school and the community at large, keeping students engaged in school and less likely to drop out, improving the atmosphere for learning, developing effective communication and collaboration skills, developing a sense of beauty and imagination, helping students share and understand other cultures and generations, helping students achieve in other academic areas (e.g. math, reading), developing critical and analytical thinking skills, and developing creative problem solving skills.
Moreover, the results from this survey are supported by further research. Kokotsaki and Hallam (2007) have found music making influencing the personal identity and the development of self-achievement, self-confidence and intrinsic motivation. Music has also been found to enhance a range of social and personal skills. For example, music increases self-esteem in children of low economic status (Costa-Giomi, 1999), social inclusion (Ings, Jones, & Randell, 2000), and one’s sense of identity (Harland, Kinder, Lord, Stott, Shagen, & Haynes, 2000).

Furthermore, recent advance with neuroscience research has allowed neuroscientists to understand how the brain processes music and the impact it has on other areas of development, such as improvements in memory (Degé, Wehrum, Stark, & Schwarzer, 2001; Jonides 2008). In regards to memory, studies indicate that music can advance skills in both long-term and short-term memory (Jonides, 2008) and improve memory storage and retrieval (Dunbar, 2008). Participants that were musicians were found to have heightened capacities in many other areas, such as language acquisition and syntax (Damman, 2009; Patel, 2009), executive function (Hanna-Pladdy & MacKay, 2011; Posner, Rothbart, Sheese & Kiers, 2008), and brain plasticity (Hannon & Trainor, 2007). The results of these studies demonstrate that music education can positively influence the emotional, cognitive, and physical development of students.

2.3 Current Status of Music Education

Music education in Canada has remained the same for the most part throughout history. It is recognized as an individual subject but treated inconsistently across Canada. Generally, music education in Canada has been marginalized and integrated into the overall Arts program. Although music education exists more prominently in secondary school, it has been significantly neglected in elementary school (Orford, 2007).
People for Education (2015) has published multiple reports on the status of the arts programs in Ontario public schools through a survey. They have reported that in comparison to 1997, the number of elementary schools with music teachers decreased to 32% in 2004. In 2008, 48% of elementary schools had music teachers. This percentage decreased by 1% in 2011. In 2012, this percentage went back up to 49%. The following year, this percentage dropped to 44%. The most recent percentage was taken in 2015, with a slight increase to 45%. However, only 25% of these elementary schools have a full-time music teacher. Since 2004, the percentage of elementary schools with music teachers remained relatively constant. This pattern indicates not only indicates the need for music teachers but also reveals other factors that influence the lack of music programs.

2.3.1 Barriers

The Coalition for Music Education (2010) surveyed 1,204 schools, representing 7.8% of the 15,500 schools in Canada. The survey discovered 10 challenges that schools face in regards to music education: funding (26%), lack of time/timetable pressure (24%), lack of specialized or certified music teachers (16%), lack of instruments or equipment (11%), lack of suitable teaching space (7%), lack of student interest (5%), lack of support from school board (5%), inadequate provincial curriculum (3%), lack of parental support (2%), and lack of appropriate assessment techniques (1%). It is important to note that the difference in percentage is relatively small for elementary and secondary schools for the top three challenges in implementing music education. However, when it comes to a lack of specialized music teachers, the difference is strikingly large, with elementary being 41% and secondary being 13%. The challenges that Ontario face are slightly different from the national average. Lack of specialized music teachers was one of the most important challenging, being 24%. This is arguably the highest level in the country.
Following this is funding (23%), lack of time (20%), and lack of instruments or equipment (13%).

2.3.1.1. Funding

Based on the Coalition for Music Education in Canada (2010), Ontario schools saw a greater decrease in funding music education programs (26%) than improvement (18%). Funding for music education has decreased in many schools while student participation has increased. In 2004, the People for Education reported that almost 60% of music teachers had inadequate funds for their elementary programs. Over one-quarter reported that they received no funding for their Program. As a matter of fact, a lack of funding continues to be a problem ever after a decade later. Previously school boards have received a Program Enhancement Grant to provide a well-rounded education. However, many boards reported that this funding was added to their general revenue to fund core areas, such as building maintenance instead of specialized areas, such a music programs (People for Education, 2011). In 2012, the province removed the Program Enhancement Grant, which supplied principals with $9,650. Some of this funding was used for various music programs (People for Education, 2012). In conjunction with this finding, results from the Coalition for Music Education (2010) survey indicated that school boards were the largest source, constituting a massive two-thirds, of funding for music education. Yet the remaining was left for the school to find other means for support. Out of all the challenges for music education, funding was seen to be the most challenging (26%) for many schools in Canada. The remainder of the funding that the board could not provide came from fundraising, parents, school councils and student fees.

According to People for Education (2015), funding for music education programs varies for each school. Special education and capital funding are the only areas where funding is
“sweatered”, meaning that the funds can only be used for these purposes and not for other areas. Most of the other funds can be allocated from one category to another, which are decided at the board level. School boards make decisions for the distribution of each school budget based on certain criteria, such as the number of students. The amount of teachers a school receives also comes from the board, depending on the number of students. This becomes problematic for smaller schools that would like to hire specialists, such as music specialists. If the number of students does not fulfill a particular quota, smaller schools are restricted to generalist teachers. Funding for elementary school specialist teachers comes from teacher preparation time. Since the amount of teacher preparation time is also dependant on the amount of teachers in a school, larger schools are far more likely to have full-time music teachers.

Principals also play an important role in how the funding is to be distributed throughout the school. They decide whether their school can have specialized staff, such as a teacher-librarian, music teacher, or department head. Based on the size of the school, principals have the authority to allocate funding to different departments and this system varies for each school with a music program.

2.3.1.2. Time

According to the survey completed by the Coalition for Music Education in Canada (2010), the lack of time/timetable pressures was ranked second in challenging quality music education in Canada. However, music teachers are not the only ones to feel a competition against time. Colwell (2008) found that many teacher candidates found more comfort in taking a music method class to incorporate music into their teaching. In spite of this, there was often very limited time for non-musicians to develop musical understanding and skills during the course, which left preservice teachers unprepared and uncomfortable teaching music after training.
PERSPECTIVES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF NON-SPECIALIST MUSIC TEACHERS

(Kraay, 2013). As a result, there was a decrease in the intention of implementing music within the curriculum due to a lack of time. The need to incorporate many different subject matters and meeting the overall expectations for each subject raised concerns and doubts for both new and experienced teachers.

2.3.1.3. Support

The support of principals is beneficial for music teachers to meet specific objectives and to enhance their programs. As mentioned earlier, it is the principal who decides how the funds are to be allocated depending on the necessity and impact the funds may have for the entire school. Therefore, it is important to see the view from the administrators’ standpoint of the learning outcomes and curricular goals in music education as they differ from that of the music teachers. From the study carried out by Abril and Gault (2006), the results indicated remote differences in the views of principals and music educators. Principals viewed athletic programs as more beneficial in creating school community than musical performing groups. Music teachers believed that music should be taught as an academic subject whereas principals did not. While administrators remained uncertain whether students are given enough opportunities to create music, music teachers proposed otherwise. Principals viewed the importance of music in connection to the enhancement of other subjects. On the other hand, music teachers saw this viewpoint as secondary to the importance of music. While principals considered “developing creativity” as one of the most important goals, “create and compose music” was considered to be the least important music learning outcome (Abril & Gault, 2006; p.17). These differences displayed that music educators should put greater effort into demonstrating and creating a link between their perspectives and beliefs with those of the principals’.
In addition, the Coalition for Music Education (2010) discovered that the strongest music programs not only had support from the principal, but also had great parental support (59%). However, there was minimal support from school boards (34%). More specifically, Ontario received very poor support from school boards with 54% schools indicating that the support from school boards needed improvement. Other areas of support come in the from investment into facilities, instruments, and equipment.

2.3.2 Specialization

The Coalition for Music Education (2010) found that most schools with a strong music education program had a specialist teacher (94%). One in three schools has stated a lack of specialized music teachers as one of the top three restrictions in implementing music education. The percentage of schools that have a specialist music teacher is much lower in elementary schools (71%) than in secondary schools (92%). Furthermore, 38% of elementary schools that offer music education are taught by general classroom teachers with no music background while 30% are taught by a classroom teacher with a music background.

Compared to other provinces, Ontario elementary schools heavily rely upon their general classroom teachers with no music background to teach music (58%). Moreover, Ontario schools have experienced decrease in the amount of specialist music teacher with 56% of schools having music teachers in comparison to the national average of 71%. In response to this dilemma, the hiring of a specialist teacher was ranked as the second most desired and improvement to music education in Canada. It should be noted that it is not mandatory for Ontario school boards to hire a music specialist. As a result, generalist classroom teachers are often responsible for teaching music. Although, it is ideal to have music specialists teach music in Ontario, reality remains that generalist teachers with limited musical knowledge are attempting to implement the Ontario
PERSPECTIVES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF NON-SPECIALIST MUSIC TEACHERS

music curriculum. For this reason, it is crucial to invest into supporting non-specialists with effective long-term training to become music educators. This builds confidence, ameliorates self-efficacy, and increases music skills and subject knowledge to equip them for the students’ music education.

