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Videovoice Perspectives of Beginning Band Students at Home

By

James Hamalainen

A culminating thesis, submitted to the faculty of Dominican University of California in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education

Dominican University of California

San Rafael, CA

May 2020

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Abstract

Research exploring the home music experience of beginning band students shows that a high level of support is critical during the first years of studying an instrument. However, school music programs continue to experience a significant dropout rate in the first few years of study. Much of the current research has been focused on the *home music environment* as well as the *behaviors* and *strategies* of the student. Despite the considerable size of this body of research, it lacks student perspective, as well as the emergence of remote learning resources. This study was designed to examine the beginning band students' perspectives of their home music practice. Qualitative data was gathered through surveys, discussions and a *videovoice* project in which students created and shared videos of their home music practice with peers. Twenty beginning band students volunteered to attend two focus group meetings, culminating in a *videovoice* exhibit. Adjacent data was also collected via a survey completed by 143 members of the Elementary Music Teachers Facebook Group. The findings of this study showed that the student-participants were highly motivated by enjoyment experienced in the music process. Findings also showed that the participants placed a high value on social recognition and peer acceptance, which in turn contributed to the development of their musical identity. The *videovoice* process combined the power of joy and social affirmation in an analytical setting. Music educators, in traditional classroom and remote learning settings alike, will find that the *videovoice* approach will empower beginning band students to develop their musical identity while bridging the gap between the band rehearsal and home music practice.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

"She danced 'cause she liked it! It's her natural state!" This statement is how a fifth grade beginning band student named Josefina explained her friend's joyous body language in a video sample of her friend practicing trumpet at home. The students in the focus group had just watched a *videovoice* compilation of five students engaged in home music practice. Josefina's quote reflects the perception among beginning band students that home music practice should be an enjoyable experience. Her desire to voice support for her classmate reveals how musical identity is delicately built in a social context. *Videovoice* proved to be an effective and rewarding means of fostering the growth of musical identity for the participants of this study.

Music education holds important cultural significance and is a staple in most U.S. public schools. Beginning band students are tasked with establishing essential habits of music practice in their home environment, requiring a high level of independence. Unfortunately, beginning band often students struggle to accomplish this task, and more than a third drop out of band within the following two years (Strickland, 2010).

While sustaining music education has been a problem since the introduction of public school music programs in colonial times, new technology offers innovative solutions to this historic problem. Crises such as wildfires, COVID-19, and natural disasters have revealed not only the possibilities of modern technology, but also the necessity of incorporating remote learning into elementary instruction. Many students, even those from marginalized communities, have access to smart phones with video

recording technology. These powerful devices can help to bridge the gap and to demystify the relationship between music at school and music at home.

Statement of Purpose

Although research in music education over the past half century has been robust, there is a lack of qualitative research analyzing the musical home lives of diverse student populations, as well as the emerging technology-based strategies for success. A significant portion of that research has focused on the behaviors of the student, revealing crucial findings that informs effective pedagogy (Austin & Berg, 2006; Clark, 2012; Hallam et al., 2012; Leon-Guerrero, 2008; Miksza, 2012; Oare, 2012; Pitts & Davidson, 2000; Schatt, 2011; Uygun & Kilincer, 2017; Zhukov, 2009). Acknowledging the immense influence of the home environment, researchers have developed tools to evaluate the home musical environment (Barnes et al., 2016; Brand, 1985; Creech, 2010; Dor, 2015; Ilari, 2018; Margiotta, 2011; Wills, 2011; Zdzinski et al., 2015). Tools such as the Parental Involvement-Home Environment in Music (PIHEM) establish a clear corollary between home life and musical outcomes for children. More recently, research has begun to address issues of privilege and access, underscoring the challenges facing marginalized populations (Butler et al., 2007; Mattern, 2019). A small, but promising body of research has explored recent music technologies (Arthur et al., 2016; Hanrahan et al., 2019; Palazon & Giraldez, 2018). As music education evolves to better serve all communities, so too must the research evolve to inform best practices in the field. Technologies that were unimaginable just a few years ago are now ubiquitous in many homes. However, this resource remains underutilized in many music classrooms. Further research is needed on the use of video sharing of the home music

practice experience, and how students respond to this approach. Ongoing research is needed to better understand the beginning band student's home music practice experience and modern technological tools to support home music practice.

This study looked at how beginning band students perceive their home music practice experience. The participants in this study helped to identify themes of obstacles, strategies, aspirations, and identity. Within the broader context of home music practice, this study was an exploration in how students respond to creating, sharing, and analyzing video of their own home practice.

Overview of the Research Design

Modeled on *photovoice*, *videovoice* is a participatory-action research methodology based on the understanding that people are experts in their own lives (Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001). For this study, *videovoice* was defined as student-created video of their own home music practice. This *videovoice* case study utilized a convergent mixed methodology with a constructivist philosophical worldview. This study was primarily qualitative and included supplemental quantitative survey data. The data was collected at Valle Trueno Elementary (pseudonyms are used in place of all names to protect privacy) over a two-week period in January and February of 2020. The focus group consisted of 20 participants who were members of the 5th grade beginning band. Demographics of the group included 11 girls and 9 boys; 12 Latino, 7 African American, and one Filipino. Eleven of the twelve Latino students reported Spanish as the primary language spoken in their home. The research site was in an urban, high poverty, majority-non-white Bay Area city. The researcher was the music teacher for Valle Trueno Elementary, teaching in his 4th year at the site and 17th year of teaching

overall. The voters of Springdale had recently passed a 'Parcel Tax', providing substantial funding for music education. All eight of the district elementary schools had recently acquired a full inventory of beginning band instruments. The participants of this study were all offered school-owned instruments for the entire school year.

The focus group gathered for two meetings, participating in discussions and surveys. Five of the twenty students successfully submitted a *videovoice*. The focus group viewed the *videovoice* submissions and subsequently responded via discussion and surveys. Supplemental quantitative data was collected using a survey of 143 music teachers on Facebook. The researcher of this study acknowledges a bias and a unique positionality due to the ongoing relationship as the music teacher for the participants. As their music teacher, the researcher had a vested interest in long term student outcomes. Furthermore, the existing power structure of the teacher-student relationship may have influenced the participants' comments and responses during the discussions.

Significance of the Study

The research revealed a major theme of how the participants sought personal enjoyment to a high degree. Their desire to find enjoyment in music appeared to be woven into their behaviors when practicing. The theme of procedural enjoyment helped guide the research to the related theme of musical identity. Data revealed that the two themes of enjoyment and identity were critical factors in sustaining participation in music education. The development of musical identity was driven by the participants' motivation to enjoy the overall process. It was clear that these first-year band students placed great value on the joy they experienced in the music room and at home, as well as the subsequent affirmation and recognition of the group. The pursuit of joyful

musical experiences had a symbiotic connection to the social response of the group. The resultant development of their emergent musical identity was a confluence of the individual desire to experience joy and the actions of the community at large.

It is also significant to note that although most of the participants expressed substantial interest in submitting a *videovoice* sample, only 25% of participants were able to do so. However, both the creators and audience of the *videovoice* content exhibited similar reactions to the sharing experience. Both segments of the focus group demonstrated a balance of joyous and analytical responses. It was somewhat surprising that the viewer-only participants demonstrated a high level of engagement. It would have been understandable if their feelings of disappointment would have limited their experience. However, students that were unable to submit video were still very active in both meetings, building upon their own musical identity in doing so. On a community level, the process of *videovoice* provided a unique opportunity for bonding and social connection. The overall benefit of *videovoice* appeared to be experienced at the individual and group level.

The findings of this study differ from previous research in the way it connected the home music experience with the in-school group experience. *Videovoice* helped to reveal a potentially powerful connection between the home and school routines of students. Prior studies have been built upon the conventional processes associated with home music practice. In general, these studies would operate within a framework that included students practicing independently, receiving minimal feedback from parents, and relying primarily on self-assessment. The researchers conducting these studies investigated a conventional process built upon the assumption that the home

practice routine is a phenomenon disconnected from the in-school experience. This study advances theoretical understanding of how home music practice can connect with the in-school experience. Through the implementation of *videovoice*, educators can better understand factors affecting home music practice, students can receive critical feedback, and a sense of community can be strengthened.

Research Implications

Like many beginning band students in the U.S., the participants of this study were faced with many challenges. By providing the researcher a window into the intimate details of their home music practice, the participants enabled this study to highlight crucial findings and promising implications. The central themes of procedural enjoyment and musical identity were accentuated through the implementation of *videovoice*. Thus, music educators will be well served to consider several implications of this study. This includes how beginning band students are highly motivated to experience enjoyment in all processes of music practice, how *videovoice* can build community and strengthen social connections, and how numerous facets of music identity are developed through the *videovoice* experience.

Enjoyment in a beginning band setting is essential. The participants of this study shared considerable evidence of how they associated joy with home music practice. Educators should consider how joy is woven into the expectations and routines of home music practice for beginning band students. The choices related to pedagogy, repertoire, and educational outcomes should therefore be built upon the understanding that beginning band students are highly motivated to experience joy in their home music practice.

In beginning band, students develop vital growth of their musical identity. During the *videovoice* experience, the participants demonstrated the centrality of their identity as musicians. The participants that submitted videos experienced social praise and affirmation. Most of the participants that were unable to submit videos expressed disappointment with not sharing a similar experience. Music educators should bear in mind the delicate growth of musical identity for beginning band students and should be deliberate in creating opportunities that nurture the growth of musical identity.

Videovoice is a dynamic educational tool with numerous benefits. The students pioneering this assignment helped bring *videovoice* to life. As a prototype, *videovoice* revealed some underlying challenges facing the students, such as a lack of universal access to technology and tech-support at home. On the other hand, the awesome response to the *videovoice* compilation has important implications for teachers of beginning band. Teachers utilizing *videovoice* will gain insight into the mysterious home practice routines of students. Students will receive critical feedback from peers and the teacher. *Videovoice* proved itself to be a project that fosters enjoyment while enabling students to rapidly enhance their own musical identity.

