

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**Student and Parent/Guardian Perceptions of the Effects of Extra-Curricular Drumming  
Ensemble Participation on Social-Emotional Learning in a Title I Elementary School**

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the Faculty of the School of Music  
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by

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine the perceptions of students and parents/guardians regarding the effects on social-emotional learning of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation while attending a Title I school in North Texas. The aim was to understand how participants and their parents/guardians perceived any changes to social and emotional development as a result of participating in a drumming ensemble beyond the traditional school day. The study was conducted at a Title I elementary school campus encompassing grades kindergarten through fifth in a suburban region of North Texas and concentrated on the fifth-grade students enrolled at that campus. Information collected from student self-assessment surveys provided insights into the immediate and cumulative influences of participation in drumming ensembles on the social-emotional development of fifth-grade students while also contributing to the greater body of research concerning the ways in which involvement in music ensembles affects social-emotional learning. The research was conducted by way of interviews with students and parents/guardians. The research engaged a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological approach which utilized interpretive phenomenological analysis and included semi-structured interviews with fifth-grade drumming ensemble participants and their parents/guardians. Thematic analysis of student and parent/guardian interviews yielded perceptions by both participant groups of improvements in social-emotional development.

*Keywords:* Drumming, ensemble, social-emotional learning, extra-curricular

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## **List of Abbreviations**

CASEL – Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

CLD – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

CRQ – Central Research Question

DRUMBEAT – Discovering Relationships Using Music, Beliefs, Emotions, Attitudes, and Thought

IC – Iterative Categorization

IPA – Interpretive phenomenological analysis

IQ – Intelligence Quotient

IRB – Institutional Review Board

LIM – Leader In Me

MACD – Modern African Classical Drumming

PES – Paul Elementary School

RULER – Recognizing emotion in the self and others, Understanding the causes and consequences of emotion, Labeling emotion accurately, Expressing emotion in socially appropriate ways, and Regulating emotions effectively

SEL – Social-Emotional Learning

WMD – World Music Drumming

ZPD – Zone of Proximal Development

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## Overview

The purpose of this qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study was to examine the perceptions of students and parents/guardians regarding the effects on social-emotional learning of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation while attending a Title I school in North Texas. Chapter One first explores the background of the topics leading to the research questions developed for this study: social-emotional learning (SEL) and how music ensemble participation affects SEL. Next, the chapter describes the problem and purpose of the study, including an overview of pedagogies utilized in SEL and drumming instruction, the theoretical framework used to guide the research, and a statement of the significance of the study. Chapter One concludes with definitions of important terms relevant to the research and a chapter summary.

## Background

### Historical Context

The history of social and emotional development remains inseparable from the history of education. Since 1994, when both the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and the term ‘social and emotional learning’ came into existence, the subject continues to receive ever-increasing recognition as an evidence-based field of collaboration worthy of inclusion in school curricula across the United States.<sup>1</sup> As the recognized leader in the SEL integration movement, CASEL defines social-emotional learning as “the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible

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<sup>1</sup> “Our History,” About Us, accessed April 23, 2022, <https://casel.org/about-us/our-history/>.

and caring decisions.”<sup>2</sup> The commitment to SEL intervention strategies benefits everyone in a learning environment, not just an individual or select group of students because social-emotional learning engages and improves competencies considered essential to success.<sup>3</sup> Such competencies include the awareness and management of self, social awareness, relationship management, and making responsible decisions.<sup>4</sup>

Zins and Elias describe how SEL acquisition mimics academic learning when children learn, practice, and apply social and emotional skills through positive interactions in positive environments.<sup>5</sup> Applying SEL interventions places children’s future behavior at the forefront of implementation, but some argue in favor of evaluating participants concurrently with involvement in a performing arts activity within the context of practice-informed research.<sup>6</sup> The inclusion of SEL within music instruction forms an intersection where the practices of both naturally meet, where the pedagogies of teaching music and social-emotional learning align.<sup>7</sup> Such alignment eases classroom management, strengthens social interactions, encourages

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<sup>2</sup> “Fundamentals of SEL,” Fundamentals of SEL, accessed April 23, 2022, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

<sup>3</sup> Scott Edgar, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music* (Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 2017), 14.

<sup>4</sup> Rebecca D. Taylor et al., “Promoting Positive Youth Development Through School-Based Social and Emotional Learning Interventions: A Meta-Analysis of Follow-Up Effects,” *Child Development* 88, no. 4 (July/August 2017): 1157, accessed January 24, 2022, <https://srcd.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cdev.12864>.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph E. Zins and Maurice J. Elias, “Social and Emotional Learning: Promoting the Development of All Students,” *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* 17, no.2-3 (2017): 234, accessed February 2, 2022, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1080/10474410701413152>.