2.3.2.1. Confidence

There seems to be a common challenge that non-specialists encounter when teaching music throughout different parts of the world. A study performed in the UK by Holden and Button (2006) found a lack of confidence to be prevalent among non-music specialists. Compared to other subjects, music was ranked the lowest in confidence. The inability to read music caused many of the respondents to feel vulnerable as they viewed music as a ‘specialist area’, unlike other subjects (Holden & Button, 2006; Hennessy, 2000). Many participants in Hennesy’s study (2000) felt inadequate to teach music because of the misconception that only an accomplished musician is capable of teaching music. Seddon and Biasutti (2008) have also found that non-music specialist teachers judge and compare themselves to specialist music teachers. This added to their low confidence. Similarly, Holden & Button (2006) found many of the respondents feeling inadequate in teaching singing as they, themselves, lacked confidence in their own voice and ability to sing in tune. Other factors that impacted the low level of confidence were: a lack of musical knowledge, time and teaching environment, resources and age group taught (Byo, 2000; Holden, & Button, 2006; Kane, 2005; Propts, 2003; Russell-Bowie, 2009). As a result, this “cycle of low expectation” of music goals for both teachers and students continue to persist (Hennessy, 2000; Jeanneret, 1997; Mills, 1989; Sanders & Browne, 1998).
2.3.2.2. Identity and self-efficacy

Developing the identity of any professional is crucial as it reflects the beliefs and values of a person. In order to create new values and a professional identity in music education, music educators need to engage in critical inquiry. It is difficult for generalist teachers to form their own music teacher identity with little to no exposure to critical inquiry relating to music education. The only way for generalist teachers to construct their music teacher identity is through primary socialization (Kraay, 2013). This relates to Albert Bandura’s self-efficacy theory (1994), where self-efficacy is the belief in one’s abilities to complete a task successfully.

Generalist teachers often have low self-efficacy perceptions in their ability to creating meaningful music education. As a result, students do not receive the instruction that they ought to receive. In addition, when generalist teachers heavily rely upon primary socialization experience, students receive a one-dimensional music education (Kraay, 2013). They do not receive a well-rounded and diversified music experience, thereby not developing values that deem music as an important subject to learn. In relation to a low perception of confidence, Kraay (2013) found two main issues that inhibited identity construction. First, low self-efficacy perceptions originated from insufficient knowledge and skill, lack of resources, and lack of practice. The second issue stemmed from the poor quality of music preparation courses which resulted inadequate preparation for generalist teachers to build strong self-efficacy beliefs. Kane (2005) found common themes that influenced self-efficacy: lack of content knowledge, low self-confidence in musical abilities, and minimal practical experience in music teaching during teacher preparation courses. Furthermore, as generalist teachers experienced low perceptions of self-efficacy, it impacted the way they instructed music. They tended to avoid or minimize tasks
in which they felt incompetent. As a result, their students do not receive quality music education (Kane, 2005).

In addition to Kane’s (2005) findings, Battersby and Cave (2014) supported that low-efficacy and childhood elementary music class experiences have possibly led preservice teachers to dismiss the importance or value of teaching music. Previous studies have examined the attitudes of preservice elementary classroom teachers towards teaching music and discovered that their outlook on music education reflected their childhood experiences in ensembles, group, and private lessons (Abril & Gault, 2005; Berke & Colwell, 2004, Oreck, 2004). Teachers generally form their method of teaching music based on their past musical experiences. If these experiences are limited to one method, then that usually becomes the only method with which the teacher is comfortable and knows how to teach. The problem with this approach is that students are only exposed to a limited experience of music education (Kraay, 2013).

Those who had prior musical experiences as children found more value in music than those who had very limited or no musical experiences (Abril & Gault, 2005; Kraay, 2013). More specifically, many elementary education candidates refrain from singing in methods courses due to a lack of ability and anxiety stemming from previous negative experiences in elementary school (Apfelstadt, 1989; Richards, 1999). These negative childhood experiences influence both the confidence in performing and ability to teach music. Moreover, these negative beliefs continue to influence teaching and learning unless they are challenged and confronted (Lasley, 1980; Stuart & Thurlow, 2000). Consequently, teachers should be encouraged to reflect and acknowledge these negative beliefs so that they do not continue to exhibit them into current practices (Lasley, 1980). In relation to Kane’s understandings (2005), Stein (2002) stated that the teacher’s outlook on music affects the way students perceive music. This is why it is just as
pivotal for teachers to have a positive influence on their students’ perception by their actions (Malin, 1998) as it is to model and establish the value of learning music (Stein, 2002).

### 2.3.3 Response

In response to a low perception of confidence and self-efficacy, studies have suggested possible courses of action to support non-music teachers. Throughout various studies, there have been common suggestions of improving the method courses that preservice teachers take during their teacher training education (Battersby & Cave, 2014; Russell-Bowie, 2009). One study indicated that method courses can make a considerable difference in increasing the confidence teacher candidates feel in teaching music (Propst, 2003). A higher level of confidence in teaching music can arise from participating in authentic music teaching experiences and reflective practices (Valerio & Freeman, 2009; Holden & Button, 2006). These trainings should focus on engaging teacher candidates in critical inquiry and help them construct their own music teacher identity (Kraay, 2013). In a similar manner, method courses should also focus on the development of content knowledge, practical experiences, and improved models of teaching to increase the self-efficacy of preservice teachers (Kane, 2005). The confidence level and self-efficacy preservice teachers experience in these courses will largely determine whether the learned skills and strategies will be implemented (Barry, 1992). Teachers are more likely to teach music effectively and successfully if they are more confident and competent with learning and creating music themselves. Music teachers are required to continue developing their values, beliefs, and experiences in music for the benefit of their students. If there is no personal growth, this cycle of low self-efficacy and confidence of musical values will transpose to both current students and future students.
Another study, performed by Holden and Button (2006), supported the notion of improving teacher training education. This study discovered a significant link between musical qualifications and confidence to teach music. There was a greater chance that more recent graduates from teacher education had received some kind of initial musical training during their studies. In turn, these teachers were more likely to feel confident to teach music than teachers who graduated ten plus years after. On the other hand, respondents who received this training felt that it did not equip them to teach music effectively. Hence, there seems to be a significant link between initial teacher training and a teacher’s levels of confidence. At the same time, there is a demand for significant improvements in initial musical training. This study also found that teachers felt more confident when teaching music was linked with teaching other subject areas. Initial music training can therefore consider equipping teachers in integrating music with other subjects, where they may feel more confident teaching. The hope is that by gradually introducing music to preservice teachers, these teachers will eventually develop the confidence and capability of teaching music as a subject on its own.

In addition to improving preservice teacher training, another possible solution to supporting non-music teachers is through the support of other music specialists. Holden and Button (2006) found that the least kind of support available was the support in the classroom from a specialist musician. This kind of support would allow non-music specialists and music specialist to work together, share ideas, and encourage teacher confidence. This is possibly the best solution to raise greater confidence to teach music (Berke & Colwell, 2004). Berke & Colwell (2004) give a positive outlook in the future of music education by stating that, “Once preconceived beliefs are lifted and attitudes are transformed, preservice teachers will come to value music and eventually
come our biggest advocates in promoting music in their future classrooms” (Berke & Colwell, 2004; p.31).

2.4 Conclusion

In this literature review I examined research on the history, benefits, and current status of music education. This review elucidates the extent to which attention has been directed to a lack of quality music education available in Ontario elementary schools. It also raises questions about the discrepancy present in the expectations written in the Ontario elementary music curriculum and the current lack of support for music teachers, and points to the need for further research about the successes of non-music specialist in teaching music. In light of this, the purpose of this research is to learn how non-music specialist teachers are creating quality music education so that other non-music specialist teachers may start to create quality music education for their students.
Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter I explain the research methodology, in light of my research purpose and questions, by describing the various methodological decisions that I have made and providing my reasoning for these choices. I begin with a description of the research approach and procedures, followed by identifying the main instrument of data collection. I then elaborate more in depth on participant sampling by stating the sampling criteria, explaining the sampling procedures, and giving brief biographies of the participants. I proceed to describe data analysis procedures and review the ethical considerations relevant to my study before identifying some of the methodological limitations while also uncovering the strengths. Lastly, I conclude this chapter with a summary of important methodological decisions and my rationale for these choices given the research purpose and questions.