Readers of this study should note the impact of privilege and equity in a school band setting. Maintaining an awareness of the obstacles facing underrepresented communities is a prerequisite to implementing the following strategies. Incorporating these strategies with added supports when necessary is the responsibility of a culturally responsive music teacher, since student populations that have a higher statistical chance of dropping out may need additional support. Nevertheless, for many students, the arts a primary motivator throughout their years in school.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Music and music education have been an integral component of every society in human history (Mark, 2008). In the United States, one indicator of the collective value placed on music education is how it has been codified in the National Standards and State Standards (West, 2015), as well as in legislation such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2002). The 2014 National Association for Music Education (NAfME) National Standards state, “Because music is a basic expression of human culture, every student should have access to a balanced, comprehensive, and sequential program of study in music.” The definition of core subjects in No Child Left Behind, located in Title IX, Part A, Section 9101 (1)(D)(11), reads: *The term core academic subjects' means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography*.

While American society demonstrably places value on musical activities and music education, the actual practice of supporting music in our schools varies greatly between communities and social classes. Early American schools focused on part singing in a choir setting (Mark, 2008), and now most public schools currently support general music, choral, and instrumental programs, with considerable resources supporting wind ensemble, colloquially referred to as ‘band.’ Across the United States, the most common age to start playing a band instrument is fifth grade. Students enrolled in band typically meet once a week in a small group, like-instrument setting for instruction specific to their given instrument, and then once more per week for a full ensemble rehearsal. Most band students receive very little, if any, individual instruction (Austin & Berg, 2006) and yet are expected to establish regular home practice habits.

Furthermore, many students have difficulty developing consistent routines of practice at home due to varying levels of parental involvement and the home music environment (Barnes, DeFreitas, & Grego, 2016). Subsequently, but not surprisingly, the attrition rate of beginning band students is a disheartening statistic (Hagner, 1985).

In order to provide a contextualized understanding of the challenges facing beginning band students, this review of the current literature covers four topics, moving progressively from broad to narrow. First, the historical context of wind ensemble instruction in the United States is explored, providing a foundation for current practices in the elementary beginner band. Next, a summary of the growing body of research on the numerous benefits of music education is offered. This body of research has helped propel music education advocacy in the U.S., which in turn inspires further research. Third, the literature review segues into a focus on student musical habits, related pedagogy of the teacher, and the music technological learning aids most employed by music students. Lastly, an overview of the parental involvement and home environment (PIHEM) is explored.

Music Education, Then and Now

The societal impetus for providing music education has varied throughout time and geographic location but has primarily been a function of culture and religion. The oldest examples of human musical instruments are bone flutes estimated to be over 40,000 years old, but the social importance of such instruments in unknown (Mark, 2008). The formal education system itself in Ancient Greece taught music as one of the four branches of mathematics, focusing on the observable ratios found in pitch and rhythm (Mark, 2008). Ancient Rome, on the other hand, reserved music education for a

select group of artisans, of which many were slaves (Mark, 2008). Although no surviving examples of Roman music exist today, there is evidence that music played an essential role in theater, religion, ritual, and the military (Burkholder, Grout, & Palisca, 2019).

In the Middle Ages, the Christian Church sought to push back on the opulence and indulgences of Roman life, and thus formal music education was reserved for liturgical purposes for most of the following two millennia (Mark, 2008). It was within this educational setting that the Church that first started notating music, which up to that point was exclusively an aural tradition. By the 17th century, New England religious leaders began to codify music education into law to improve music literacy in the church. Society in the southern colonies, however, was more stratified by class, and music education was reserved for the privileged (Mark, 2008). The New England colonies, on the other hand, had established universal access to education, and music was taught in the so-called singing schools (Mark, 2008). Present day music education in the United States has a direct lineage to these early singing schools. Early New England required education for all by law, and thus music curriculum was designed for the masses, and not just a select few. This laid the groundwork for music as part of public education in the United States. In the 19th century, the shift from vocal to instrumental music instruction was paralleled by the rise of the U.S. Military Band and supported by the surge of people enrolling in public schools. By the mid-20th century, there were tens of thousands of ‘wind bands’ in schools throughout the United States (Burkholder, Grout, & Palisca, 2019).

As elementary music education in the United States expanded in the 20th century, various methodologies grew in popularity, generally European in origin. The teachings of Zoltán Kodály, Carl Orff, Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, and Shinichi Suzuki are now ubiquitous in music classrooms and private music studios throughout the United States, and much of the world for that matter (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). More commonly found in large group settings, the Kodály, Orff, and Dalcroze methods are known for their focus on the *natural* learning processes of children. Kodály, Orff, and Dalcroze capitalize on young people's innate desire to sing, explore, and move, respectively. Suzuki, on the other hand, has become more commonplace in private string and piano studios, focusing heavily on technique and playing *before* reading, as well as extensive involvement of the parent. Suzuki, despite having lived most of his life in Japan, in fact developed his approach to teaching music in Germany (Mehl 2009). Arguably, one reason for the common usage of these methods in U.S. elementary schools is their efficacy and practicality in large class sizes (Benedict 2009). Although these popular methodologies have European origins, there was a shift during the second World War to unite the Americas (Mattern, 2019) and music classrooms in the United States began to incorporate more 'international' and 'ethnic' music. This trend continued sporadically throughout the United States, somewhat mirroring the Civil Rights movement. The more recent awareness of social justice has helped highlight issues of access, equity, and culture as it relates to music education. Mattern (2019) notes that music educators need to consider social and cultural implications in all decisions.

The State of the Musical Union. According to a report from the U.S. Department of Education (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012), by the year 2010, 94% of elementary schools included music in the curriculum. On average per week, those elementary music teachers taught 25 classes, each with 18 students. The general availability of music education in secondary schools is similar, but the level of participation differs. Only fifty-seven percent of secondary schools reported including the arts as a specific *requirement* for graduation. Predictably, the overall level of participation is slightly lower at the secondary level compared to the elementary level, as many schools do not require arts participation, and the courses offered are electives. Furthermore, inequities persist regarding access to music education resources in high poverty communities. The report from the U.S. Department of Education (2012) indicates that the top 25% most economically disadvantaged school districts employed less than a third of the number of music educators as compared to the 25% most economically advantaged districts. Without question, the report indicates an unequal playing field. While nearly every primary and secondary school in the U.S. includes music in the curriculum, there are substantial differences in the de facto availability of educational resources for many students. Fewer music educators per student, less adequate rehearsal spaces, and lower access to instruments and equipment is the current reality for most low-income communities. It is worrisome to note that the report indicates that these inequities increased from the year 2000 to 2010 (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). In response to this trend, Salvador (2019) argues that music educators are in a unique position to enact grassroots changes in equity at the micro level while policies and societal change progress at the macro level. Speaking broadly,

Salvador (2019) explains that music educators need to continually reassess the existing status of who is accessing music education and who is not. By acknowledging the existence of inequities, music teachers can then begin to recognize the barriers.

As research in the field of equity, access, and music education emerges, researchers have begun to develop conceptual models of how culture relates to music education. Butler, Lind, and McKoy (2007) have proposed one such model. Their model describes a relationship between five categories: teacher, student, content, instruction, and context. Both student and teacher are affected by factors of culture and identity, which affects all interactions thereafter, as well as the ultimate outcome of music learning. Like Salvador (2019), the research by Butler et al. (2007) indicates that music educators can affect change at the community level.

Music: It Does a Body and Brain Good

Historical sources reveal that humans have consistently harnessed music for purposes of social, spiritual, and political power (Burkholder, Grout, & Palisca, 2019), but there is also evidence that music has long been a tool of medicine. Wilson (1985) discussed how the Greeks utilized music for therapeutic purposes in the temples of Asclepius. The medical applications of music continue to be explored up to this day, and an ever-growing body of research is revealing the neurological benefits of music. Frequently cited researcher, Assal Habibi (2016), notes that over the past two decades, there have been numerous studies investigating the effects music has on the brain. These studies help unravel the intricate puzzle of what music does to people, especially the developing brain of a child. A recent study led by Habibi (2016) at the Brain and Creativity Institute at the University of Southern California found that children

participating in music education experience accelerated auditory neurological processing. The implications for the acquisition of language, communication, and reading are significant.

Researchers have also established a connection between music and math. A team of researchers at Harvard, led by Gottfried Schlaug, has demonstrated that “music training in children results in long-term enhancement of visual–spatial, verbal, and mathematical performance” (Schlaug, Norton, Overy, & Winner, 2005). However, noted music education advocate Bennett Reimer, cautions against the justification of music education for non-musical ends (Richard Colwell, 2015). Reimer simply believed that music is part of the human experience, and thus an essential part of education: A*rs gratia artis*; that is, art for the sake of art.

In the Practice Room

The musical practice routines, strategies, and independent processes of students have been the focus of a large body of research in the last twenty years (Austin & Berg, 2006; Clark, 2012; Hallam et al., 2012; Leon-Guerrero, 2008; Miksza, Prichard, & Sorbo, 2012; Miksza, 2012; Oare, 2012; Oare, 2016; Pitts & Davidson, 2000; Schatt, 2011; Uygun & Kilinçer, 2017; Zhukov, 2009). The act of practicing itself, Austin (2006) notes, is “both a requisite and ritual behavior of musicians.” Austin (2006) found that motivation and self-regulation are two distinct phenomena in practice, and yet a significant number of music students engage in routines that are distinctly non-strategic. Research by Miksza (2012) found significant correlation between self-efficacy, practice behaviors, time management, and social influences. His research suggests a need for music educators to design lessons that provide opportunities for students to experience

self-regulated activity, and for teachers to make home practice routine expectations more explicit. Leon-Guerrero (2008) added that the most used technique by beginning band students at home is non-strategic repetition, and that most of these students lack any systematic planning at all. Looking at high school aged, high self-efficacy students, Clark (2012) found that “advanced practicing” was commonplace. This included strategic repetition of difficult phrases, slowing tempo and gradual increase thereafter, as well as practicing one hand alone at a time. This study was a case study of four string students, and all four had access to significant supports and resources, including studying with expert teachers, availability of a home practice space, and owning a high level ‘conservatory’ instrument. This study highlights the advantages of having significant parental and financial support.