<sup>6</sup> Lisa Wood et al., “‘To the Beat of a Different Drum’: Improving the Social and Mental Wellbeing of At-Risk Young People Through Drumming,” *Journal of Public Mental Health* 12, no. 2 (2013): 71, accessed January 24, 2022, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JPMH-09-2012-0002>.

<sup>7</sup> Edward Varner, “General Music Learning is Also Social and Emotional Learning,” *General Music Today* 33, no. 2 (February 28, 2019): 74, accessed February 19, 2022, <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/pdf/10.1177/1048371319891421>.

leadership amongst peers, and increases motivation to practice the music being studied.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, the presence of SEL within music education enriches both the classroom experience and comprehensive musicianship.<sup>9</sup>

Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux describe how participation in drumming activity encourages the self-worth of individuals and positive social interaction while facilitating self-expression and nonverbal communication.<sup>10</sup> They further explain that participating in group drumming provides for the channeling of negative emotions such as frustration and anger.<sup>11</sup> The work of Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux, however, occurred in an environment inclusive of relatively few children: a residential care facility.<sup>12</sup> To examine the perceived effects of extra-curricular group drumming on the social-emotional learning of a larger population, the current study was made available to all fifth-grade students attending a Title I school within a suburban district of North Texas.

As a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study, the examination of perceptions of the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on social-emotional learning afforded the prospect of studying SEL in a music learning context beyond the school day. Engaging in the qualitative phenomenological study approach for this research allowed students to self-assess indicators of social-emotional growth, including self-control, self-confidence, and

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<sup>8</sup> Edgar, *Music Education*, 21.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>10</sup> Kim Flores, Caroline van Niekerk, and Liana le Roux, "Drumming as a Medium to Promote Emotional and Social Functioning of Children in Middle Childhood in Residential Care," *Music Education Research* 18, no. 3 (2016): 254, accessed January 10, 2022, <https://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/full/10.1080/14613808.2015.1077798>.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 254.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

positive peer interactions. According to Edgar, “self-evaluation is a critical element of SEL.”<sup>13</sup> The researcher combined Edgar’s recommendations for SEL instruction with a similar structure to a study that examined the effects of group drumming participation on children in low-income households.<sup>14 15</sup> The students’ accounts of self-assessed social-emotional development provided first-hand knowledge of the perceived influences of extra-curricular group drumming participation on SEL outcomes for students attending a Title I school located within a suburban school district in North Texas.

### Social Context

The primary research question emerged from a study exploring the potential influences of school-based drumming ensemble participation on the social-emotional learning of children and focused on students who reside in low-income or poverty environments in Los Angeles, California.<sup>16</sup> Working from the connections between stressors, behaviors, and the frequent inaccessibility of quality health care, Ho et al. conducted a study involving 101 fifth-grade students divided into either the control groups, consisting of students who received no drumming sessions during the course of the study, or the treatment groups, which included students who received twelve weekly forty- to forty-five-minute drumming sessions augmented with group counseling activities.<sup>17</sup> The intervention sessions included culturally diverse drums and rhythms,

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<sup>13</sup> Edgar, *Music Education*, 21.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>15</sup> Ping Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming on Social-Emotional Behavior in Low-Income Children,” *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine* 2011 (February 13, 2011): 2-3, accessed January 10, 2022, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3095989/?tool=pmcentrez&report=abstract>.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

and the lessons were structured to focus less on performance and more on the process of learning.<sup>18</sup> The social-emotional learning emphasis in the Ho et al. research embraced “various combinations of positive behavior, team building, positive risk-taking, self-esteem, awareness of others, leadership, sense of self, expressing feelings, managing anger, managing stress, empathy, and gratitude.”<sup>19</sup> The outcomes of the study indicate significant behavioral improvements for the intervention group when compared to the control group, thereby supporting the hypothesis that social-emotional behavior would potentially improve for students involved in school-based group drumming activities.<sup>20</sup> The results of the Ho et al. study were considered a potential indicator of the outcome of the current study, and both investigations offered benefits to elementary educators as well as individuals in areas of social science and those who work with children.

A limited amount of research examined connections between drumming ensemble participation and the effects on or connections with social-emotional learning. However, Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux explored the ways in which drumming promotes the social and emotional functioning of children at a child and youth residential care center in South Africa.<sup>21</sup> The research describes how conditions at the residential center affected the development of social awareness and social competence.<sup>22</sup> Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux explain the ways a drumming ensemble “represents a safe and supportive environment for children in which social

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<sup>18</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming,” 4.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

<sup>21</sup> Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux, “Drumming as a Medium”, 254.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 255.



processes such as following, leading, imitating, taking turns, sharing, and other forms of reciprocal interaction are facilitated.”<sup>23</sup> Moving from teacher-led to participant-driven, the drumming sessions provided safe opportunities for the children to experiment, learn through mistakes, and celebrate the effort involved in working toward ascertaining the right answer or performing the correct pattern or sequence.<sup>24</sup> The researchers concluded that the participants experienced improved social and emotional functioning, including an increased sense of self and self-confidence, resulting from involvement in the drumming sessions.<sup>25</sup>