3.1 Research Approach & Procedures

The study was conducted using a qualitative research approach involving a literature review and semi-structured interviews with two to three teachers. It is has been long debated which research method is greater, quantitative or qualitative research. Quantitative research refers to counting and measuring while qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things (Berg, 2004). Qualitative research includes methods such as participant observation, interviewing, observation of experimental natural settings, photographic techniques, historical analysis, document and textual analysis, sociometry, sociodrama, ethnographic research, and a number of unobtrusive techniques (Berg, 2004).
The many definitions that qualitative research encompasses provide flexibility and openness in the direction of research that is to be taken. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) define qualitative research more traditionally as an interpretive, naturalistic approach with focus on meanings. According to Creswell (2013), emphasis is put on the inquiry approach of qualitative research. In relation to my research purpose and questions, qualitative research is an appropriate approach for my research, as it allows me to inquire into the lived experiences of a small sample of non-music teacher specialist teachers. The research questions I pose do not require measuring and counting which quantitative research entails, but rather focuses on the meanings and explanations of these teacher’s lived experiences that will be recorded through a semi-structured interview.

3.2 Instruments of Data Collection

There are three main types of interviews: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews. The structured interview uses a formally structured schedule of interview questions with no flexibility in terms of what kinds of questions are to be asked. Contrary to this type of interview, the unstructured interview does not utilize schedules of questions. Semi-structure interviews falls somewhere in the middle of this spectrum, where predetermined questions are created but there is the freedom to create new questions on the spot depending on how the interviewee responds (Berg, 2004; Denscombe, 1998).

The main instrument of data collection for this is study is the semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix B). This type of interview allows researchers to hear the lived experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2013). The amount of flexibility and freedom semi-structured interviews provide, gives me the ability to inquire more about the experiences that non-music specialist teachers have lived. Furthermore, the freedom of adding and taking out
certain questions could lead to possible digressions. However, these digressions could lead to more unexpected, meaningful data that unfolds the interests and knowledge of the participant that might not have been achievable through structured interviews.

I proceeded with two to three semi-structured interviews with non-music specialist teachers individually and face-to-face. The reason being, every teacher comes with different set of experiences and providing the space to share one-on-one will allow for deeper conversations to come to fruition. In reference to Appendix B, I followed the interview questions, which have been divided into 4 sections, starting with the participant’s background information, followed by the participant’s perspectives about music education and his/her practices, then discuss the supports and challenges faced when teaching music, and conclude with the next steps the participant is planning to take while teaching music.

3.3 Participants

In this section, I review the sampling criteria that I established for participant recruitment, and I review a variety of ways for teacher recruitment. I have also included a section wherein I will introduce each of the participants once I know who they are. As for now, I have left this as a place-hold.

3.3.1 Sampling criteria

For the purpose of this study, there are certain criteria that need to be met in order to respond to the research questions. They are the following:

1. Teachers will have 5 years of teaching experience
2. Teachers will be working in Ontario
3. Teachers will have no or very little musical background and be non-specialist music educators
4. Teachers will be teaching a quality music program

In relation to my research purpose and questions, these criteria need to be set in place. The first criterion requires that teachers have at least 5 years of teaching. This ensures that the teacher will have enough experience to draw upon his/her journey of becoming a music teacher. The literature used in this research study is based on the quality of music education in Ontario. Therefore asking teachers in Ontario would keep in line with what existing research is demonstrating. It is important that the teachers do not have any or very little musical background. This aligns with the research purpose, of trying to equip other non-music specialist teachers with the tools and resources available to create a successful music program. Using teachers with musical background is not the same as asking teacher with no music background as the former has previous experience that may lead to more confidence in teaching. The purpose of this study is to see how non-music specialist teachers are creating their music programs to be successful in order for other non-music specialist teachers, who are having difficulties, to learn how to create successful music programs for their students.

3.3.2 Recruitment

Purposeful sampling strategy is an approach of qualitative research that determines whom to select as participants for the study, the specific type of sampling strategy, and the size of the sample to be studied (Creswell, 2013). Convenience sampling relies on available participants (Berg, 2004). Due to the methodological parameters of this study, I used the purposeful sampling strategy as it allows me to be productive, effective, and specific in the way I carry out my research questions. Convenience sampling may also be used because music is a specific subject with limited amount of teachers available.
Given the small-scale nature of this study, I recruited participants from existing contacts of music teachers as well as generalist teachers who have to teach music. I contacted schools in my area as well as the schools I attended during my practicum blocks. I contacted music organizations and provide them with an overview of my research study. I provided them participant criteria and ask that these organizations to distribute my information to teachers they believe may fulfill the criteria. I provided my contact information to these organizations to ensure that teachers are volunteering to participate instead of feeling obligated to participate.

3.3.3 Participant bios

Grace has been teaching for over 20 years and has only been given the task to teach music as a prep coverage in the last three years. She also teaches art and ELL as part of her prep coverage. She specifically teaches music for junior kindergarten up to Grade 2. Her school currently has one music specialist that teaches Grades 2-8, including band. Grace did not have any previous formal music lessons, nor was she given any music courses during her preservice training. She did not take any additional qualification in music nor was given any professional development related to music in her school.

Mark has been teaching for 6 years and has only been teaching music for 2 out of the 6 years. He is currently teaching intermediate special education and ELL. In addition to music, he has taught drama, physical education, health, science, social studies, FDK, geography, history, and math. He is also the athletic rep and coaches various sport teams. Similarly to Grace, Mark did not have any formal music lessons except for playing the violin up until Grade 8 at school. He did have preservice music training but only for a week. Mark also did not have any professional development relate to music in his school and did not take any additional qualification in music.
3.4 Data Analysis

The data collected through the transcription of the interviews was analyzed by coding and synthesizing themes. Data analysis incorporates describing, classifying, and interpreting data. The process of coding involves combining the text into small categories of information (Creswell, 2013). Some researchers create extensive lists of coding which makes the database complex. For this research study, short lists of 25-30 categories of information were formed. Once these categories were established, the data was be analyzed again to point out four themes, while also being aware of the null data in the research and discussing its significance. In qualitative research, themes are broad units of information that consist of many codes combined to form a common idea (Creswell, 2013). Once the themes have been established, interpretation can take place. Interpretation allows researchers to discover the larger meaning of the data and is linked to the larger research literature.

3.5 Ethical Review Procedures

Throughout the whole research process, several ethical procedures need to be taken into account to ensure the rights and safety of the participants. Berg (2004) states that, “confidentiality is an active attempt to remove from the research records any elements that might indicate the subjects’ identities” (p.65). To ensure the confidentiality of the participants, pseudonyms were assigned and they were notified of their right to withdraw from the participation in the study at any stage of the research study. In addition, all data, including audio recordings, will be stored on my password protected laptop and will be destroyed after 5 years.

Creswell (2013) also indicates the necessity of being aware to the potential power imbalance present during the interview process. As a result of this potential ethical problem, I built trust and avoid leading questions to remove some of this imbalance. There are no known
risks in participating; nevertheless, participants were given the interview questions right beforehand to look over any questions that they may feel uncomfortable to answer. Participants were asked to sign a consent letter, found on Appendix A, giving their consent to be interviewed and audio-recorded. This consent letter provides an overview of the study, addresses ethical implications, and specifies expectations of participation, which includes a 45-60 minute semi-structure interview. Once the transcriptions have been completed, participants had the opportunity to review the transcripts and to clarify any statements before I conduct the data analysis. These ethical concerns were addressed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants while conducting this study.

3.6 Methodological Limitations and Strengths

Given the ethical parameters of this study, limitations are present when gathering and analyzing data. There is a limited amount of teachers that can be interviewed to two to three participants. Furthermore, I am unable to include the experiences of students or parents, or to conduct classroom observations, which prevents me from seeing the perspectives of other lenses. According to Creswell (2013), having a larger sample size will help in collecting extensive details. As a result of the sizing limitation, the findings presented can inform the topic at hand but they cannot generalize the experience of all non-music specialist teachers.

Another limitation that needs to be taken into account is the amount of time that is allocated to work on the research. During my time as a Master of Teaching student, I am in a professional preparation program. Meaning, I am in a schedule of a full course load but expected to meet similar requirements of a master’s program. Due to this limited timeframe, I could only explore my research problem to a certain degree. For example, this affected the amount of interviews I could administer which then affected that amount of data collected.
Besides the many limitations this study contains, there are strengths that are also present. By interviewing teachers, I am able to hear from their lived experiences whereas this depth of experience would be difficult to achieve through a survey. The process of interviewing gives the space and time for teachers to voice their opinions and experiences in a way that is meaningful to them. It allows them to deeply reflect and process on their practices and clearly communicate their thoughts on the topic of music education. As a result, “meaning” is made and becomes part of the journey of each participant (Berg, 2004).