The importance of developing proper practice habits is supported by large scale studies as well. In a study led by Hallam (2012), which included 3,325 young people ranging in age from the very young beginner to conservatory level, researchers had similar findings to smaller studies. The researchers looked at seven distinct factors of practice: adoption of systematic practice strategies, organization of practice, use of recordings for listening and feedback and use of the metronome, use of analytic strategies, adoption of ineffective strategies, concentration, and immediate correction of errors. Much of the findings were unsurprising, such as how advanced students tend to practice on more days, and for longer periods of time. Also unsurprising is the finding that beginner students tend to not recognize their own playing errors while advanced players do. However, some of the findings are surprising, such as how the level of overall organization does not necessarily increase with age and level. Hallam (2012)

notes that this might relate more with personal learning style and other factors related to their home life. The other surprising finding that Hallam (2012) notes is that analytic strategies, such as harmonic analysis, do not increase with age for many students.

Research has also shed light on data of the dropout rate for student musicians. Hallam (2012) found that “practice was enjoyed in the early stages of learning, with less enthusiasm in the middle examination grades, and with enjoyment and commitment returning thereafter beyond this level” (p. 671). Sometimes referred to as the ‘middle school bottleneck’, this is the age level which sees the highest attrition rate from music ensembles. Hagner (1985) notes that most public middle school music students must leave another class to attend group lessons or band rehearsal, with many classroom teachers expressing frustration about the missed work. As the stakes are raised for various educational and extracurricular activities throughout middle school, the inevitable conflicts arise. If students are not establishing effective practice strategies in their first year of playing, the deficit will only become more evident in their middle school experience.

As researchers have sought to better understand the middle school band dropout rate, they have turned their focus towards the first year of instrument study. Pitts and Davidson (2000) argue that most beginning band students do not have an adequate understanding of what *practice* entails. Their study adds that parents, teachers, and students often have three distinct interpretations of what ‘practice’ means, which frequently creates friction between stakeholders. Parents may express the desire to hear familiar melodies, while teachers might be assigning exercises that are repetitive and unfamiliar. Furthermore, beginning band students tend to interpret practice as

simply playing straight through each exercise. Pitts and Davidson (2000) describe a case study of beginning band students, offering valuable examples of productive and counterproductive behaviors. The study revealed how both parents and students can respond to the enormous challenge of establishing effective practice routines. Some parents choose to give full autonomy to the student, while others take the authoritative route of mandating aspects of practice. Some parents unknowingly praise ineffective strategies such as encouraging their child to play too softly or asking the child to only play familiar melodies. Other parents' actions create an environment in which music practice is a chore, where the parent becomes the authority mandating a practice schedule.

However, many middle school band students move past this hurdle, and establish self-initiated practice routines. Leon-Guerrero (2008) adds that by the age of middle school most students still employ basic repetition as their primary strategy. Much less commonly used are strategies such as problem identification (where is the problem), strategy selection (how to fix the problem), and self-evaluation (is the problem fixed). All three of these strategies are commonly accepted by expert musicians as essential practice skills. The study by Leon-Guerrero (2008) suggests that most middle school music students incorporate one or two basic practice strategies yet lack a wider range of strategies from which to choose.

Oare (2016) argues that most beginning band students struggle with *audiation*, that is, the ability to *hear* a musical element in one's own thoughts. Colloquially, this is often referred to as *how it goes*. Edwin Gordon, noted music learning researcher, created a model called the Music Learning Theory that centers on the process of

audiation (Liperote, 2006). Gordon's Music Learning Theory, or MLT, asserts that children reach a stabilized point of musical aptitude by age nine. In those formative years, Gordon's MLT argues that exposure to receptive and productive musical experiences are required to develop musical skills. While aspects of Gordon's MLT are somewhat controversial, such as his description of 'musical aptitude,' his definition of audiation is referenced consistently in the literature. West (2015) describes effective practicing to include 'the big five' skills: rhythm, tonality, notation, executive, and creativity. All five of the skills on West's list utilize audiation intrinsically. Liperote (2006) describes her own experiences as a fifth grade beginning clarinetist as primarily "playing by ear" (p. 46). However, Liperote (2006) adds that although some beginning band students have an existing deficit in audiation skills, there are proven teaching strategies to help remedy such deficits.

The use of music practice technology, such as a metronome, pitch tuner, self-recording, or play along tracks, has virtually universal acceptance with a large body of research supporting the efficacy of such tools (Arthur, Khuu, & Blom, 2016; Hanrahan, Hughes, Banerjee, Eldridge, & Kiefer, 2019; Palazón & Giráldez, 2018). However, the literature reveals no consensus on the specific degree to which music technology should be utilized. Goodkin (2001) describes the Orff Approach as a delicate balance of romance and precision, with romance being the prerequisite. He defines romance as the imagination being awakened and trained, while precision can be found in the detailed instrumental techniques and stylistic nuances. The metronome is an unromantic tool of precision and has a limited role in the Orff classroom.

Nonetheless, the metronome is a fixture in virtually all band rooms. Arthur, Khuu, and Blom (2016) found that metronome use improved rhythmic accuracy for a wide range of students. Using digital cameras, they tracked the eye movements of musicians playing piano with a metronome. Their findings suggest that more experienced musicians were able to track sheet music accurately, even when playing at tempi beyond their technical comfort zone. In general, they found that beginners still appeared to benefit from practice with the metronome, despite a large increase in errors.

Like the metronome, play-along tracks have also proven effective in the practice room (Palazón & Giráldez, 2018). Relevant to Gordon's theory of audiation, the use of audio recordings can help a student by modeling the desired sound. Palazón and Giráldez (2018) conducted a study with students using QR codes embedded in sheet music, which enabled students to use their phones to hear brief examples of specific excerpts. Like research related to the metronome, it appears that *some* use of play along tracks is better than *none*.

Taking it another technological step forward, a group of researchers tested the possible benefits of having young instrumentalists read sheet music from synchronized iPads in an ensemble setting. Hanrahan, Hughes, Banerjee, Eldridge, and Kiefer (2019) found that a group of elementary orchestra students reported generally positive feelings of achievement and satisfaction while using the synced iPads. The researchers added that younger ensembles frequently struggle with "staying in musical synchrony" (p. 60), and that the use of this technology appeared to be a successful scaffold for young students. However, they also noted such use of technology would not be a viable

option in many ensemble settings. Clauhs (2018) described several internet-based strategies for teaching band. First, he uploaded practice tracks for his beginning band students, with most students indicating and demonstrating that they were using the tracks at home. Secondly, he uploaded concert video footage to enable far away family members to view the concert. Zhukov (2009) found that "listening to models of sound such as a teacher or recording" (p. 7) is an essential practice strategy. In fact, Zhukov suggests that listening to a model alone, even without an opportunity to physically practice, is nearly as effective as practicing with the instrument. From the metronome, to synced iPads, to audio/video recordings, research is demonstrating that the use of music technology has become an effective tool in practicing music.

Parental Influence and the Home Environment

The literature indicates that parental influence and home music environment (PIHEM) play a major role in the musical outcomes of school aged students. Researchers have been increasingly interested in the relationship between the home music environment and students' musical attributes over the past four decades. Brand (1985) first introduced the Home Musical Environment Scale (HOMES) in 1985 as a survey tool used to better understand the way students are affected by the home music environment. This survey tool established a framework of variables on which subsequent research would be built. Researchers have used such tools to better understand the student experience outside of school and thus deliver more informed music instruction. Zdzinski (1987), building upon Brand's scale, introduced the Parental Involvement Home Environment in Music survey tool (PIHEM). In 2011, Wills adapted the existing research tools and created the Preschool Home Musical Environment

Scales (PHOMES). And in 2013, Zdzinski further refined his survey tool while maintaining the acronym PIHEM.

All the research survey tools of the home musical environment share much in common and have modified over time to better interpret the evolving home life of music students. At their core, these tools measure the musical factors of parental experience, parental attitude, parental involvement, and access to musical resources and instruments in the home.

Building upon these tools for evaluating the influence of the PIHEM, there is a large body of current research looking at how family life outside of school affects music students (Barnes, DeFreitas, & Grego, 2016; Creech, 2010; Dor, 2015; Ilari, 2018; Margiotta, 2011; Wills, 2011; Zdzinski et al., 2015). Margiotta (2011) notes that "there is compelling evidence that the confident and skilled playing of most young performers is supported by caring parents who are committed to helping their children," and this support is crucial "in the early musical development, as it engenders security and confidence" (p. 16). Indeed, Zdzinski describes parents as the children's first music teachers. Ilari (2018) suggests that when thinking about the parent/teacher/student musical relationship, it is valuable to incorporate Bronfenbrenner's (2001) bioecological theory of human development. Bronfenbrenner suggests that human development is a complex process involving sources of support and stress in a child's life. Like all social growth, music certainly fits into this definition. Comparing two sample groups from Brazil and the United States, Barnes, DeFreitas, and Grego (2016) uncovered some notable findings of cultural norms. The researchers found that although the Brazilian family participants were of lower socio-economic status on average, their scores were trending

upwards on the PIHEM over time, implying that music was increasingly becoming a more significant aspect of their home life. Conversely, their research found that the PIHEM scores of the participants in the United States were trending downward over time, implying that music was becoming less present in their home life. Creech (2010), in researching "the ways in which parents can most constructively support their children's musical development" (p. 13) suggests that parents should strive to be "adept at moving between the close and distant positions on the responsiveness axis and between directive and acquiescent positions on the control axis" (p. 29). This suggestion is significant in that it is applicable across a spectrum of family circumstances and experiences.