Social competencies such as problem-solving, listening, sharing, diversity awareness, and acceptance emerge when children feel sufficiently confident to investigate new drumming experiences like previously unexplored techniques, rhythms, and styles.<sup>26</sup> Drumming, therefore, fills a gap often left unsatisfied for alienated or at-risk children due to a lack of access to the systems through which competencies typically develop.<sup>27</sup> The work of Wood et al. engaged at-risk children in a program titled *Discovering Relationships Using Music, Beliefs, Emotions, Attitudes, and Thoughts*, or DRUMBEAT, as a way of bringing together the qualities of drumming and social-emotional development.<sup>28</sup> Every DRUMBEAT session incorporated various combinations of “themes, discussions and drumming analogies relating to self-expression, communication, emotions and feelings, self-worth, problem solving, confidence and

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<sup>23</sup> Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux, “Drumming as a Medium”, 257.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 258.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 266.

<sup>26</sup> Wood, et al., “To the Beat,” 71.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 72.

teamwork.”<sup>29</sup> DRUMBEAT aims to help children transfer the competencies developed when drumming into daily self- and social-awareness as the pedagogies of the program intersect with SEL pedagogical practices.<sup>30</sup> Broader benefits emerged from participation in DRUMBEAT, including improved school attendance and attitudes toward school in addition to increased willingness to engage in a non-threatening therapy and recovery program.<sup>31</sup>

Curriculum and schedule constraints often prevent elementary music educators from engaging students in extensive drumming sessions within the school day.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, music-centric assessment tools for SEL implementation are virtually non-existent.<sup>33</sup> Lashley and Rosenfeld Halverson note, however, that “effective classroom-based programs systematically promote students’ social and emotional competence.”<sup>34</sup> Varner also explains how a music-learning environment provides an ideal environment for engaging students in SEL due to the overlap of instructional strategies applied for music and SEL.<sup>35</sup> Because of the potential for overlapping objectives in music and SEL instruction, exploring the effects of group drumming participation on SEL outside of the regular school schedule amplifies opportunities for music educators and their classroom colleagues to gain increased beneficial insights into SEL development. Research conducted pertaining to music and SEL practices potentially provides

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<sup>29</sup> Wood, et al., “To the Beat,” 72.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Yorel Lashley and Erica Rosenfeld Halverson, “Towards a Collaborative Approach to Measuring Social-Emotional Learning in the Arts,” *Arts Education Policy Review* 122, no. 3 (2021): 183, accessed January 26, 2022, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1080/10632913.2020.1787909>.

<sup>35</sup> Varner, “General Music Learning,” 74.

foundational information upon which relevant, music centered SEL assessments can then be created.

## **Theoretical Context**

### Sociocultural Theory

The musical learning environment serves as a community defined by student-to-student social collaborations as well as interactions between students and the teacher.<sup>36</sup> St. John describes the community as a place where ideas are exchanged and transformed as members became empowered through the co-construction of knowledge and the discovery of an awareness of belonging.<sup>37</sup> St. John emphasizes the social need to participate in a community by stating how “a sense of belonging, fostered amidst secure relations, is fundamental to encouraging, expanding, and extending contributions within a community of learners.”<sup>38</sup> The expansion and extension of learning contributions St. John references, also known as scaffolding, are rooted in Lev Vygotsky’s Genetic Law, in which the activity of learning builds upon a foundation of knowledge already in existence.<sup>39</sup> From his observations and research of how knowledge is formed, Vygotsky assembled his sociocultural theory, concluding that the meaning behind what is learned grows through social construction.<sup>40</sup> Learning in a musical community offers a setting conducive to the principles of Vygotsky’s theory, in which children can make meaning of their

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<sup>36</sup> Patricia A. St. John, “Finding and Making Meaning: Young Children as Musical Collaborators,” *Psychology of Music* 34, no. 2 (2006): 239, accessed June 13, 2022, <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/abs/10.1177/0305735606061854>.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 238-9.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 239.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 241-2.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 243.

knowledge acquisition through collaborations and interactions with others within a social environment.<sup>41</sup>

From a Vygotskian sociocultural perspective, music learning in general and drumming in particular involves recognizing how conceptual tools are engaged by students as they encounter challenges.<sup>42</sup> Participants utilize physical tools, such as the drums; intellectual/communicative tools, particularly singing and speech; and tools which combine both the physical and the communicative, including written notation, to make meaning of experiences.<sup>43</sup> In the sociocultural approach to learning, knowledge is constructed through this interdependence of personal and social processes.<sup>44</sup> St. John states that “such creative collaboration is transformative, born from risk and challenge, relying on and deepening each learner’s contribution.”<sup>45</sup> The influence of building a supportive context/environment which becomes a social community guides the musical learning experiences and consequently the sociocultural development of children.<sup>46</sup>

### Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Social context or learning environment, according to Howard Gardner, contributes to the development of core abilities in certain human intellectual competences he termed

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<sup>41</sup> St. John, “Finding and Making Meaning,” 243.