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the research methodology by beginning with the explanation of the research approach and procedure. I then identified the primary instrument of collecting data, which were semi-structured interviews that provided some flexibility for participants to respond to questions. This was followed by explaining the types of participants recruited which was based on the type of musical experience as well as the duration of experience. I proceeded by describing my method of analyzing data, coding, while considering the ethical implications present. I concluded with the limitations and strengths when working with teachers. In the next chapter, I report the research findings.
Chapter 4: Research Findings

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I present and discuss my findings based on data collected from two face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with educators who have taught music with limited musical background. The purpose of this research is to discover how non-specialist elementary music teachers are teaching quality music education to their students. With this knowledge, I hope to learn from them what experiences and resources helped develop their confidence and competence for teaching music education so that other non-music specialists may learn from the experiences of these participants.

I explore the following four themes:

1. Non-specialized music teachers produced meaningful learning by promoting an inclusive learning environment that is informed by a variety of professional resources.

2. Non-specialized music teachers addressed various challenges encountered when teaching music.

3. Non-specialized music teachers acknowledged drawing upon supports made available to them both within and outside the school setting when teaching music.

4. Non-specialized music teachers recognized their passion and creativity as key elements to strengthen their music program.

Each theme contains three subthemes that demonstrate how non-music specialists are delivering a quality music education program. Within each subtheme, the participants’ voices are expressed which is followed by connecting their experiences and the Chapter 2 literature review. These themes and subthemes will address how non-specialist elementary music teachers are teaching quality music education to their students.
4.1 Non-Specialized Music Teachers Produced Meaningful Learning by Promoting an Inclusive Learning Environment That is Informed by a Variety of Professional Resources

This theme centers on what participants of the study are practically doing in their music program that produces meaningful learning. By exploring the strategies they used, it reveals what helps in the process of creating a meaningful learning experience and it gives other non-specialist music teachers a model to refer to. The first thing that will be examined is the positive relationship the teachers form with their students. Followed by this, the participants will explain what they do before carrying out a lesson. Then the participants will demonstrate various teaching methods while carrying out their lessons.

4.1.1 Non-specialized music teachers prioritized developing a positive student-teacher relationship in the classroom

Grace recognized the importance of listening to her students’ suggestions. As a non-specialized music teacher, Grace had to experiment with various lessons in order to figure out her students’ interests. The students were honest with her and informed her if a certain song was not engaging for their grade. Her willingness and openness to listen to her students’ suggestions, rather than going forward with her own plans, helped her to move toward producing a more relevant and meaningful learning for her students.

Similarly, Mark pointed out the significance of encouraging students to explore music. By giving students the choice of exploring the different qualities of music, he allowed students to express themselves musically instead of trying to teach them something he did not know. This guided freedom of choice demonstrated that Mark valued his students’ interest by allowing them make their own musical decisions. Mark explained that during the lesson,
I would teach them the basics, like rhythm and beats, how you have bars, and then from there, letting the kids explore and create their own…getting them to teach each other and getting them to be the experts in the classroom rather than me teaching everything.

In order for Mark to allow students to explore and express themselves, trust must have been developed in their relationship, which was made possible through creating a safe environment. This explorative outcome exemplifies that a positive relationship with students must be built beforehand.

Both participants utilized the students’ previous knowledge to peer teach and recognized their role as a facilitator throughout the process. Unlike a teacher-centered approach, their student-centered approach and humility allowed students to engage in various kinds of meaningful music making and learning. This relates to what literature says about the benefits of music education for students. The Coalition for Music Education (2010) reported that out of the 13 potential benefits of music education, the ability to express one’s self musically was considered important for in music education. These benefits of music are apparent if a music teacher is generating a successful music class. Seeing that Mark prioritized student voice and expression, he recognized the importance of student-teacher relationship as a way of building meaningful learning. Another benefit that was listed was music’s ability in keeping students engaged in school and less likely to drop out (Coalition for Music Education, 2010). This relates back to Grace’s approach in trying to listen to her students’ interest in order to engage their attention. Grace was able to engage her students by being sensitive towards her students’ need, thereby making learning more meaningful for them. The participants’ way of developing a positive relationship with their students support the benefits listed in research, thereby helping to produce meaningful learning.
4.1.2 Non-specialized music teachers acquired lesson material from a wide range of informative sources when preparing and planning lessons in hopes of creating a quality music education

Both non-specialized music teachers emphasized the necessity of relying on the curriculum document when planning and preparing for lessons. They would read through the document and figure out what the overall and specific expectations were before starting to unit plan. Whenever they were introduced to a new song, they would make sure it would fit with the curriculum. Both participants also repeatedly mentioned their reliance on the music teacher’s support and guidance when first preparing to teach music as well as throughout their music teaching experience. Most schools have a music specialist but since there are many grades within the school, the music specialist teacher is not able to teach every class. This is why generalist teachers are required to teach music. It was through the music teacher that Grace was introduced to some resources and received support. In addition, both participants claimed to communicate with other classroom teachers in order to create units that were cross-curricular. Grace indicated,

What I like to do is if I know one of the kindergarten classes is doing a unit on the farm, I will try to find songs that are relevant to the farm. So I try to work with the classroom teachers that way. When the kids are a bit older, Grade 1 or Grade 2, I’ve often gone to our specialized music teacher, who teaches instrumental, and I’ve asked him for some ideas.

Mark also explained the significance of making the learning goals and success criteria explicit by displaying them on the classroom walls as well as giving examples during class time. By co-creating the expectations with the students, the students, as well as Mark, had a clear understanding of what the expectations were for music class. Having these clear expectations
allowed the class to work towards a similar goal. Once the non-specialized music teachers established relying on the curriculum documents and other teachers, they were able compile a list of repertoire to use. Both participants incorporated various genres of music by using YouTube and iTunes as one of their primary sources.

The support of a music specialist was a prominent finding throughout the literature. Holden and Button (2006) found that the least kind of support available to generalist teachers was the support from a music specialist. However, having this kind of support is reported to possibly be the best solution to raise greater confidence in non-specialist music teacher, as it allows them to work together, share ideas and encourage teacher confidence (Berke & Colwell, 2004). Since both participants were able to receive some support from their music specialists in their respective schools, this allowed them to prepare and plan lessons for their music programs. This thereby aligns with what literature has to say in terms of the benefits of having the support of a specialist teacher.

4.1.3 Non-specialized music teachers incorporated a variety of teaching methods when carrying out their lessons to create a meaningful learning environment

Both participants explained the various approaches they used when teaching a song. Grace taught songs by taking apart verse by verse, writing out the lyrics for the older grades, listening to the lyrics for the younger grades, listening to the meaning of the lyrics, and identifying different instruments. She pointed out the importance of bringing in her personal passion to music as well as modeling how she listens to music. She then invited the students to listen, make connections, and discuss. Using a relatively different approach, Mark explained that he started off with a big group lesson which later led into small group activities. In their small groups, he invited them to explore, perform, and demonstrate what they know.
One specific tool both participants incorporated in their music program was technology. However, both participants used technology differently. Grace used technology as a way of engaging students to learn different instrument names in a game format. She also used technology as a means to search for songs. On the other hand, Mark integrated technology by showing students a performance on YouTube of what they will be performing in the future. This was to allow students to see the bigger picture by showing them the end goal.

Grace approached teaching music as a way of making it cross-curricular. She pointed out the connection between music and DPA, such as *Just Dance*. She also explained the connection between music and literacy by using a couple of examples. One way she connected music and literacy was by introducing a picture book on Mozart and allowing students to make connections and personal reflections when listening to Mozart. Another example came through studying and analyzing the lyrics of *Roar* by Katy Perry. At the time, this song was popular on the radio, one that many students would be able to recognize. Grace incorporated the theme of anti-bullying with this song. Grace’s extended music teaching by explaining,

[Teaching music] can just be the whole love of music and how music tells a story…I started to link it to language because a lot of the teachers were reading stories and morals and what’s the connection…it really connected with all the kids…So I just looked at [teaching music] in a different way.

By integrating music with literacy, Grace provided students the opportunity to respond to the morals of a song and make a personal connection to it, similar to what other literacy teachers were doing with stories. Grace was able to see how music in itself is like telling a story in a different way. A cross-curricular approach allows teachers to incorporate subjects that they are familiar with, such as literacy, with an unfamiliar subject, music. Research shows that low level
of confidence stems from a lack of musical knowledge (Kane, 2005; Propts 2003; Russell-Bowie, 2009). However, by pairing a familiar subject and an unfamiliar subject, generalist teachers demonstrate they are able to gain greater confidence with building a music program that integrates other subjects they are comfortable teaching. Extending what literature states, participants demonstrate that it is possible to increase confidence in non-music specialist teachers by approaching music through a cross-curricular lens.