Conclusion

A large body of research has helped shed light on the processes involved in music education, with insights on the influence of parental involvement and the home environment. There is considerable research on parental influence and the home music environment, or PIHEM (Barnes, DeFreitas, & Grego, 2016; Creech, 2010; Ilari, 2018; Margiotta, 2011; Zdzinski et al., 2015), as well as in the independent habits and strategies of the student themselves (Austin & Berg, 2006; Clark, 2012; Hallam et al., 2012; Leon-Guerrero, 2008; Miksza, 2012; Miksza, Prichard, & Sorbo, 2012; Pitts & Davidson, 2000; Zhukov, 2009). However, there is a gap in the research on student perception of home music practice, as well as their response to sharing authentic evidence of their experience amongst peers. This study explores feelings towards and perceptions of the home music practice space for a group of fifth grade beginning band students, as well as their response to sharing video of their home music practice in a

peer-group setting. Learning a musical instrument is no small feat; one which has social implications of culture, identity, class, and privilege. It is a complex and challenging process, occurring within the stark pass/fail binary that permeates so much of American culture.

Music educators will often cite the large number of studies that suggest how music education helps to improve test scores as well as numerous other academic and cognitive benefits. As is the problem with much research, these studies can only point at evidence of causation and correlation. Research strongly suggests that music helps foster healthy brain development, as well as a well-supported *correlation* to academic growth, but the story is much more complicated than these studies consider. Deeper social and cultural factors certainly play a much bigger role than prior studies have been designed to consider.

Most of the available research appears to be deliberately narrow in scope by design. On one hand, this is appropriate given the goal at hand: to better understand a specific aspect of music education. On the other hand, the narrowness of the prior studies reveals a lack of contextualization for the broad, interconnected, holistic, cultural, and social nature of music education. More recently, several studies have looked at socially contextualized aspects of music education. However, there is a lack of qualitative research that deeply explores the perspective of the student; that is, student perceptions of the various attributes of the home practice space and how those perceptions are impacted by the social/familial structure of the home practice space.

The purpose of this study was to explore the musical lives of a cohort of fifth grade beginning band students from an urban, high poverty Bay Area, California

community. This study sought to empower the participants to voice *their* perspectives of their home music practice experience. Specifically, this study was designed to utilize *videovoice* as authentic student-centric evidence of musical identity and growth.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Existing research has explored many elements of the student/home music practice experience, including the behaviors of the student (Clark, 2012), the influence of the family (Creech, 2010), and the use of tools and technology (Hanrahan, Hughes, Banerjee, Eldridge, & Kiefer, 2019). However, one under researched aspect of home music practice is the perspective of the student. The aim of this research was to provide a platform for the participants' feelings and experiences to contribute to the body of research in the area of home music practice for beginners. Thus, this study was guided by the following research questions: (1) How do students perceive the home music practice experience? (2) How do students respond to *videovoice* evidence of their own and their peers' home music space? The sub-questions associated with the above research questions follow:

- How do the participants describe their home practice environment?
- What characteristics of the environment do they feel are important?
- What is contributing to their feelings about their peers' home practice space?
- How does the act of sharing video of these spaces make the participants feel?
- After the sharing process, what might the participants (creators and audience) change about their home practice experience?

Description and Rationale for Research Approach

In researching the home music practice space for beginning band students, this study used a convergent mixed method *videovoice* case study with a constructivist philosophical worldview. Although the bulk of the data was collected qualitatively, some additional quantitative survey data supplemented and supported the central theme of

investigation. Furthermore, the use of *videovoice* (a variant of photovoice) incorporated elements of participatory action research as a methodology. The multi-faceted nature of music education is such that a mixed method approach with a focus on qualitative, observational data was appropriate. Creswell (2014) describes qualitative research as a process of collecting data in the participants' setting. Creswell (2014) also defines the role of a constructivist researcher as one that relies heavily on the participants' views of the situation being studied.

As a variation of *photovoice*, the emerging methodology *videovoice* is a participatory action research (PAR) process. PAR is unique in that it encourages discussion of important issues to the community, fosters dialogue, and produces shared knowledge (Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001). The participants in this study were current fifth grade, first-year beginning band students. Research shows that the majority of beginning band students do not employ a consistent, structured approach to practice, and many fail to develop habitual home practice at all (Austin & Berg, 2006). In response, this study explored the challenges and preferred strategies of the participants. With a relatively small sample size, *videovoice* served to empower the participants in sharing their stories, while creating a safe environment for supportive peer analysis. The *videovoice* video clips did not include participants' faces or personal information, and the safety and privacy of the participants was held tantamount. Modeled on *photovoice* research, the spontaneity and power of the camera was carefully utilized in a way to not cause harm to photovoice participants (Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001).

This research project used a constructivist philosophical worldview. The researcher focused on the specific contexts in which the participants lived and practiced music. This helped explain the historical and social settings of the participants. The researcher acknowledged and embraced his own unique experience and perspective in the domain of home music practice and used his experience as a lens through which to better understand the meaning of home music practice in the participants' lives. Creswell (2014) notes that meaning *always* exists in a social context. No two home practice environments are the same. Furthermore, musical instrument practice *means* something different to each musician, regardless of age or experience. Approaching the research as a constructivist meant respecting and prioritizing the participants' perspective.

While the bulk of the research was deliberately qualitative, the opportunity to obtain data through the power of global social media added supplemental quantitative research. With many thousands of professionally active members, the Elementary Music Teachers Facebook group provided relevant survey results. The quantitative data put the qualitative *videovoice* case study research into an enormous context. Using the convergent mixed method meant that data was collected simultaneously, with the information integrated and analyzed in the results (Creswell, 2014).

Research Design

Research Site. The research site was a public elementary school (pre-K to 5th grade) in Northern California with approximately 700 students. The school was one of eight elementary schools in a Bay Area school district and had more than three quarters of students from low-income families. The school consisted of all genders and diverse

race/ethnic composition, listed here in the order of relative amount: Latino (predominantly Mexican), African-American, Asian (predominantly Filipino), Pacific Islander (predominantly Tongan), Middle Eastern (predominantly Yemeni), Caucasian, and mixed-race participants. Approximately half of the student population spoke a language other than English at home, predominantly Spanish. The researcher was a music educator at Valle Trueno Elementary, and had a pre-existing relationship with the student participants as their general music, choir, and band teacher. The Valle Trueno Elementary Band was purposefully selected for its logistical feasibility, and for the goal of giving voice to an underrepresented population. The taxpayers of Springdale had generously provided the instruments for beginning band students. In response to this level of community support, the researcher was highly motivated to improve instruction by looking closer at the lived realities of the participants as they develop home music practice habits.

The principal at Valle Trueno Elementary reviewed all relevant surveys, procedures, and related documents, and granted permission to conduct the research study with the student participants.

Participants. Thirty-two participants were invited to take part in this study, and twenty opted to do so. The invitees consisted of fifth grade (ages ten and eleven) beginning band students at the research site. Each week, the student participants had one after-school, small-group music lesson, and one full-ensemble rehearsal during the school day. The focus group was proportionally representative of the overall school population. Students were provided a school-owned instrument for the school year at no cost to the family, which helped provide access across socio-economic levels.

Sampling Procedure. At the site and during the after-school rehearsals (trumpet on Monday and trombone on Tuesday), the beginning band students were invited to participate in this study. The researcher briefly explained and summarized the purpose of the study, the role of the researcher, the role of the participants, and that a pizza party would be provided at the scheduled meetings, regardless of the level of participation. At that point, the Informed Consent Forms were sent home, providing all relevant information: purpose of study; schedule of meetings; how data would be collected, used, and protected; and the right to opt-out at any point. The subsequent focus group meetings included participants who opted to participate.

Informed consent forms were signed by parents/guardians of students (all minors, aged ten to eleven) participating in the study. A separate developmentally appropriate form was provided for students. The consent forms informed parents and participants of the research process. The students delivered the consent forms to the parents and returned them to the researcher.

An additional group of 143 participants, who were members of the Elementary Music Teachers Facebook Group, was invited to complete a survey. All survey participants were informed of the research process, and that returning the survey indicated their consent.

Methods. The first of two focus group meetings occurred on Thursday, January 30th, 2020, immediately after school in the music room. The participants completed a pen and paper survey, consisting of ten questions and taking approximately twenty minutes (see Appendix A). The researcher provided surveys, clipboards, and writing

tools. Immediately following the completion of this initial survey, the researcher and participants engaged in a group discussion, discussing the next steps of the study.

All dialogue and conversations were audio recorded and transcribed solely by the researcher. The recordings were subsequently deleted permanently. All paper surveys were collected and stored securely in a locked office with the researcher. At the conclusion of the research period, all surveys were subsequently shredded by the researcher.

As part of the *videovoice* component of this study, participants were invited to make video recordings of themselves practicing in their practice space. The parameters of *videovoice* were discussed and articulated verbally to the participants. The participant videos were three to five minutes in length, contained no easily identifiable information, and included no direct shots of their faces. The participants' home practice videos were emailed to the researcher's school email. The videos were stored securely on a password protected computer, edited into a montage of clips, and used exclusively in three ways: for descriptive analysis by the researcher, for display during the Dominican University Scholarly and Creative Works Conference Presentations, and to show subsequent beginning band students examples of home music practice.

In the second and final meeting on February 13th, 2020, participants viewed the compilation of their home practice videos, and completed a survey reflection on the experience of making and viewing their videos (see Appendix B). This was followed by a follow-up group discussion. This conversation was recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

Concurrently with collecting data in the beginning band focus group, the researcher invited members of the *Elementary Music Teachers Facebook Group* to complete an online survey (see Appendix C), collecting data relevant to the fifth-grade focus group's experience. The Facebook focus group consisted of 143 participants.

Data Analysis

Data was collected concurrently, using a convergent mixed methods design. Qualitative data analysis methods were employed to process data that was generated in: focus group discussions, open-response survey questions, and in the *videovoice* submissions. The focus group discussions were audio recorded, and subsequently transcribed by the researcher. The researcher also recorded field notes following both focus group meetings. Furthermore, the researcher maintained a journal of analytic memos throughout the time period of data collection. The quantitative data from the Elementary Music Teachers Facebook Group was entered into a spreadsheet for graphical representation. The rich *videovoice* data was also "winnowed" quantitatively (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012), looking at measurable variables, such as the presence of a music stand, practice book, or other family members.