<sup>42</sup> Cecilia Wallerstedt and Niklas Pramling, “Conceptualising Early Childhood Arts Education: The Cultivation of Synesthetic Transduction Skills,” *International Journal of Early Childhood* 44, no. 2 (August 2012): 131, accessed June 13, 2022, file:///Users/116603/Downloads/Conceptualising\_Early\_Childhoo.pdf.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Patricia St. John, “The Songs Teachers Teach Are Not Necessarily the Songs Children Sing: The Boy Who Would Be an Airplane,” *Contemporary Justice Review* 6, no. 1 (2006): 48, accessed June 13, 2022, <https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/abs/10.1080/1028258032000055649>.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 48.

intelligences.<sup>47</sup> Of the seven intelligences originally identified, musical intelligence and personal intelligence, including both intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences, are of particular significance to the research in this study concerning the perceived effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on social-emotional learning.<sup>48</sup> Gardner believes in the potential for the development of each intelligence, and musical intelligence is no exception.<sup>49</sup> Although some individuals are predisposed genetically to musical giftedness, Gardner emphasizes the influence musical stimulation has on the growth of musical competence.<sup>50</sup>

Gardner's conceptions of the personal intelligences align with the core competencies of SEL. Gardner appears to address a lack of self-awareness and self-management when referring to intrapersonal intelligence by stating "the less a person understands his own feelings, the more he will fall prey to them."<sup>51</sup> Without using the SEL competency names of social awareness or relationship skills, Gardner effectively describes both as interpersonal intelligence. According to Gardner, the likelihood of a person interacting appropriately with others in a social context such as a group drumming ensemble depends on the person's ability to understand someone else's feelings, responses, and behavior.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 257.

<sup>48</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 110.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

## Statement of the Problem

Much of the available research concerning the effects of social and emotional learning as related to participation in musical activities pertains to investigations conducted either within a traditional school setting or through a clinical environment, such as a residential facility.<sup>53 54</sup> While some studies investigate large group behavior, others examine the actions of a single individual or a few participants.<sup>55</sup> A limited amount of research illustrates the connections between music participation and SEL, and even fewer inquiries consider the influences of drumming ensemble participation on the social-emotional development of children.<sup>56</sup> For music teachers in low-income and Title I schools, further research is needed to provide evidence of the effects of drumming activity on the SEL of children in poverty or severely low-income households. Ho et al. offer insight into the benefits that drumming ensemble participation within the traditional school setting provides to the social-emotional development of children residing in low-income households.<sup>57</sup> At times, however, opportunities to engage in drumming ensembles arise beyond the context of the traditional school day and are instead made available to children as extra-curricular activities. No research exists regarding investigations into the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on the SEL of children in a Title I school within a suburban region. All relevant research addresses similar benefits in the extra-curricular setting as those gained through school settings and non-traditional environments.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming”, 2.

<sup>54</sup> Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux, “Drumming as a Medium,” 254.

<sup>55</sup> Wood, et al., “To the Beat,” 71.

<sup>56</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming”, 4.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 9.

Experiential learning programs provide opportunities for students to exercise independence, competence, responsibility, and initiative through the model of hands-on learning and creating because of how initially learned skills improve and are enhanced, integrated, and nuanced over time through ever-increasing complex events.<sup>59 60</sup> Investigations conducted by Mak and Fancourt demonstrate how “arts engagement...can improve classroom behaviors such as attention, as well as promoting prosocial behaviors, enhancing emotional competency, reducing competitive dynamics in classrooms, and reducing bullying.”<sup>61</sup> Embracing musical creativity by analyzing emotions and feelings means emotions and feelings become a part of the students’ musical creations.<sup>62</sup> Sharing something as unique as a personal musical composition requires trust. As drumming participants learn to trust one another throughout rehearsals, relationships form and develop, students’ self-confidence strengthens, self-control improves, and students experience increased positive peer interactions.<sup>63</sup> Improvements in social and emotional development, therefore, translate into improvements in classroom behavior and, in so doing, ease the pressures of classroom management for music educators.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Shelley Snow and Miranda D’Amico, “The Drum Circle Project: A Qualitative Study With At-Risk Youth in a School Setting,” *Canadian Journal of Music Therapy* 16, no. 1 (2010): 13-14, accessed February 3, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/521203891/fulltextPDF/B8D420CF0C0417EPQ/1?accountid=12085>.

<sup>60</sup> Zins and Elias, “Social and Emotional Learning: Promoting the Development,” 234.