4.2 Non-Specialized Music Teachers Addressed Both External and Internal Challenges Encountered When Teaching Music

Starting something unfamiliar and new brings many uncertainties and challenges. This theme unpacks the different types of challenges the participants faced when teaching music. It is beneficial to identify these challenges as it reinforces the findings in literature but it also goes beyond certain findings in literature by providing how to overcome certain difficulties. The first challenge that will be addressed is the lack of resources made available to the participants. The next barrier found in both participants was a lack of support when initially starting the music program. Finally, the participants acknowledged personal reactions of uncertainty and anxiety but explained how they are able to overcome such feelings.

4.2.1 Non-specialized music teachers voiced a lack of available resources when trying to create a quality music program

Both participants repeatedly noted a lack of access to resources when building their music program. When starting a new subject, resources give teachers the confidence, comfort and knowledge to teach that subject. However, when there is a lack of music resources, it makes it difficult for non-specialized music teachers to transition from a general teaching position to a specialized subject—in this case, music. Despite the resources that were made available to them,
both non-specialized music teachers voiced a limited amount of resources they were able to use. Mark commented, “You need resources at school but it’s hard to find resources…sometimes you don’t know where to find resources outside of school.” As a result, they had to compile their own list of resources from multiple sources. Grace indicated, “It’s been a lot of sitting on the computer and going on to iTunes and listening to sample songs.” She also indicated that it was only recently she was able to buy some shakers; before then, all she used were the students’ voices.

Once the participants realized the lack of access to resources and the limited amount of resource they were able to access, they also realized the quality of the resources were questionable. Many of the resources that were made able to access were songs that did not reflect the current genres of music students were listening to. However, what was considered quality music resource was subjective as Grace pointed out a resource, Music Play, being outdated whereas Mark mentioned its usage as a resource. Grace explained the relevancy of Music Play as such,

Some of the songs for teaching Grade 1, I mean they were really, really babyish and a lot of the Grade 1s are a lot more street smart kind of thing, like they hear all the songs on radio or TV. Those kinds of songs just were not going to fly with them…they’re cute songs but they’re so not current anymore that I don’t pick it up anymore. I wish there was maybe like a website or like Google Doc…a place where you can go to.

Despite their differences in what makes a quality music resource, both participants recognized a limited knowledge on where to find quality resources. This caused them to look to online resources, such as YouTube and iTunes as primary sources. The lack of resources was a common theme among the literature. The Coalition for Music Education (2010) surveyed 1,204 schools
and discovered 10 common challenges schools faced in regards to music education, one of which was a lack of instruments or equipment. Both participants support the findings of research as they have repeatedly expressed difficulties in accessing and finding quality resources to develop their music programs. In addition to such challenges, a new finding of accessing quality music resources has also added to the difficulties in creating quality music programs.

4.2.2 Non-specialized music teachers addressed a lack of professional support when teaching music for the first time

Both participants expressed a concern of not having adequate professional development when it comes to teaching music. They explained how they received workshops on other subject areas but never in music. Grace mentioned that she did not have any pre-service training in music while she attended teacher’s college. Mark also expressed limited pre-service training that amounted to solely six hours throughout his whole education in teacher’s college. Furthermore, Grace identified minimal funding at her school. She shared how she did not understand how the music budget worked. This ambiguity caused Grace to take the initiative in advocating for funding within her music program to the principal.

It wasn’t so much a budget. It was more me walking into [the principal’s] office and saying, ‘Could I have some money for some shakers because I need to do more with the kids.’…I don’t know where the money is coming from.

Both participants also indicated limited support from their respective schools. One limitation was evident through the amount of time that was allocated for music weekly. Mark’s response to the challenges he faced when teaching music was,
I think timing…if you look at the schedule for one class, you’ll notice that there’s one or two music slots for the whole week and that shows the importance of music that it’s not very high. So if you’re not doing a lot of it, definitely you’re not going to grow in it.

Grace also expressed concerns that she only sees her students once or twice a week. In addition to this, Grace mentioned the challenge of not having her own classroom. This limits her in how she would like her music program set up due to limited space. Another limitation was displayed by the amount of support both participants received from their principal. Mark expressed,

> When you get your timetable, the principal just assumes that you’re going to be able to teach everything. And so you don’t get any support in anything until you ask for it or you seek PD for it…So you’re really just finding stuff on your own or asking around and trying to be as resourceful as you can.

The lack of professional support was a reoccurring theme throughout literature. The Coalition for Music Education (2010) listed funding and lack of time/timetable pressure as the top two challenges music educators encounter. They also discovered that the strongest music programs had the support of both the principal and parents. Although both participants resonated with the same challenges that research brought up, they were able to overcome such barriers by advocating for their program and making the most of the time they are given.

4.2.3 Non-specialized music teachers had to overcome personal reactions of uncertainty and anxiety when teaching music for the first time

Student engagement is a challenge that many teachers have to overcome when teaching. However, when it comes to music, there is an additional challenge in engaging students due to the reputation that a music course carries, one that is not taken seriously by some students. Some students see music as an easy subject, thereby causing some disrespect to the subject as well as
the teacher. As a result, classroom management is a challenge that both participants initially encountered. In response to this challenge, both participants reported beginning the school year with establishing an environment where attentive listening is the expectation. Additionally, Grace expressed her difficulties in assessing students in music. She explained that in comparison to other subjects, it is difficult to authentically assess students in music since a lot of the concepts covered are “not concrete”. As a lot of the music assessment comes from observation, listening, and discussion, it is difficult to measure it quantitatively in comparison to other subjects such as math and science.

The commencement of a new subject brings uncertainty in how to deliver the required contents. Consequently, both participants acknowledged the initial feelings of panic, self-criticism, self-pity, inadequacy, and uncertainties when teaching music. Mark expressed initially placing too much emphasis on the final performance instead of enjoying the process of experimenting and giving space for mistakes. Focusing on the final performance caused great pressure, anxiety and stress. In order to combat such feelings, Mark reported taking a step back and realizing the beauty of making music in the process versus the product. Grace attested to similar feelings of panic and self-pity by expressing,

The first couple of months I really took it to heart that I’m not doing the best job and I can’t believe I’m doing music…so like it was all a “woe is me” kind of thinking. And then I just kind shook my head and said, “but you know music is also about loving music and not just about playing music because you don’t have to love music in order to play it.” Instead of letting her initial feelings prevent her from moving forward in creating a quality music program, Grace was able to overcome such negative feelings by self-reassurance and seeking the advice of the specialized music teacher. Both teachers took the initiative to proactively address
PERSPECTIVES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF NON-SPECIALIST MUSIC TEACHERS

their personal attitudes and feelings towards teaching a new subject that allowed them to move forward in building a meaningful learning experience.

The theme of having confidence is a reoccurring theme found throughout literature. Holden and Button (2006) performed a study that found that in comparison to other subjects, music was ranked the lowest in confidence for non-specialist music teachers. Although both teachers initially reported having a lack of confidence in music, they were able to overcome such a challenge by changing their personal outlook on their own abilities and seeking help from others. While research demonstrates that there is a lack of confidence in music, these participants show that it is possible to increase their confidence level.

4.3 Non-Specialized Music TeachersAcknowledged Drawing Upon Supports Made Available to Them Both Within and Outside the School Setting When Teaching Music

In this section, I will be talking about the supports that the participants access from within and outside the school setting. The way in which the participants make use of the supports made available to them demonstrates their resourcefulness and initiative. Instead of waiting for resources and supports to come to them, both participants actively seek out guidance from others which added to enhancing their music program. I will begin by discussing the supports that the participants experienced within the school. Then I will examine the resources the participants had access to. I will conclude this section by indicating participants’ access to popular and multicultural forms of music.

4.3.1 Non-specialized music teachers affirmed having continuous relational support from others in the school throughout their music teaching

One of the greatest supports a person can have is the support of another person. For the non-specialist music teachers, they found that homeroom teachers, specialized music teachers,
and teachers from other schools were of some support when starting to formulate their music program. Grace pointed to the openness between teachers as they were readily open to share resources. Mark advised other teachers in the future, “Don’t do it on your own, see what other teachers are doing, whether it’s in your school or around the world and just try to bring that into the classroom.” Mark sought the advice from teachers within his school as well as elsewhere. More specifically, the music specialists were helpful when the participants were trying to develop ideas for lessons and assessments.

In addition to teacher support, Grace found her students to be supportive in teaching music. She noted, “The kids are great at telling you the way it is.” Her students honestly stated their opinion about what they were learning, whether it was positive or negative. Grace listened to their suggestions and feedback as one of the ways to decide which songs to incorporate in her music program. The Coalition for Music Education (2010) listed a lack of support as one of the top 10 challenges that schools face in regards to music education. Although there was partial support for these participants, they took the opportunities given to them as a way of advancing their respective programs. When they were not able to access support within the school, they sought out support from other teachers from different schools, resulting in some form of a safety support network.