The transcribed focus group discussions, survey data, and qualitative *videovoice* analysis were open coded by hand, looking for both expected and unexpected codes in the data. Creswell (2014) defines open coding as the process of labeling concepts and generating categories based on their description. Open coding can also be defined as an inductive attempt at capturing new insights (Maxwell, 2013). Some of the expected codes included physical descriptors about the practice space itself, such as: room, bedroom, living room, family, television, phone, and computer. Other expected codes

included the sounds that occur while the participants are practicing, such as: mouthpiece buzzing, scales, improvising, talking, and play-along tracks. Although the researcher had extensive experience working with beginning band students and hearing how they describe their home practice routine, it is important to allow unique data to emerge during this analysis. Thus, inductive and open coding methods were employed. Unexpected codes that emerged during open coding included video games, room-type, dancing, and enjoyment. Subsequently, the data was coded a final time utilizing a focused-coding process, whereby the expected and unexpected codes could inform a more detailed analysis of all the qualitative data sources.

From this point, the coding revealed specific themes, which was applied to an overarching concept map. The concept map was created with the assistance of the researcher's graduate peers. By reviewing the codes from the transcribed focus group conversations and observations, a concept map was created, which included: parents/home, student/student feelings, teacher, practice, technology, and motivation.

The next step was to connect the coded qualitative data (student surveys, focus group discussion, and *videovoice* submissions) with the quantitative data (Facebook survey). The findings of the focus group were examined in tandem with that of the anonymous Facebook survey, and the data was sorted into typical/atypical and common/uncommon categories. This process of triangulation revealed insights about different aspects of the home practice experience and how the various stakeholders perceive the meaning of that space (Maxwell, 2013). Furthermore, there was great value in finding the connective threads between the students' and teachers'

perspectives, as a deeper meaning is obtained when all voices are given equitable weight (Seidman, 2013).

Throughout the data analysis, the researcher found several poignant, keystone quotes that highlighted the themes found in the data. These insights were used as exemplars of data, using the exact verbiage of the participants to communicate directly with the readers of this study. By using the actual words of the participants, the final thematic findings of this research become less abstract.

Validity and Reliability.

Multiple approaches were used to ensure the validity of this study. First, the research design method was selected to enable participants to authentically offer their unique and detailed experience against the backdrop of the broader, contextualized Facebook survey. This step increased validity in that it utilized triangulation and rich descriptions (Maxwell, 2013). Procedures for all three of the data sources were clearly established as a consistent protocol for all participants, thus ensuring reliability across participants. Second, the student participant data was triangulated by collecting data from the sources: focus group discussions, surveys, and the *videovoice* submissions. This step enhanced validity by enlisting respondent validation (Maxwell, 2013), whereby the participants provided peer analysis of the *videovoice* submissions, rather than relying solely on the researcher's perspective. Thirdly, rich and thick descriptions of the data (especially the *videovoice* submissions) were offered as evidence of the authenticity of the participants' experience.

While the results of this study were not necessarily generalizable externally to other contexts (other content areas, geographic locations, demographic populations),

readers may find important trends or notable connections to their own experience. As this study was not seeking to find a causal relationship between factors, and rather offered an observational and descriptive analysis, the findings of this study are thus generalizable to only the participants.

Researcher Positionality. The researcher acknowledged a bias as a music teacher of the participants in this study. This positionality created a unique relationship whereby the participants were quite familiar with the researcher and fellow participants. The researcher has been teaching music at the research site for four years and has worked with most of the participants for the duration of that time in general music class and fourth grade choir. Participation in the beginning band has enabled the participants to work directly with the researcher in group settings multiple times per week, for the entire school year. Furthermore, the participants and researcher have performed on stage in multiple formal concert settings. This unique relationship offers an opportunity for candid, authentic dialogue in the focus group discussion settings. As the participants' teacher, the researcher is in a position of power, and has selected research methods that encourage authenticity and trustworthiness in the participant responses. These controls help temper the impact of researcher reactivity, while acknowledging the nature of the teacher/student relationship that exists. The positionality of the researcher is such that intensive, long term involvement provides a foundation on which to build the research (Maxwell, 2013). In fact, the opportunity to incorporate the past experiences of both the researcher and the participants has been utilized, providing a unique lens through which to analyze the data (Creswell, 2014).

The researcher also acknowledged a bias regarding the meaning and value of home music practice. Having been raised in a musically active family, the researcher experienced a level of familial support that could be described as atypical. The personal experience of the researcher is used as one of the lenses through which the data may be examined. Acknowledging his bias and positionality, the researcher made deliberate steps to look for discrepant data points and alternative perspectives from his own. Concurrently with this study, the researcher was actively working to improve the home practice experience of the participants. Aware of this bias, the researcher analyzed the data accordingly, and accepted this as a unique and valuable perspective.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

In the first year of studying a musical instrument, students are faced with the challenge of establishing fundamental practice habits at home. The specific characteristics of these habits have a great impact on musical growth, and researchers have looked extensively at many aspects of this process. The large body of research has examined student practice strategies, teacher techniques and supports, parent and home involvement, as well as broader social factors. While the existing literature is extensive and robust, an emerging gap was found in the area of student-sharing of their authentic practice experience. This study sought to better understand how beginning band students feel about their home practice experience and how sharing video of this experience with their peers in a safe, nurturing environment can affect student perception of home music practice.

The findings of the study are grouped into three main themes. The first theme is that students encounter a wide variety of *obstacles* to establishing effective routines of home music practice. These obstacles include the internal challenges of practicing an instrument alone as well as external challenges: parental involvement, siblings, and pets. Although not explicitly stated by the student participants, the focus group discussions revealed how issues of class and privilege underlie these obstacles. Thus, the process of establishing a home music practice routine is significantly more challenging for some than for others. The second theme is that the value of music enjoyment is the dominant *solution* to the previously established obstacles. The participants described numerous strategies and factors that contributed to a consistent

and productive home practice experience. They also offered insightful suggestions for better teacher-provided support. The final theme revealed in the data that peer video-sharing of home music practice had a critical effect on the emergent musical identity, and thus is a powerful resource for music educators. The peer video sharing experience has important educational benefits in how it affects overall motivation, assessment, and social-emotional learning.

Independent Student Challenges

During the initial focus group meeting of twenty student musicians, several participants were eager to share experiences of the difficulties associated with practicing their instrument at home. Even though Kahlia was a leader in music class and routinely demonstrated a strong sense of pitch, both vocally and on her trumpet, she experienced a sense of being unsure of her own playing at home. She explained:

> *It is challenging knowing if I'm making the right sounds with my trumpet.*

Kahlia expressed that playing her trumpet alone at home was often confusing as she was frequently unsure of which partial to play (specific pitch within a group of possible pitches for each valve combination on a trumpet). Pedro added:

> *One difficult thing, I don't, like, I can't practice that good at home, like, I don't have, like, YOU* (points at researcher)*, 'cause you're good, to correct me, like "eyy, that's wrong."*

Pedro described feeling confused when a teacher is not present to give him feedback. The focus group voiced agreement for both Kahlia and Pedro's comments. Participants shared examples of feeling unsure of their own accuracy, with the most voiced

challenge being their own pitch awareness (i.e. "*What note am I on?*"). Eight of the twenty initial written surveys reported feeling confused or unsure of their own playing at home. Alessandro then added how technical aspects of trombone playing were challenging:

> *One thing about practicing at home, is that I don't always have my phone, so I don't remember my slide positions.*

Alessandro, one of ten trombone players in the school band, had the largest range (low to high register ability) of his peers, yet struggled with translating written notes on the staff into slide positions on his instrument. In his written survey response, he acknowledged that he misplaced his lesson book, which displays each note and illustrated examples of corresponding slide position. In fact, almost half of the first focus group surveys reported not using the home lesson book at all.

Although not openly discussed in our focus group discussions, there was also evidence of other student-based home music practice challenges. During regular weekly band rehearsal, several participants required ongoing support on proper trumpet and trombone setup, grip, and posture, despite much of the band demonstrating mastery of these skills. The *videovoice* videos submitted by several participants corroborated the reality that many students continue to struggle with basic skills such as proper instrument grip, especially at home without peer or teacher support. In La'Nesha's *videovoice* submission, she demonstrated the long-tone exercise used in band rehearsal, yet her grip on the trumpet was entirely incorrect. Despite this specific difficulty, her example of the *long tone* was played with a full tone and for an appropriate length of time. In her case, the skill deficit of appropriate trumpet grip did not prevent her

from practicing an unrelated, yet important skill successfully. This example demonstrates how beginning band students practicing alone often establish habits that only become problematic in later skill development.

Another frequently noted obstacle to home music practice was the prevalence of phones, computers, televisions, and video games. Most of the participants acknowledged that these various screens were often distracting at home. Kahlia reported that she had difficulty focusing on her trumpet playing while her little brother was nearby playing video games. While some participants described how family members' screen time was distracting, others acknowledged that their own screens were a problem. Participant Julian mentioned that his daily routine included 2-4 hours of online gaming every day after school. Of the six *videovoice* submissions, two showed paused video games in the background. In her *videovoice*, La'Nesha was using a laptop to display a Google timer for her *long tones*. When viewing her *videovoice*, the participants could see La'Nesha using Google Chrome with several tabs open, one of which was an online game. In his *videovoice*, Jacob was sitting in the family room, and a large television can be seen with a paused video game on the screen.

Family Dynamics. Participants discussed in detail the challenge of practicing at home with family nearby. This category can be broken down into the following subcategories: parents, siblings, extended family, and pets. All these factors were cited by numerous participants as contributing to the challenge of practicing at home.