<sup>61</sup> Hei Wan Mak and Daisy Fancourt, “Do Socio-Demographic Factors Predict Children’s Engagement in Arts and Culture? Comparisons of In-School and Out-of-School Participation in the Taking Part Survey,” *PLoS ONE* 16, no. 2 (February 12, 2021): 1-2, accessed January 27, 2022, | <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0246936>.

<sup>62</sup> Scott, *Music Education*, 84.

<sup>63</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming”, 9.

<sup>64</sup> Marilee Sprenger, *Social-Emotional Learning and the Brain: Strategies to Help Your Students Thrive* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2020), 35.

Social and emotional learning pedagogies aligned with drumming instructional pedagogies specifically, and educational pedagogies in general, provide opportunities for the drumming instructor to maximize rehearsal time.<sup>65</sup> The informal philosophy of group drumming, according to Snow and D’Amico, “embraces the fostering of community expression, the joy of making music in the moment in community, and the honoring of each individual within the circle as an important contributor to the whole.”<sup>66</sup> The SEL process of restorative practices, including restorative circles, provides safe opportunities to restore that which is lost when an offense occurs against another student.<sup>67</sup> Just as importantly, restorative practices provide means for teaching intrapersonal as well as interpersonal competencies as students hear and learn about one another’s stories, a pedagogy closely aligned with drumming as a means of storytelling.<sup>68</sup>

Participation in beginner drumming ensembles requires little to no previous drumming experience. Thus, situating social-emotional learning in the context of drumming rehearsals provides a logical environment in which to initiate SEL pedagogies.<sup>69</sup> Together the group experiences new musical developments, encounters musical challenges, overcomes musical problems, acknowledges musical development, and celebrates musical achievements. Musical progress experienced as a group allows participants in a group drumming ensemble to improve

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<sup>65</sup> Ben Dyson et al., “Educators’ Experiences of Establishing Social and Emotional Learning Pedagogies in an Elementary School With At-Risk Students,” *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education* 13, no. 5 (June 2021): 626, accessed January 26, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2584781129?parentSessionId=b%2BS0epo%2BZK6rnm0LOik8OTeqPxsMrITEXABKRHO2wDI%3D&pq-origsite=summon&accountid=12085>.

<sup>66</sup> Snow and D’Amico, “The Drum Circle Project,” 15.

<sup>67</sup> Dyson et al., “Educators’ Experiences,” 630.

<sup>68</sup> Miguel A. Guajardo, et al., *Reframing Community Partnerships in Education: Uniting the Power of Place and Wisdom of People* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2016), 52.

<sup>69</sup> Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux, “Drumming as a Medium”, 256-7.



both as individuals as well as meaningful contributors to the purpose of the entire learning environment.<sup>70</sup>

Specific relationships between SEL and extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation are unexamined despite the existence of literature supporting the benefits of social and emotional learning within the music classroom and the influences of musical learning on social and emotional growth. The problem originates from the lack of attention to addressing the perceptions of fifth-grade students and their parents/guardians regarding the effects of social-emotional learning on extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas. The literature also fails to adequately address the alignment of social-emotional learning pedagogies with drumming ensemble instructional pedagogies.

#### Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of conducting this study was to evaluate the perceptions of fifth-grade students and parents/guardians concerning the effects of participation in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble on students' social and emotional learning while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas. To determine how students received and responded to the drumming ensemble and SEL pedagogies, the researcher engaged a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological approach. The study was open to all fifth-grade students enrolled at a Title I elementary school within a suburban region of North Texas. Interviews conducted with children and their parents/guardians provided preliminary and summative data concerning overall assessments of each child's initial social and emotional condition and subsequent development over the duration of the rehearsal season.

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<sup>70</sup> Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux, "Drumming as a Medium", 257.

## Significance of Study

The study addressed a gap in research specifically regarding the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on social and emotional learning in fifth-grade students attending a Title I school in a suburban school district in North Texas. With the insights gained through the investigation, elementary music educators have new information to engage when making decisions to extend music learning opportunities grounded in social and emotional development experiences. Further evidence of the benefits music ensemble participation provides children strengthens the foundation upon which music programs are designed.<sup>71</sup> The relative ease of facilitating a drumming ensemble substantiates the argument for expanding extra-curricular opportunities for elementary students. Additionally, in a time of assessment-based validation of programs, the findings of this study address opportunities for creating music assessments deliberately and intentionally based on SEL principles.<sup>72</sup>

## Theoretical Context

The nature of the mind is social, extending beyond the individual to external influences in the development of higher cognitive functions, according to psychologist Lev Vygotsky.<sup>73</sup> The considerations of this qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study regarding social and emotional learning in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble setting aligned with Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). In both the ZPD and a drumming ensemble, children learn from others who possess greater experience.<sup>74</sup> What eventually came to

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<sup>71</sup> Varner, "General Music Learning," 77.