4.3.2 Non-specialized music teachers reported having access to resources within the school to support their quality music program

Although both participants expressed concerns about having a limited amount of resources, they utilized the available resources to its fullness. Both participants utilized the curriculum when planning various units by looking at how different parts of a song fit the curriculum expectations. One major resource that both participants mentioned was Music Play.
This resource consists of premade lessons plans with various songs. Grace did not find this resource suitable for her students. On the other hand, Mark utilized parts of *Music Play* to enhance and guide his lessons. Grace also listed some of the instruments she used in her class, which were Lummi sticks, shakers, and jingle bells, two of which were borrowed from another teacher. Other than those instruments, the only other thing she could use were the students’ voices as an instrument. With the limited amount of instruments, she worked with what she had to engage students in a quality music program.

As a response to a limited amount of resources, Grace sought out the support from the principal to gain financial support. Since the Lummi sticks were borrowed from another teacher, Grace explained, “I was able to ask the principal for some money… and he was great and said sure…and I bought shakers…which actually go a long way.” In relation to literature, the principal plays a significant role in supporting music teachers financially. The Coalition for Music Education (2010) discovered that the strongest music programs had support from the principal. Although there could be more improvement on the amount of support given, Grace utilized her principal’s financial support to enhance her music program.

4.3.3 Non-specialized music teachers reported accessing popular and multicultural forms of music to enhance their music program

Some music education programs can have the tendency to solely rely on classical music. However, both participants recognized the importance of using contemporary, relevant music for their students. In order to be aware of current songs, both participants report using the radio as one way of being introduced to new songs that their students may be listening to but also making sure that the meaning and words are appropriate. Mark remarked,
It might be just seeing what’s relevant in society or listen to the radio and saying, “oh this is a song that’s always playing, is there anything that we can do with it? Or how can we incorporate what’s in the curriculum with this?”

Both participants also mentioned their reliance on YouTube and iTunes as primary resources. They both use these sources to look up songs and listen to new songs. Mark continued by indicating his use of YouTube as a way of finding performances that he would like his class to work towards. He mentioned,

If you see something really neat that another school did on YouTube, then you think, “oh I want to try doing that with my kids”…so that was a big resource, just using YouTube, like finding something interesting that would engage the kids too.

In addition to these supports, both participants utilized professional music performers. Grace mentioned bringing in a Canadian performer and composer, Jack Grunsky. He introduced different instruments from various parts of Canada and allowed the students to play on the instruments. Mark also invited experts into the school to expose students to drumming, bucket drumming, and other cultural music. Both teachers added multicultural form to their music by allowing experts to introduce various genres of music. This allowed students to experience various types of music and gain a better appreciation for other types of music. Two of the challenges that were listed in the Coalition for Music Education (2010) were a lack of support and equipment or instruments. Although the participants did indicate challenges in these areas, they were able to work with such challenges by accessing songs that were easily accessible on social media as well as using other experts to expose students to various kinds of music.
4.4 Non-Specialized Music Teachers Recognized Their Passion and Creativity as Key Elements to Strengthen Their Music Program

In comparison to the other themes, this final theme will explore the participants’ emotional response to teaching music. As much as the concrete examples reported by the participants are important, the invisible emotional aspect of teaching something new should also be taken into account. It seems that a lot of what the heart feels, directs what one may or may not do. Therefore, investigating the various emotions these participants faced should be noted in order to demonstrate possible ways of addressing certain issues or using these emotions as a way to channel passion in music and motivation to teach music. This section will begin by demonstrating how the participants’ passion and love for music may spark a similar response within students. Following this, the next subtheme will address participants’ openness and creativity when creating their music program. This section will then conclude with participants connecting their past teaching experiences as transferable skills to their music teaching experience.

4.4.1 Non-specialized music teachers believed their passion and love for music could ignite a similar response within students’ desire to learn music

Music has the ability to spark various emotions. For Grace, she experienced music as a way to set the mood and to give energy. She understood the ability that music has different uses in different contexts. This allowed her to share with her students various genres of music and gain an appreciation for the uses and sounds of different kinds of music. Mark’s positive experience with music allowed him to see music as one of the tools that provided students to be exposed to different art forms and to discover their personal interests and talents.
Just as music can set the mood, music has the ability to cause an emotional response. A commonality between Mark and Grace was their personal passion and love for music and a desire to share that with their students. Grace’s positive experience motivated her to teach music in order for her students to also have the opportunity to share in that joy and love. She expressed,

The only type of experience that I have is I honestly love music…I love to sing…I love listening to different types of music so I try to bring that with me…so there’s nothing that I learned in school about it, it was just my own passion and I’ve always loved music.

Her personal experience with music made her want to “share some of [her] own enthusiasm…as if [she] can set the fire in [her students]”. In relation to literature, Stein (2002) stated that the teacher’s outlook on music affected the way students perceived music. Both participants had positive experiences with music which allowed them to gain a positive outlook on music. The participants’ outlook on music support the notion of literature and in turn their outlook influences their students’ response to learn music.

4.4.2 Non-specialized music teachers pointed to their personal creativity and openness when learning how to teach music

Both participants were constantly aware of how to incorporate music throughout the whole music class. Mark advised, “Try to find music everywhere you can.” His creativity allowed music to be included into routines, such as using it to take attendance, providing another form of assessment. Grace emphasized having the freedom and flexibility to teach music in a way that allowed her to think “outside of the box”. Similarly to Mark, Grace was “always looking for fresh ideas”. An example of this was hearing the song, *Count on Me* on the radio while casually working on things outside of teaching. From hearing this song, Grace then started to brainstorm different ways she can use this song in her music class.
When starting to teach music, both participants were able to adapt when things did not go according to plan. They explained their approach in setting up a music program was through trial and error, being open, and seeing teaching as journey. Grace expressed trying different things as the years went by which resulted in gaining experience and knowledge in identifying and predicting what will and will not work. When she experienced difficulties, she was reminded to “not [put herself] down” and be “easier on [herself]”. She advised,

Be open minded to ideas that you would think, “oh I’m never going to do that” but you know it might just work…there’s always a first time for it…there’s always a first time and that’s what’s learning is. You fall on your face, but you get up again.

Mark also expressed trying not to stress but have fun as the teacher. He had to constantly remind himself that learning was not only about the performance but the process of exploring and producing music. He stated, “It’s also to be creative and not to stress too much about it, have fun with it…it’s okay to make mistakes.” Both teachers had a sense of humility and were teachable throughout their teaching experience.

Alongside of being humble, both participants emphasized the importance of asking others and students for guidance. Grace noted to not “be afraid to ask for help...listen to the kids”. Mark also advised to, “Ask for help, you don’t need to be the expert in the room, ask the kids for help.” Grace and Mark’s positive view on their ability to create a successful music program stemmed from being teachable and creative. This is contrary to what literature states, where Kraay (2013) found that insufficient knowledge and skill and lack of practice resulted in low self-efficacy perceptions. Both participants were able to overcome such perceptions by seeking guidance from others, being open to suggestions, and using their creativity.
4.4.3 Non-specialized music teachers acknowledged the transferable skills of their past teaching experiences at the start of their music teaching career

Grace was able to identify her role as a teacher by viewing teachers as learners. She already held this outlook prior to teaching music which allowed her to view teaching music as a learning journey. She remarked, “What I will do is just keep learning. That is my goal, to keep learning. Whether that’s reading things on the computer, reading articles, checking Pinterest…learning how to make it more fun.” When she was first presented that she had to teach music, she realized that even though she was not able to change the subject, she could change the way she was thinking. Grace’s optimistic outlook when teaching other subjects transferred when she started teaching music. This allowed her to overcome certain challenges and prevented a negative outlook on learning something new.

Mark and Grace indicated using strategies in their music programs like they did for any other class. Grace used her previous understanding of her students, knowing the attention span of each grade, and using common sense. Her previous experience of classroom management helped build an atmosphere that gave respect to the teacher and the music. Mark also used his previous knowledge as a starting point to determine what to teach. Just like he would do for other subjects, Mark referred to the curriculum documents, he unit planned by using the backward design, and he created detailed lesson plans. As with any other subject, he pointed out the importance of building a positive relationship with the students. He explained, “It’s also having a personality in the classroom so that the kids gravitate towards you and whatever you bring to them they’ll enjoy doing it and building that positive relationship with the kids so that they’re enjoying the class.” Her personality aided in transitioning from one subject to another subject, teaching music.
Mark also mentioned his childhood experience with music. Although he had limited experiences, mostly ones that came from school band and music classes, he used his childhood experience of learning as a guide when deciding what to use in his music program. He explained, “You think about when you’re a kid and what your music teacher taught you…and you try to bring that in.” This relates to what the literature says about utilizing past music experiences. Studies have shown that teachers generally form their method of teaching music based on their past musical experience (Abril & Gault, 2005; Berke & Colwell, 2004; Oreck, 2004). This can become a problem if teachers only use the one method in which they were taught, as that limits the experience students will have with music education (Kraay, 2013). Although Mark and Grace utilized their previous experience, they did not solely rely on the one method they grew up with but rather infused it with their own teaching experiences as well as being creative and expanding on what they know. Contrary to what research states, the participants went out of their own experiences and explore other methods.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study found that although non-specialist music teachers did not have a firm foundation in music education, they were able to use what they knew and put it into practice effectively. Both participants were able to overcome many challenges and barriers that were typically faced by many non-music specialists by seeking out advice from others. They also implemented their own creativity and built their confidence in order to develop a quality music classroom. These findings make a significant contribution to the existing literature as there is a limited amount of literature as to what non-specialist music teachers report doing in their music program that created a quality music program. This study expanded research by demonstrating to non-music specialists, who are experiencing similar difficulties, how to approach teaching a
subject of novelty in a way that would increase their confidence and self-efficacy. Going forward, in Chapter 5 I will discuss using these findings as a possible way of bringing in more professional development in schools to increase support for non-specialist music teachers. These findings will also address improving pre-service teacher education in order to help non-specialist music teachers to be equipped emotionally as well as through the provision of current resources. It is by exploring these areas of further research, that the issue of developing more quality music education can be addressed.
Chapter 5: Implications