Parental influence was the most significant of all the family and home life factors as cited by the participants. Additionally, 25% of the participants reported that they had

extended family living with them, including grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins. The reasons for the challenge covered a broad range. Participant Jesus noted that his mother would tease him, saying, “Hey, you suck, stop doing that.” Pedro added to this theme, noting that his parents would often tell him that his playing did not sound very good. Several other participants also offered anecdotes of parents complaining that the musical practice did not sound correct. One parent of a participant in this study mentioned to the researcher that he has a *musical ear*, and that he keeps telling his daughter, “That don’t sound right.” Pedro summed up parental involvement, saying, “sometimes they help me, and sometimes they don’t.”

On the other end of the spectrum, the participants mentioned overly involved parents as a challenge. Pedro shared:

> *One challenging thing is that sometimes my mom gets her phone and starts recording me for no goddamn reason!*

Alessandro agreed, saying:

> *That’s one traumatizing thing about a Mexican mom.*

Andrea noted that her mother would play “loud Mexican music” in the kitchen while she cooked every night, singing loud, and that Andrea could not hear herself at all. Andrea and Josefina both noted that their mothers would often laugh when they practiced their trumpets, which in turn made both girls giggle uncontrollably.

The participants also described how the parental sleep schedule was a challenge. Both Julian and Josue shared how their fathers needed to go to sleep at 3pm due to work schedules. Julian reported that he would still try to practice quietly, but

his father would become upset with him. Coming to his defense, Kahlia offered, “Well, he should stop playin’ his nose, ‘cause he prolly snoring.”

More than half of the participants have younger siblings, and they offered numerous examples of little brothers and sisters interfering with home music practice. Josue shared:

> *One challenging thing is every time I try to practice, both my sisters bust open the door like it was nothing, and they try to come in here, for to touch my stuff. They’re like, “FBI, open up!” I’m like, “dang!”*

In the process of creating her *videovoice* submission, Kahlia reported that her eight-year-old brother was yelling in the adjacent room while playing a video game with their uncle. After several attempts, she permanently deleted the first few videos and attempted to make the video the following day. La’Nesha added that her nine-year-old brother made repeated attempts to ‘sabotage’ her video shoot, throwing a water bottle at her. Alessandro reported that his younger cousin kept entering his room, dancing in his underwear. Conversely, several of the participants reported that it was difficult to find time to practice when younger siblings or cousins were napping in the house.

One surprising finding in the home life of the participants was the factor of having dogs. Nearly half of the participants felt that their pets interfered with their home practice routine. Participant Taj described an incident where his two dogs kept barking and growling while he was trying to practice. After being bit by one of them, Taj’s mother reportedly had to carry both dogs out of the room. Penelope offered a similar story:

I was going to [record a *videovoice* video]. *I was going to go in my backyard. But the first time I tried doing it, the dogs were barking so loud. My dogs and neighbor dogs. So, then I went down the street to my cousin's house. And their dog started barking! And their neighbor dogs, and the other neighbor dogs, too!*

Class, Privilege, and Resources. For most of the participants in this study, financial resources were limited. More than 75% of the students at Valle Trueno Elementary came from low-income families, and the participant group for this study was representative of this proportion. For the two years prior to this study, Springdale Unified School District provided wind instruments to all beginning band students in fifth grade. Prior to the district providing this resource, participation in the beginning band across the district was approximately 50% less. At that time, participation in beginning band was dependent upon families and students procuring their own instruments, and predictably, lower income families were under-represented in the program. Despite the new availability of school band instruments, several socio-economic issues persist.

Analyzing the data through the lens of socioeconomics highlights several key findings. First, several of the participants described their parents' sleep schedule as an obstacle to practicing music at home. Julian shared that his father needed to go to sleep in the afternoon due to work. Secondly, many of the participants lived with extended family. Participant Alessandro remarked how both his younger brother and cousin would distract him when he was trying to practice. Third, nearly half of the participants reported that they lived in an apartment or condo with neighbors sharing a wall. Penelope reported that she could hear the neighbor dogs barking through the wall when she tried to practice. The final socio-economic theme to emerge as an obstacle to

home practice was the access to technology. Participant Kahlia reported that she does not have a phone or computer to access the online home lessons, but she does borrow her grandmother's phone occasionally. When offering advice to Alessandro, Kahlia said, "if you don't have a phone, just search it up on your TV, if you have one." The final qualifier in her statement revealed the realization that some of her peers may not own a TV.

The online Elementary Music Teachers Facebook Group survey, of which 143 participants completed, also revealed socio-economic themes. Seventy-three percent responded that they taught in a majority white community, 60% worked in a school that had less than half low-income families, and more than 66% responded that students obtained their own band instruments.

Playing for Fun, And Other Solutions

Individual Motivation. When prompted to explore the positive aspects of practicing music at home, the participants shared many important insights. The dominant theme that appeared in discussion, in written survey response, and in response to the *videovoice* submissions was that practicing at home can be fun. In the written survey, the participants wrote:

I get to play all these fun and weird notes!

It's fun and you're creative with music.

[One thing] I like about playing music is that it makes me feel happy.

[I like] the sound it makes.

It's fun and relaxing.

I get to play what I want.

During the *videovoice* viewing party, the positive, enthusiastic energy among the participants was significant. As the video started, Otu asked, "Can we clap and stuff?", -while Josefina reminded everyone, "Okay, be quiet everybody!", and at the end of the video, Alenna asked, "Can we watch it again?" Kahlia summed it up nicely, saying, "Wow, just wow. That's my reaction. Wow."

In addition to the fun factor, several participants found practicing at home to offer distinct environmental benefits, as opposed to practicing at school:

I get to hear myself.

I like that my mom can hear what I [have] been playing.

I get to hear myself with no [peer] noise.

It's very quiet in my room.

Lastly, several participants shared how practicing at home made them feel like their playing was improving:

Sometimes I learn new things.

I can get better.

During the group discussion, Taj reminded his peers that, "they [future students] should try, and keep trying, until you get it" when practicing at home. The group responded to Taj with a round of applause.

Teacher Support. When asked about how to improve the existing beginning band experience, participants articulated poignant pieces of advice. One participant felt that additional rewards should be offered:

- *Maybe give out candy as a reward?*

Two participants believed that classroom behavior could be improved:

- *Prolly be a bit more strict.*
- *Make the students be quiet.*

Four of the participants felt that teacher interventions could be strengthened, with increased pacing, scaffolding, and content review:

- *To write the new song we do, or to put the [note names] on our paper when we learn new things.*
- *Explain things slower.*
- *Put out more YouTube vids.*
- *Do more warmups.*

Lastly, only two participants suggested greater parental involvement:

- *Have parents sign a practice log.*
- *Talk more with parents.*

On the other hand, in the online Elementary Music Teachers Facebook Group survey, only 26% of respondents said that they require a weekly parent-signed practice log.

Family Music Culture. Despite the previously mentioned challenges of practicing in a crowded home, the beginning band participants also highlighted some

distinct advantages that may exist in a musical family. Eight of the participants described how at least one of their parents, or an aunt or uncle actively sang, played guitar, or played accordion in local community music ensembles. Three of the participants noted that an older sibling played an instrument as part of a school music program. Alessandro summed up his familial music identity:

> *My uncle, and my dad, and my grandpa, and my mom… basically all my family, they, they all play some sort of instrument.*

Educational Benefits of Music Technology

YouTube Practice Tracks. One of the regular learning activities in the beginning band at Valle Trueno Elementary is the use of YouTube practice tracks, created by the researcher. Participants made numerous references to these practice tracks in both focus group meetings, as well as in the content of the *videovoice* submissions. In the written survey, several participants noted that they enjoyed using earbuds and playing along with YouTube on their phones. When asked for areas of improvement for the ensemble overall, several participants requested more use of YouTube practice tracks. Finally, in three of the six *videovoice* submissions, participants played excerpts from the existing YouTube practice tracks created by the researcher.

VideoVoice. When first introduced to the concept of *videovoice*, many of the participants voiced concerns about how to transmit video via email from their phone (or other family shared device). These concerns centered on the daunting task of attaching a video to an email. In the two weeks between the initial and the final focus group meetings, the researcher had numerous informal conversations with all the participants about the progress of their *videovoice* submissions. At the same time, the Springdale

Unified School District was recovering from a ransomware attack. The entire district email system was taken offline, several weeks of emails were permanently deleted, and a highly limited version of the email system was brought back online. Several of the participants reported that their *videovoice* submission emails were sent back as undeliverable. The researcher requested that they repeat the attempt, and several videos were sent successfully. At the end of the two week window during which participants created and submitted their *videovoice* samples, six were sent successfully, five emails were sent with no attachment, five participants did not attempt to send a video, and five participants did not attend the final focus group meeting.

Despite the various obstacles to the email process, the *videovoice* submissions that were sent successfully offer some important findings. It should be noted that one participant inadvertently submitted two different *videovoice* submissions. Five of the six videos show the participants practicing buzzing exercises on their mouthpiece. As noted previously, three of the six videos show participants practicing music from the researcher's YouTube channel. In short, the six videos showed a wide range of strategies and routines that were taught in band rehearsal. However, none of the videos showed the use of the lesson book (sheet music). This is significant in that music literacy is one of the core outcomes in both state and national learning standards for the arts. The lack of evidence supporting participants' use of music literacy in their *videovoice* submissions suggest that future implementation of *videovoice* should place greater emphasis on reading sheet music.

VideoVoice Viewing Party. The final focus group meeting included the viewing of the six *videovoice* submissions. Fifteen of the initial twenty participants attended this

meeting. Pizza was provided, the lights were dimmed, and the atmosphere among participants was that of excitement and respect of their peers' videos. The participants that submitted videos appeared to be a nervous yet pleased by the reaction of their peers.

Watching Alenna's video, Jesus stated matter-of-factly, "pretty good," to which Alenna responded, "messed up a little!" with a big smile. Jesus appeared to be testing the waters of constructive criticism. Alenna, like all the *videovoice* creators, struggled with accepting praise without downplaying her video. In her video, Alenna demonstrated an advanced technique harmonic-series exercise, and she appeared uncomfortable as her peers watched with admiration. Despite her moderate discomfort, the display of technical prowess demonstrated appropriate grade-level ability to her peers.