<sup>72</sup> Lashley and Halverson, "Towards a Collaborative Approach," 183.

<sup>73</sup> Jan Derry, *Vygotsky: Philosophy and Education* (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2013), 2.

<sup>74</sup> Helen Hedges, "Contemporary Principles to Lead Understanding of Children's Learning: Synthesizing Vygotsky, Rogoff, Wells and Lindfors," *Early Child Development and Care* 191, nos. 7-8 (2021): 1057, accessed May 6, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2020.1849169>.

be termed sociocultural theory grew from Vygotsky's beliefs concerning the nature of knowing as a claim of reasoning instead of responses to or descriptions of events.<sup>75</sup> To attain the ability to reason means interacting with the environment through various stages of thought and speech, known as the developmental continuum.<sup>76</sup> The developmental continuum begins with the prelinguistic stage.<sup>77</sup> Thoughts later move into External Speech, a stage inclusive of all social interactions directed to children.<sup>78</sup> Private Speech, also referred to as egocentric speech, follows External Speech.<sup>79</sup> Inner Speech, or what children inwardly say to themselves, precedes Thought, the subtext of every sentence which is spoken.<sup>80</sup>

Examination of Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences provided a context in which to frame the learning, whether cognitive or social-emotional, which occurred when students participated in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble in the study conducted.<sup>81</sup> Musical and personal intelligences were influenced by the nature of the setting in which the study took place and which contributed to both of the prerequisites for engaging intellectual competencies.<sup>82</sup> First, the ensemble demanded the resolution of problems both musical and personal in nature. The second prerequisite involved the discovery or creation of problems as a

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<sup>75</sup> Derry, *Vygotsky: Philosophy and Education*, 2-3.

<sup>76</sup> Stephen Newman, "Vygotsky, Wittgenstein, and Sociocultural Theory," *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 48, no. 3 (2018): 354, accessed May 7, 2022, <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/full/10.1111/jtsb.12174>.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 354-5.

<sup>81</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 63.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

means of laying the foundation for the expansion of knowledge, again for both the musical and personal competencies.<sup>83</sup> The drumming ensemble, while more relaxed and less formal than a traditional instrumental ensemble, provided structured opportunities for students to grow their musical knowledge.<sup>84</sup> The ensemble also offered an environment both intrapersonal and interpersonal by nature of the individual student's experience and that student's interactions with and contributions to the group's practice and creation of music.<sup>85</sup>

### **Empirical Context**

The current study presented the perceptions of fifth-grade students and their parents/guardians regarding the social-emotional learning which occurred while participating in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble at a suburban Title I school in North Texas. Insights from existing literature illuminated the effects of musical learning on social-emotional development, such as Varner's work which examined the alignment between the competencies of social-emotional learning and the acquisition of general music comprehension.<sup>86</sup> By comparing students in rural areas whose parents were employed in professional or managerial positions or who lived in owned or rented home environments with students living in urban areas whose parents were unemployed or held manual or routine positions of employment or who resided in social housing, Mak and Fancourt discovered consistently low participation in performing arts activities outside of school.<sup>87</sup> At the same time, Mak and Fancourt's research

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<sup>83</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 63.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 253.

<sup>86</sup> Varner, "General Music Learning," 74.

<sup>87</sup> Mak and Fancourt, "Do Socio-Demographic Factors Predict," 6-7.

produces “no evidence of a social gradient in arts participation or cultural engagement in school.”<sup>88</sup> Faulkner et al. evaluated at-risk students engaged in an early intervention drug prevention program known as *Discovering Relationship Using Music, Beliefs, Emotions, Attitudes, and Thoughts* (DRUMBEAT).<sup>89</sup> They conclude that participation in the program connected students often difficult to engage by promoting social skills which contributed to growing relationships with peers and family members.<sup>90</sup> Ho et al. narrowed the research by examining how group drumming affects the social-emotional growth of children in low-income environments.<sup>91</sup> The results of their study aligned with similar studies and revealed that group drumming in combination with group counseling results in improvements in behaviors and the ability to internalize problems.<sup>92</sup>

### **Practical Context**

This phenomenological study yielded outcomes aligned with objectives for social-emotional learning, the implementation of elementary music curricula, and the merger of the two within an extra-curricular group drumming ensemble in a suburban Title I school. Social-emotional learning applications in a drumming ensemble contributed to the schoolwide objectives focused on the development of the learning community through two significant elements: delivering quality SEL instruction and establishing a safe, caring, and cooperative

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<sup>88</sup> Mak and Fancourt, “Do Socio-Demographic Factors Predict,” 9.