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the overall implications and significance of this research study. I begin by providing an overview of the key findings on how non-specialist elementary music teachers are teaching quality music education to their students. Then, I discuss the implications of these findings, both for the educational community as well as my own practice as a teacher and researcher. With this in mind, I make recommendations, which may be utilized by other educational professionals, such as teachers, schools, and school boards. I conclude by posing questions and raising suggestions for further research and discussion.

5.1 Overview of Key Findings and their Significance

The following section is an overview of key findings and their significance in reference to the four subthemes that were discussed in Chapter 2. Both participants produced meaningful learning by promoting an inclusive learning environment that was informed by various professional resources. They prioritized developing a positive student-teacher relationship in the classroom by listening to the students, giving space and time to explore different qualities of music, and establishing a student-centered approach by maintaining a role of a facilitator. The participants acquired lesson materials from a wide range of informative sources when preparing and planning lessons. These resources were gathered from curriculum documents, YouTube, iTunes, and the support of a music specialist. Both participants also incorporated a variety of teaching methods when carrying out their lesson. Grace taught songs by taking it apart verse by verse and bringing in her personal passion. Mark started his lessons with a big group formation which later branched into smaller groups. Both participants incorporated technology and made connections to cross-curricular content. Research shows that a low level of confidence stems
from a lack of musical knowledge (Kane, 2005; Propst 2004; Russell-Bowie, 2009). However, by pairing a familiar subject and an unfamiliar subject, the generalist teachers demonstrated they are able to gain greater confidence with building a music program that integrates other subjects they are comfortable teaching. In addition to what literature states, a practical way of increasing confidence in generalist teachers is by approaching music through a cross-curricular lens.

When teaching music, both participants addressed challenges that they encountered, one being a lack of resources. As a result, they had to do a lot of searching and browsing online. The limited amount of resources that was made available to them was questionable in their quality because most of the repertoire was old and not relatable to the students. Another challenge the participants experienced was a lack of professional support when teaching music for the first time. These supports came in the form of a lack of professional development, such as workshops, preservice training, financial support, and a lack of time. In addition to such challenges, both participants had to overcome personal reactions of uncertainty and anxiety when they entered their first year of teaching music. Participants expressed feelings of panic, self-criticism, self-pity, inadequacy and uncertainties. In particular, Grace expressed difficulties in assessing her students meanwhile Mark expressed his tendency to focus on the product more than the process. Holden and Button (2006) performed a study that found that in comparison to other subjects, music was ranked the lowest in confidence for non-specialist music teachers. Although both participants reported having a lack of confidence in music, they were able to overcome this feeling by changing their personal outlook on their own abilities and seeking the advice of others. While research shows a lack of confidence in music, these participants demonstrated it is possible to increase their confidence level.
Participants acknowledged drawing upon supports made available to them both within and outside the school setting when teaching music. They affirmed having continuous relational support from others, such as homeroom teachers, specialized music teachers, teachers from other schools, and feedback from their own students. Within some of these relationships the participants were able to share resources and gain advice. Within the school, both participants reported having access to *Music Play*, a book full of lesson plans, as well as financial support from the principal. In addition to accessing resources within the school, the participants reported accessing popular and multicultural forms of music outside of school to enhance their music program. They reported listening to songs on the radio, YouTube, and iTunes as well as bringing in performers and musical experts. While literature states that there is a continuous lack of support and equipment for music (Coalition for Music Education, 2010), efforts were being made by teachers to proactively seek out support and create their own resource list.

When strengthening the music program, both participants recognized their passion and creativity as key elements. Grace believed her passion and love for music could ignite a similar response within her students’ desire to learn music. Both participants pointed to their personal creativity and openness when learning how to teach. Mark incorporated music throughout the whole music class, for example using music while taking attendance, and realized the importance of having fun as a teacher instead of constantly being stressed out. Similarly, Grace recognized having to think outside of the box and being flexible when things did not go as planned. Mark and Grace acknowledged the transferable skills of their past teaching experiences at the start of their music teaching career. Strategies such as knowing the students’ attention span, classroom management, using a backward design unit plan, building positive relationships with the students, and drawing upon childhood experience with music have all aided in building their music
program. Grace and Mark’s view on their ability to create a successful music program stemmed from being teachable and creative. This is contrary to what literature states, where Kraay (2013) found that insufficient knowledge and skill and lack of practice resulted in low self-efficacy perceptions. Both participants were able to overcome such perceptions by seeking guidance from others, being open to suggestions, and using their creativity.

5.2 Implications

In this section, I outline the implications of my research findings. I begin by discussing the implications of my research findings for the wider educational community as a whole. Next, I discuss the implications of my findings for my professional practice as a teacher and researcher.

5.2.1 The educational community

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of generalist teachers having to teach music. Ideally, it would be best to have enough music specialist teachers teaching music. However, since there has always been a lack of funding and has been a decrease of music specialists, the most common option is to place generalist teachers teaching music. Therefore, it is currently most practical, beneficial, and effective to equip generalist teachers to teach music.

This study, in conjunction with literature, raises the concern of teacher confidence in teaching music. Referring back to the literature review in Chapter 2, low teacher confidence – which can be caused by lack of knowledge and experience – usually results in low self-efficacy which can then create a lower quality of music education. Contrary to what is found in literature, high teacher confidence was found from this study. Such confidence was built from seeking the support of others, making music cross-curricular, being open, and changing one’s personal outlook.
Having quality music education programs is integral to the education of all students. Research demonstrates the many benefits, which is discussed in Chapter 2, that music brings. Therefore it is important that students have access to quality music education from a young age. The way in which current teachers teach music will have an impact on the quality of music education not just during the elementary years but throughout high school. In recent years, there has been a decline in students choosing music elective and this is partly due to the lack of music education in their upbringing. By establishing a foundational music education in the early years, all students will have the access and choice of experiencing quality music education in the later years.

Both participants highlighted that generalist music teachers are most successful when they have the support of others. Music specialists play a key role in helping generalist teachers adjust to a new context. Principals are also of great support as they determine where the funds are to be allocated. Parental support is important because they are able to help support their own child’s learning and the music program as a whole. Usually teaching something well requires passion for the subject. Both participants attested to having great passion when teaching music. This passion supported and sustained their music programs. Although there is some progress moving towards creating better music programs, there are still many areas that need to be addressed, such as having more support, time, and resources. Such topics will be addressed in the latter section of this chapter.

5.2.2 My professional identity and practice

In response to what I found from this research, I have gained a greater understanding of the kinds of experiences non-music specialists encounter. Contrary to the participants’ experiences, I come from a musical background. I was immersed in music from a young age and
continued studying music education during my undergraduate studies. From such a long journey in music, I have gained much appreciation for music and have experienced the benefits of learning music. As a result, I too would like all students to experience music and hopefully gain appreciation for music. Since I have had a significant amount of music in my upbringing, I did not know what it would be like for someone who did not have, or had little, musical experiences. Therefore hearing the experiences of these teachers allowed me to gain a different perspectives on how they experience music and how they teach music.

I hope to be a teacher in the near future but I do not know whether I will be a generalist teacher or a music teacher. In any case, I hope to support generalist teachers who have to teach music wherever I am placed. I also hope to develop music workshops for all teachers that would equip and teach them how to teach music but also integrate it with other subjects. Although I knew prior to this study that there has been a continuous lack of resources in music, I did not know the extent of how little was available. In response to this, I would like to create an online resource bank for teachers to access and share freely. Moreover, I learned that building confidence in teachers is important but contrasting it with humility and being teachable is just as important.