Jacob's video included him playing the popular melody, "Havana", to which Otu began clapping on the back beat, and nearly all the participants started dancing in their seats. Jacob appeared very happy with the reaction of the focus group, as their body language communicated overwhelming praise for his playing. This momentary shared experience exemplified the feeling of joy and fun for which the participants sought.

As soon as the compilation of videos ended, Alenna called out, "can we watch it again?!?" Otu teased Alenna about how she briefly danced in her video, and Josefina came to her defense, responding, "she danced 'cause she liked it! It's her natural state!" This example further shows how the participants enjoyed displays of confidence and enthusiasm.

Before watching the *videovoice* compilation again, the focus group spontaneously broke into numerous conversations about what they had just witnessed. Kahlia lamented that her first video was 'ruined' by her little brother, and Josefina pronounced, "He [the researcher] doesn't want it to be perfect. He wants it to be realistic. He wants it to be YOU." This comment reinforced the recurring sentiment among participants that they wanted their experience to be *real*.

Conversely, several other students expressed disappointment that they were not able to submit a *videovoice* sample. This reinforced previously shared feelings of frustration surrounding the challenges of submitting a *videovoice* with limited parental support and technological resources at home. The underlying issues of class and privilege were highlighted in this respect, as only a quarter of participants were able to create and send submissions. Despite their frustrations, the participants that did not send in videos still clearly enjoyed watching the compilation of *videovoice* submissions.

After a second viewing of the videos, the focus group talked enthusiastically again. This time, the conversation turned more analytical, with several comments focusing on the practice habits and techniques showcased in the compilation. Jesus stated:

> *On Kahlia's video, it shows that you need to blow harder [use breath support]. At first, it sounded like little air. It shows that you just need to blow harder.*

Josefina continued:

> *You can see, that seeing it, you [Kahlia] can fix mistakes and [make] corrections.*

Jesus added:

I think it's cool how Alenna didn't just do all the new stuff. She did the first thing we started [chromatic exercise].

All three of these comments reveal how viewing the *videovoice* compilation led the participants to reflect analytically on various processes of practicing a brass instrument independently, including breath support, error correction and balanced use of time.

Emergent Musical Identity. The *videovoice* experience produced exciting results due in large part to the participants' intrinsic desire to develop their musical identity. Most of the participants described having a strong culture of music in their families, which appeared to spur their eagerness in the music room. This also applied to the participants that did not submit *videovoice*, as they expressed disappointment in this regard. Nonetheless, the *videovoice* creators and audience engaged in social interactions that demonstrated the desire to affirm their friends' musical identity, as well as profound pride and fulfillment in receiving these affirmations. Even Otu's lighthearted teasing of Allena's dancing was interpreted as acknowledgment of her well-deserved satisfaction displayed in her video. The *videovoice* audience members did not simply offer non-specific praise. Jesus commented that Kahlia's use of air support was an example of problem-solving and determination. In that moment, Kahlia was admired for her perseverance in response to a challenge.

Musicians come to the belief that they are musicians through the process of accumulating pieces of their musical identity over time. Beginning band students are in a critical chapter of this journey. *Videovoice* proved itself to be an efficient tool for strengthening the emergent musical identity of students. When practicing music at

home, students may not feel the emotional support provided by their teacher and peers. *Videovoice* bridges this gap by helping students feel that connection. Kahlia felt compelled to delete the first few attempts of her *videovoice*, demonstrating a desire to share a product of which she was proud. She experienced that feeling *at home.* It is a tall order to ask beginning band students to abstractly perceive their home music practice as a valuable contribution to the overall band. Conversely, students often demonstrate commitment to the larger band community *during* band rehearsal. *Videovoice* served to connect these two worlds by harnessing the energy of musical identity.

Conclusion

This study sought to explore two central questions: how do beginning band students perceive their own home music practice experience, and how do beginning band students respond to sharing student-created videos of their home music practice. These questions and their corresponding sub-questions are discussed in this section.

Participants in this study shared a deeply personal and intimate experience with the focus group. This courageous offering has helped to demystify the home music practice experience of beginning band students. It also created a powerful opportunity for community building and social affirmation. On the surface, the *videovoice* experience highlighted the simple truth that beginning band students are motivated to practice at home for fun. This was evidenced in the content of the *videovoice* submissions, and in the joyful reaction of the viewers. The researcher also participated in this joyful experience, and vicariously shared his students' feelings of joy and excitement.

The participants revealed that they perceive their home music practice environment in a variety of ways. They also shared several important characteristics of these spaces. Some described their home practice space as a place of productivity, conducive to making progress and feeling a sense of accomplishment. They felt that it was advantageous to have a quiet space where they could better focus on their own sound. Several participants described their practice space as fun, often including how the ability to use YouTube play-along tracks as a significant factor. Numerous participants shared feelings of frustration in their practice space. Parents sleeping, sibling interruptions, and dogs barking were all given as examples of the challenges associated with practicing at home.

Videovoice showed how the experience for each participant is unique, with unique challenges and strategies. The participants that were successful in submitting a *videovoice* experienced a positive peer response and supportive affirmations. The participants that struggled to submit a *videovoice* were faced with some of the invisible barriers of class and privilege. Nonetheless, they appeared to have a generally positive experience participating in the *videovoice* viewing party, both in terms of enjoyment and in thoughtful analysis of technique. *Videovoice* also revealed how sharing images of one's home is socially risky. *Videovoice* creators appeared to be cautious, waiting to see how their peers might respond to the details revealed in the background. Notably, the audience was largely focused on the musical content, and did not make any negative comments.

The focus group response to the *videovoice* compilation revealed that the act of sharing video of their home music practice space was a positive emotional experience.

The five *videovoice* creators were cautiously proud of their work, and their peers articulated supportive statements and thoughtful analysis. Many of the participants that were not able to complete a *videovoice* expressed that they would have liked to submit a video, yet it is also clear that the underlying issues of class and privilege were barriers to participation. Despite the challenges, the *videovoice* process was a powerful experience for the focus group and researcher. The entire *videovoice* process benefitted from an existing foundation of trust, while simultaneously building upon that foundation.

In response to viewing the *videovoice* submissions, the participants of this study did not explicitly state any intentions to change their own practice habits or any specific aspects of their practice space. However, it was evident that the participants admired many facets of the videos, some of which the participants may emulate as they develop their own musical identity. Some of these behaviors will likely include the use of popular songs (i.e. Havana), celebratory dancing, perseverance and determination. Many of the participant *comments* suggest with specificity that the audience would likely imitate behaviors noted in the *videovoice* compilation. For example, Alessandro shared that after watching Jacob practice *Havana*, he intended on playing the *Megalovania* theme song at home. Imitation is an important strategy for beginning band students, and it is highly likely that many of the *videovoice* audience members will integrate pieces of the content observed in the videos as they continue to develop their musical identity.

Chapter 5: Implications

This study sought to explore the self-described experiences of beginning band students in their home music environment, as well as their responses to sharing *videovoice* evidence of their own and their peers' home music routines. The research revealed that the student participants felt practicing music at home to hold significant meaning, with an emphasis on the aspect of *having fun*. The *videovoice* research highlighted the power of sharing video evidence of home music practice strategies among peers in a social circle. The students that successfully submitted *videovoice* clips received positive social recognition and thoughtful analytic responses. Overall, *videovoice* appeared to be an exciting tool for learning as it coupled emergent musical identity development with growth-based analysis.

The findings in this study aligned with the theoretical frameworks of the current literature in several respects. First, participants in this study exhibited many of the behaviors described by Leon-Guerrero (2008) and Clark (2012), such as feeling confused, utilizing non-strategic practicing, and maintaining incorrect technique. Secondly, the presence of family greatly affected the home practice routines of the participants, which aligns with the findings of Creech (2010) and Margiotta (2011). Lastly, many of the opinions and behaviors of the participants reinforced the findings of prior studies (Hanrahan, Hughes, Banerjee, Eldridge, & Kiefer, 2019) which focus on the values of music technology (metronome, play-along tracks, recording techniques).

Implications for the Literature

Several unexpected themes were revealed in the research findings. First, the beginning band students chose to play an instrument because they believed it would be

enjoyable. The participants shared numerous examples of how they perceived home music practice to be pleasurable. These findings were revealed in focus group discussions, survey responses, and *videovoice* evidence. The existing literature placed more emphasis on student technique and strategy, while this study revealed the underlying function. Thus, the findings from this study suggest that socio-emotional pedagogies may be equally important for successful music instruction, particularly for children from marginalized and disenfranchised communities.

Another unexpected theme was the element of *resource availability*. While the school district in this study provided substantial resources in the form of loaner-instruments, many of the students were still faced with significant obstacles related to socioeconomics and class. While more recent studies have begun to reveal broader issues of access and privilege in education, the most recent research in music education lag in this domain. This research suggests that inequities in access to technology at home have a direct impact on the ability of students to engage in *videovoice*-type learning, which limits the opportunity to experience crucial social engagement.

The final unexpected theme was *musical identity*, which was deeply connected to the other themes listed. The five students that shared a *videovoice* at the viewing party experienced a brief, yet powerful social event. While the other ten students expressed the aspiration to experience the same, they still appeared to experience a *community-based* advancement of their musical identity. *Videovoice* appeared to pull the group together with vicarious enjoyment of peer success. The students indicated feelings of pleasure in the accomplishments of others. This appeared to be built upon a previously

established foundation of trust and cooperation. This research suggests that purposeful community building activities such as *videovoice* contribute to individual students' sense of musical identity.

This study has contributed authentic student perspectives to the growing body of research into the behaviors of beginning band students. The current literature lacks the voice of the student. In written response and group discussions, the participants offered their unique and genuine feelings about their home music practice environment. The participants of this study have helped fill in the gap in knowledge with insightful descriptions and analysis. Furthermore, the five participants that submitted *videovoice* evidence pioneered a promising new educational tool that is relevant to the emerging use of remote learning.