<sup>89</sup> Simon Faulkner et al., “It Is Not Just Music and Rhythm...Evaluation of a Drumming-Based Intervention to Improve the Social Wellbeing of Alienated Youth,” *Children Australia* 37, no. 1 (March 2012): 37, accessed May 17, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1115004933/fulltext/EC0ABA6BE6234E37PQ/1?accountid=12085>.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming,” 9.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

environment.<sup>93</sup> The research of Oberle et al. emphasizes how, in the words of the authors, “competence in core SEL skills is critical for positive outcomes in the school context.”<sup>94</sup> Within the context of a prescribed music education curriculum, the results of this study present what Varner describes as a natural alignment between general music and social-emotional learning as demonstrated through two of the musical activities included in the study: participating in an ensemble and improvisation.<sup>95</sup>

The perceptions of students in this qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study provided insights into the legitimacy of including core SEL competencies within extra-curricular ensembles in general and drumming ensembles in particular. This is especially true for music educators in Title I environments. Aligned with the results from Ho et al.’s study of low-income children, the authors note how “the intrinsic value of drumming, and the opportunity to develop competence in it, may lead to continued participation, which may in itself be helpful given the social, emotional and academic benefits that have been linked to participation in music activities.”<sup>96</sup> This qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study conducted in a suburban Title I school addressed a practical need for elementary music teachers interested in SEL applications when working with students in low-income home environments who display tendencies toward challenging, aggressive, and even non-social behaviors.

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<sup>93</sup> Chunyan Yang, George G. Bear, and Henry May, “Multilevel Associations Between School-Wide Social-Emotional Learning Approach and Student Engagement Across Elementary, Middle, and High Schools,” *School Psychology Review* 47, no. 1 (March 2018): 46, accessed June 26, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2014930851/fulltextPDF/5EC318E4AEB34216PQ/1?accountid=12085>.

<sup>94</sup> Eva Oberle et al., “Establishing Systemic Social and Emotional Learning Approaches in Schools: A Framework for Schoolwide Implementation,” *Cambridge Journal of Education* 46, no. 3 (2016): 280, accessed May 20, 2022, <https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/full/10.1080/0305764X.2015.1125450>.

<sup>95</sup> Varner, “General Music Learning,” 74.

<sup>96</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming”, 9.

## Research Questions

The study was conducted to focus on answering the following questions:

Central RQ 1: What are the perceptions of fifth-grade students regarding the effects on social-emotional learning of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas?

Sub-Question 1: How are social-emotional learning pedagogies aligned with drumming ensemble pedagogies?

Central RQ 2: What are the perceptions of parents/guardians of fifth-grade students regarding the effects on social-emotional learning of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas?

## Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested:

H1: The perceptions by fifth-grade students of the effects on social-emotional learning of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas will include increasing participants' self-confidence, self-control, and positive peer interactions.

H2: Social-emotional learning pedagogies may be aligned with drumming ensemble pedagogies through a shared focus on leadership, restoration, and relationships.

H3: The perceptions by parents/guardians of fifth-grade students of the effects on social-emotional learning of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in north Texas will include increasing participants' self-confidence, self-control, and positive peer interactions.

## Core Concepts

Participation in a drumming ensemble was a concept significant to the study due to the unique pedagogical approaches designed to acquire performance skills, master culturally diverse rhythms, establish the physical structure of the ensemble, and affirm the interactions between the students who are using instruments and the leader, whether student or adult.<sup>97</sup> When elaborating on the position of drumming as a core concept, Bittman explains how “group drumming is a complex composite intervention with long-standing historical roots that encompasses the subject’s full participation with physical, psychological/emotional, and cognitive involvement.”<sup>98</sup> On a sub-core level, the emphasis on the concept of an ensemble required examination due to the distinctive way in which a drumming ensemble is assembled and configured. The placement of drums and auxiliary instruments, while flexible, adhered to the logic of the genres performed, and the shape of a circle or semi-circle influenced the fluidity of movement both within a piece of music as well as from one work to another.<sup>99</sup>

Social-emotional learning figured prominently as a core concept within the study. Social-emotional competence developed through the process of social-emotional learning and consists of the following five interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies: self-awareness, self-

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<sup>97</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming,” 2.

<sup>98</sup> Barry B. Bittman et al., “Composite Effects of Group Drumming Music Therapy on Modulation of Neuroendocrine-Immune Parameters in Normal Subjects,” *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* 7, no.1 (January 2001): 46, accessed February 3, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/204821973/fulltextPDF/80E39B3191A54CE0PQ/1?accountid=12085>.

<sup>99</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming,” 2.



management, relationship skills, social awareness, and responsible decision-making.<sup>100 101</sup> Jones and Doolittle explain how social-emotional development “can be taught and nurtured in schools so that students increase their ability to integrate thinking, emotions, and behavior in ways that lead to positive school and life outcomes.”<sup>102</sup> School-based SEL interventions provide widespread benefits to all students, not just a targeted group or an individual with specific SEL needs.<sup>103</sup> However, while decades worth of research exist concerning SEL and the role of social-emotional development in a child’s success, only recently have researchers started to investigate the influences of participation in the arts on a child’s social-emotional development.<sup>104</sup> Both core concepts were considered in tandem throughout the study and the outcomes expand the available literature regarding the topics.