5.3 Recommendations

Although both participants claimed to have quality music programs, there are areas to ameliorate the process in attaining and developing such a program. In this section, I will make recommendations among three areas: schools, school boards, and preservice training. Schools should support the value music education and provide support systems. This can be done through the support of the principal and parents. Principals are able to decide how the funds should be allocated within the school. As a result, they should be aware of the benefits that music education
can have on students. They have the ability to financially support music programs as well as emotionally and mentally support their teachers. Parents need to also be aware of the benefits of music education for their children. Parents have a strong voice in determining what is best for their child. Some parents are involved on the parents’ committee which organizes events and raises funds for the school. These parents should also be aware of the school’s music program because some of the funds from this committee could also be allocated towards enriching the program.

School boards play a prominent role in equipping non-music specialists to create quality music programs. As it was expressed in the participants’ experiences, two major areas the participants were challenged in creating a quality music education were adequate funding and resources. The school boards have the ability to give more funds specifically for music and they have the power to provide more workshops and professional development for non-music specialists. The Ministry of Education has supplied many supporting documents and resources for other subjects and similarly, they also have the ability to provide more current resources for non-music specialists.

Additionally, music courses provided during preservice training should include more opportunities to build teacher confidence. A major finding from this study was the process of building confidence in teaching music. For a smoother transition from preservice training to professional practice, preservice training should provide more time for teacher candidates to become familiar and comfortable teaching music. Such training should include actual teaching opportunities as well as strategies to create cross-curricular music content. This would address the challenge of time. Having cross-curricular material would also not only allow more time for all subjects, but would also allow teachers to teach a subject they are familiar with combined
PERSPECTIVES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF NON-SPECIALIST MUSIC TEACHERS

with music, a subject that is not so familiar. These three areas I have given recommendations for are in hopes of allowing future and current non-music specialists to be able to teach quality music programs.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

After analyzing and discussing various topics and issues that arose from this study, the following questions remain: Can other non-music specialists create a quality music program based on the experiences the participants of this study explained? Is it still possible to not be able to create a successful music program after following their examples? If this is the case, is there a next step in trying to create a successful music program and what would that look like?

While much research exists to address the benefits of music education, additional research needs to be done around supporting non-music specialists teaching music education. Much research speaks to the inadequacy of funds, time, music specialists but none addresses what non-music specialists are doing to bring about a better music education. Although my research addresses this topic, there was a limited amount of data that was acquired. More voices of non-music specialists should be included as well as the perspectives of those involved in the education field. If these voices were made available, more could be done to equip non-music specialists teachers teach quality music programs and address the questions found above.

Further research should also explore teacher confidence and self-efficacy in music. Existing research demonstrates the reason for lacking confidence and having low self-efficacy in teaching music yet there is little research discovering how to practically build up confidence and achieve higher self-efficacy when teaching music. Understanding how to build up confidence would aid in allowing generalist teachers to be more open to take risks and making mistakes.
These two avenues of further research would bring deeper insight into understanding how to equip non-music specialists to develop quality music programs.

5.5 Concluding Comments

There is a growing number of generalist teachers having to teach music with little to no experience in music. This could negatively impact the course of music education if there are no interventions in place. One way of addressing this problem is by understanding how to better support non-music specialists. The participants involved in this study explained their personal journey that allowed them to achieve a successful music program. Their example was displayed in hopes of encouraging and supporting other non-music specialists who are having difficulties teaching music. In addition, their stories also pointed out areas in need of improvements. These changes cannot solely be dependent on the teachers, but involves other people in the education field, such as other teachers, principals, boards, and preservice trainers. There is still much work that needs to be done in increasing the quality of music education, but at the same time there is much hope for what future teachers can do in order for all students to experience meaningful learning in all subject areas, including music.
References


PERSPECTIVES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF NON-SPECIALIST MUSIC TEACHERS


PERSPECTIVES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF NON-SPECIALIST MUSIC TEACHERS


doi:10.1177/002248710005100205

Appendix A: Letter of Consent

Date:

Dear ______________________________,

My Name is Nadia Kim and I am a student in the Master of Teaching program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). A component of this degree program involves conducting a small-scale qualitative research study. My research will focus on how non-music teachers are creating a quality music classroom. I am interested in interviewing music teachers who have little or no musical background who are teaching quality music education programs. I think that your knowledge and experience will provide insights into this topic.

Your participation in this research will involve one 45-60 minute interview, which will be transcribed and audio-recorded. I would be grateful if you would allow me to interview you at a place and time convenient for you, outside of school time. The contents of this interview will be used for my research project, which will include a final paper, as well as informal presentations to my classmates. I may also present my research findings via conference presentations and/or through publication. You will be assigned a pseudonym to maintain your anonymity and I will not use your name or any other content that might identify you in my written work, oral presentations, or publications. This information will remain confidential. Any information that identifies your school or students will also be excluded. The interview data will be stored on my password-protected computer and the only person who will have access to the research data will be my course instructor Angela MacDonald. You are free to change your mind about your participation at any time, and to withdraw even after you have consented to participate. You may also choose to decline to answer any specific question during the interview. I will destroy the audio recording after the paper has been presented and/or published, which may take up to a maximum of five years after the data has been collected. There are no known risks to participation, and I will share a copy of the transcript with you shortly after the interview to ensure accuracy.

Please sign this consent form, if you agree to be interviewed. The second copy is for your records. I am very grateful for your participation.

Sincerely,
PERSPECTIVES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF NON-SPECIALIST MUSIC TEACHERS

Nadia Kim
nadia.kim@mail.utoronto.ca

Course Instructor’s Name: Angela MacDonald
Contact Info: angela.macdonald@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 from this research study at any time without penalty.

I have read the letter provided to me by Nadia Kim and agree to participate in an interview for the purposes described. I agree to have the interview audio-recorded.

Signature: ________________________________________

Name: (printed) _______________________________________________

Date: _________________ ______________________
Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Introductory Script: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study, and for making time to be interviewed today. This research study aims to learn how non-music teachers are creating quality music classroom for the purpose of informing the practice of future non-music specialist teachers. This interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes, and I will ask you a series of questions focused on your own experiences teaching music to elementary aged students. I want to remind you that you may refrain from answering any question, and you have the right to withdraw your participation from the study at any time. As I explained in the consent letter, this interview will be audio-recorded. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Background Information
1. How long have you been an elementary teacher?
2. How long have you been a music teacher?
3. What is your current position?
   a. What grades do you teach?
   b. Do you teach other subjects other than music?
   c. Do you work with other teachers for music class?
   d. Do you fulfill any other roles in the school other than being a music teacher?
4. Can you tell me more about the school that you work in? (e.g. size, demographics, program priorities)
   a. What is the model of music education in your school?
   b. Do you have you own classroom?
   c. What resources are available in your school for music education?
5. What range of experiences has contributed to developing your interest in, and preparation for, music education?
   a. Personal experiences?
      i. What kind of musical experiences have you had?
      ii. Is music part of your personal/everyday life? If so, how? If not, why?
   b. Educational experiences?
      i. Did you take any AQs? If so, which ones?
      ii. How was your experience during teacher’s college in relation to learning music?
      iii. Did you take any undergraduate courses in music or music education?
   c. Professional experiences? (e.g. employment positions, teaching experience, PD. What kind of professional development have you attended?)
6. As a self-reported non-specialist music teacher, what would you say have been the primary sources that have developed your subject-matter knowledge and instructional pedagogy in music education?
Attitudes toward Music Education
7. In your view, what is the role of music education in schools?
8. What are the benefits of music education?
9. In your experience, what do you think of the quality of music education programming in Ontario?
10. What are some of the key barriers standing in the way of strengthening the quality of music education in Ontario?
11. How do you think these barriers could be addressed?
12. How did you feel when, as a non-specialist music teacher, you were assigned a position in music education?
13. What did you do to prepare yourself for this role?
   a. What sources of support did you access and how?
   b. What resources did you access and why?
14. What were your primary concerns when you started out? How, if at all, did you alleviate those concerns?
15. What range of supports, if any, was provided to you by the school and colleagues?
16. How did you learn to develop your comfort level and confidence in developing a quality music education program? How did you first start to learn how to teach music?

Teacher Practices
17. What does your music education program look like?
   a. What does quality music education mean to you?
   b. How do you create opportunities for quality music education?
   c. Can you provide me with some examples of how you develop and enact a quality music education program?
      i. What are your learning goals?
      ii. What are some key instructional considerations that you make?
      iii. What are some of your instructional strategies and approaches?
      iv. What resources do you use and how do you access them?
      v. How do your students respond to your music education program?

Supports and Challenges
18. What range of factors and resources support you in developing and implementing a quality music education program?
19. What resources and sources of support would you have liked when you were first starting to teach music?
20. What resources and sources of support would help enrich your music class right now?
21. What are some challenges you deal with when teaching music? How do you respond to the challenges you face?

Next Steps
22. What will you do to continue the future success of your music program?
23. What advice, if any, do you have for beginning teachers who do not have a background in music education to prepare them for teaching music education?
Thank you for your participation in this research study.