Given that the problem of 2nd and 3rd year dropout from instrumental music programs persists, it is important to understand perspectives of all those involved. This study revealed descriptive details of the home music practice experience as expressed by the students. As the global education system continues to integrate remote learning, research into approaches such as *videovoice* become increasingly important. The participants in this study demonstrated that *videovoice* is highly motivating, highly rewarding, and powerfully analytical. This study also revealed some of the obstacles to *videovoice*, such as the socioeconomic barriers that exist in high poverty communities.

The findings of this study revealed intimate insights into the lives of the participants of this study. The focus group was composed *entirely* of students of color, a group that is statistically marginalized in the United States. Existing literature is deficient in its exploration of the beginning band experience for this demographic.

Empowering the voices of these young people gave this study gravitas and authenticity. Their analytic commentary and *videovoice* offerings were the keystone facets of the research. Furthermore, their contributions have the potential to combat negative stereotypes associated with this population. Their intelligence, compassion, and honesty have added critical perspectives to the academic literature. Readers will find that the voices of this focus group have provided contributions which can improve the educational outcomes of future students of color in beginning band.

Implications for Practice and Policy

Music educators and policy makers reviewing this study will find several implications for their work. This study reinforces the existing literature (Clark, 2012) in that it supports common best practices in the field, such as the proactive involvement of parents and utilization of pedagogically targeted method books. Through discussion in the focus group meetings, the participants expressed that increased parental communication would improve student accountability. There was evidence that students were utilizing the researcher's YouTube channel for practice, yet not using the lesson book at home. All of the implications of this study are connected by the findings of musical identity, which requires continuous attention and reinforcement.

Remote learning has been brought to the forefront as our society responds to pandemics, wildfires, hurricanes, and other natural disasters. Readers of this study will find implications related to the emerging use of technology and remote learning. Participants that pioneered the *videovoice* experience courageously shared valuable information, which has set the stage for future iterations of the project. It is significant to note that the *videovoice* creators demonstrated that the process of creation and

submission of home video is not only desirable to students, but also attainable and logistically feasible. Although numerous participants were unable to submit *videovoice* expressed disappointment in this regard, they still contributed important supportive and analytical responses to the *videovoice* creators and, as a result, had much to learn through this process. This implies that the role of audience in the videovoice experience is valuable, essential, and rewarding.

Given the pedagogical benefits of the *videovoice* project demonstrated through this research, educators would be well served to incorporate the *videovoice* experience for students on a recurring basis. As a prototype, *videovoice* was met with several obstacles. In fact, most of the students were not able to submit a *videovoice*. Repeated iterations of this experience would provide opportunities to troubleshoot and problem-solve. Workarounds could be devised in response to specific obstacles. Simply loaning out basic cameras on a rotational basis could enable students to bypass many of the technical hurdles. Logistically, it would be advantageous to streamline *videovoice* by periodically featuring a small subset of the ensemble. This would help the educator by limiting the time spent on supports and trouble-shooting. It would also use less of the precious rehearsal time for the viewing session. Most importantly, the ongoing application of *videovoice* would build upon prior knowledge, provide for deeper analysis, and help maintain the desired routines of home music practice.

Policy makers (department chair, principal, superintendent, and school board), grade-level teachers, and parents of band students can all contribute to the strength of a music program by supporting music educators who seek to establish a *videovoice* process for beginning band students. Ideally, school districts should provide laptops or

tablets, on a one-to-one basis, for every student. Access to current technology is a persistent problem for low-income families. Furthermore, music educators should have access to digital technology that can gather and edit student video efficiently. Even simple video editing is virtually impossible on a budget computer. The technical challenges of the *videovoice* process revealed important implications related to socioeconomics and access to resources. Distinct financial obstacles to home learning were revealed in this study. Most participants were not able to submit *videovoice* samples, due in large part to a lack of technologies in their home environment. As the role of remote learning continues to grow, it is evident that meaningful opportunities like *videovoice* will not be accessible to all students without targeted supports.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study were limited due to several variables. The primary limitation of this study was time. The school calendar of the research site resulted in conducting research over a two-week period. Extending the research calendar would have allowed for more troubleshooting of technology issues, and a second round of *videovoice* submissions. Another temporal limitation was the availability of meeting times. The daily and weekly schedules of the researcher and the participants was such that the only option for meeting was a 45-minute session after-school on Thursdays. Although approximately half of the Valle Trueno band members attended the meetings, there were many invitees that were not able to participate because of family obligations. Adding more participants would have broadened the range of perspectives and experiences. Removing the time limitations would have increased the potential for the dialogue to go further in depth. Lastly, the Facebook survey questions did not deeply

explore the experiences of the respondents' students. Although valuable evidence was gathered from this data source, it lacked the nuanced and personal quality found in the focus group discussions.

The participants in this study helped paint a portrait of their own lives as beginning band students in Springdale, California. The resulting data should be examined with the understanding that every community, family, and student is unique. The findings of this study may not be universally applicable to beginning band programs in all communities. The researcher's lived experience, and therefore interpretation, is also limited.

Furthermore, the lived experiences of the participants as persons of color impacted this study. Like many communities in the Bay Area, Springdale has dramatic correlations between privilege of opportunity and race/ethnicity. Each individual participant was not responsible for being a representative of an entire population group. However, their individuality should be viewed as valuable and credible in its own way. Although this study enlisted the participation of primarily Latino and African American students, it only had one Asian student and no other ethnic or racial representation. The findings of this study were therefore missing the perspectives of many demographic populations. In absolute terms, the findings of this study were only generalizable to this group of participants at this specific research site. However, readers of this study will still find many relatable insights throughout, particularly in the application of *videovoice*.

Directions for Future Research

The global response to the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that remote learning is an essential element of education. Teachers and students are discovering

new ways of maintaining growth through tools similar to *videovoice*. Continued research on *videovoice* should explore potential supports that could increase student participation, such as loaning out video cameras. If research is conducted within a district that provides laptops to all students, researchers could explore how students respond to *videovoice* with fewer obstacles. If utilizing the internet as a conduit for video submissions, researchers should consider the vast new array of online platforms and the strengths and weaknesses of each. Issues of cost, ease of use, and privacy should all be considered when exploring new digital learning tools. While this study sought to explore the student response to *videovoice*, future research should explore specific strategies for improving access and support for students throughout such an endeavor. This study revealed several obstacles to participating fully in *videovoice* and future research should consider all options when discussing these obstacles.

This study found that beginning band students seek joy in the development of their musical identity. The underlying motivation of positive social recognition was evidenced by their responses both as creators and viewers of the *videovoice* content. Ongoing research should consider how various social contexts affect this phenomenon. It would be valuable to understand the varying responses to the application of *videovoice* in other types of performing arts ensembles (choir, string, dance) or other age groups of ensembles. This research should help determine the optimal balance of variables involved in *videovoice*, and therefore improve the efficacy of a powerful resource, improving educational outcomes for future music students.

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Appendix A: Student Focus Group Questions, Meeting #1

Where do you practice music at home?

What days/times do you usually practice? For how long?

Are you alone? Who can hear you?

Does anyone help you practice?

Do you sit or stand? Both?

How is your lesson book displayed?

Do you use the play-along tracks on Mr. Hamalainen's YouTube channel?

If yes, how is the sound played? (Headphones, Bluetooth speaker, etc.)

What do you like about playing music at home?

What is challenging/difficult about playing music at home?

What advice would you give to a brand-new trumpet/trombone student?

What can Mr. Hamalainen do to help students with their practice at home?

How can participants be respectful of their peers' *videovoice* submissions?

What information might be gained by viewing others' videos?

Appendix B: Student Focus Group Questions, Meeting #2

Describe something about the video that you found helpful.

Describe something that many of the videos have in common.

If you were to make another video like this, what would you do differently?

Do you find it helpful to watch yourself practice? If so, in what way?

Do you find it helpful to watch your peers' practice? If so, in what way?

Is there something you saw another student do that you want to try at home?

Does anyone else in your family play an instrument? What instrument?

Do/did they play in a school ensemble?

What is your favorite thing about playing your trumpet/trombone at home?

After watching the video, how can Mr. Hamalainen help you with your home practice?

Do you live in an apartment, condominium, or single-family house? Other?

Appendix C: Elementary Music Teachers Facebook Group Survey

What grade do your students start a band instrument?

- 4th grade
- 5th grade
- 6th grade
- Other

When do you see your students for band instruction?

- Mostly during the school day
- Mostly after school
- Combination of during and after school

How do students obtain instruments?

- Mostly rent and/or purchase
- Mostly school provided
- Other

Do you require a specific amount of practice minutes per day/week?

- Yes
- No

Do students turn in a parent-signed practice log?

- Yes
- No

Which of the following best describes your school’s demographics?

- Majority non-White student population
- Majority white student population
- I'm not sure

Which of the following best describes your student's housing?

- Majority lives in single-family residences
- Majority lives in apartment/multi-family residences
- I'm not sure

How many students have family members with musical experience?

- Less than ⅓
- ½
- More than ⅔
- I'm not sure

If a 'home music practice space' is defined as: *a dedicated space for practice, chair for sitting (if applicable to the instrument), music stand and lesson book, and very few distractions*, how many of your students have a home music practice space?

- Less than ⅓
- ½
- More than ⅔
- I'm not sure

Appendix D: IRB Acceptance Letter

DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA

12/2/2019

James Hamalainen 50 Acacia Ave.
San Rafael, CA 94901

Dear James,

On behalf of the Dominican University of California Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants, I am pleased to approve your proposal entitled *Exploring the Beginning Band Student's Home Practice Space* (IRBPHP IRB Modification Application #10816).

In your final report or paper please indicate that your project was approved by the IRBPHP and indicate the identification number.

I wish you well in your very interesting research effort. Sincerely,

[redacted]

Randall Hall, Ph.D. Chair, IRBPHP

Cc: Jennifer Lucko, Ph.D.

Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants

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