#### Definition of Terms

*Drumming ensemble* refers to the collective group of students learning, rehearsing, and ultimately performing music together on drums in addition to smaller, handheld auxiliary instruments.<sup>105</sup> The drumming ensemble provided a platform for exploring musical performance and the means through which social and emotional learning strategies were implemented.

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<sup>100</sup> Celene E. Domitrovich et al., “Social-Emotional Competence: An Essential Factor for Promoting Positive Adjustment and Reducing Risk in School Children,” *Child Development* 88, no. 2 (March/April 2017): 408, accessed January 26, 2022, <https://web-s-ebsohost-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=a8ee764c-554a-499b-889d-54a10b41943d%40redis>.

<sup>101</sup> Clark McKown, “Social-Emotional Assessment, Performance, and Standards,” *The Future of Children* 27, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 160, accessed January 26, 2022, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44219026>.

<sup>102</sup> Stephanie M. Jones and Emily J. Doolittle, “Social and Emotional Learning: Introducing the Issue,” *The Future of Children* 27, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 3, accessed February 3, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2434475404/fulltextPDF/4F28FB3F8E18458FPQ/1?accountid=12085>.

<sup>103</sup> Jones and Doolittle, “Social and Emotional Learning: Introducing the Issue,” 10.

<sup>104</sup> McKown, “Social-Emotional Assessment,” 158.

<sup>105</sup> Snow and D’Amico, “The Drum Circle Project,” 15.

*Extra-curricular* refers to activities such as rehearsals and performances held beyond the regular school day.<sup>106</sup> Participation in extra-curricular activities is often optional. Directors who are compensated for leading extra-curricular ensembles often receive remuneration in the form of a stipend or contract pay.<sup>107</sup>

*Social and emotional learning/SEL* encompasses the ability to recognize and control emotions, form positive relationships with others, and effectively solve problems.<sup>108</sup> SEL encourages independence, confidence, self-regulation, accountability, and empowerment so that students eventually feel comfortable participating in and leading the group through activities of varying degrees of challenges.<sup>109</sup> The following five core competences comprise SEL: the ability to recognize and identify the emotions or self, or self-awareness; the ability to effectively regulate the emotions, behaviors, and thoughts of self, referred to as self-management; social awareness involves understanding the perspective of others; relationship skills are the tools children possess to shape and maintain healthy, positive relationships; and the ability to make responsible decisions concerning personal behavior and social interactions, known as responsible decision-making skills.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> John L. Benham, *Music Advocacy: Moving from Survival to Vision* (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2016), 41.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Zins and Elias, "Social and Emotional Learning: Promoting the Development," 234.

<sup>109</sup> Jennifer StGeorge and Emily Freeman, "Social-Emotional Learning Through a Drumming Intervention," *Approaches* 12, no. 1 (2020): 38, accessed July 7, 2020, <https://approaches.gr/stgeorge-a20181112/>.

<sup>110</sup> Oberle et al., "Establishing Systemic Social and Emotional Learning Approaches," 280.

A *pedagogy* is an approach engaged when teaching.<sup>111</sup> Pedagogy also encompasses the practice of learning.<sup>112</sup> A pedagogy can follow a rigid or relaxed framework and provides the educator with a structure for delivering instruction.<sup>113</sup>

*Assessment* involves evaluating outcomes to determine whether progress has been made and where assistance is needed.<sup>114</sup> When used with fidelity, assessments help inform the pedagogical processes of teaching.<sup>115</sup> Self-assessment provides students with the opportunity to reflect on their own drumming performance during the rehearsals as well as their emotional well-being immediately before and after each rehearsal.

A *Title I* school qualifies for grant funding as a result of meeting criteria pertaining to families with low-income levels.<sup>116</sup> Funds are made available for the purpose of providing every student with fair and equal access to high-quality opportunities in education.<sup>117</sup> The campus for which the study was based qualifies as Title I with a high percentage of low-income households. Title I funding, therefore, can be utilized for campus-wide achievement efforts and can also be combined with other federal and state funding in a variety of programming options.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Dyson et al., “Educators’ Experiences,” 626.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Lashley, “Measuring Self-Efficacy Development in Drumming Skills,” 27-8.

<sup>115</sup> Benham, *Music Advocacy*, 43.

<sup>116</sup> “Understanding the Unique Needs of Title I Students,” Blog Posts, last modified December 15, 2016, accessed February 19, 2022, <https://www.lexialearning.com/blog/understanding-unique-needs-title-i-students>.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

## Summary

The research conducted in this study sought to examine the perception by fifth-grade students and parents/guardians of the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on the students' social-emotional learning while attending a Title I school situated within a suburban school district in North Texas. While research exists concerning the relationships between social-emotional learning of children and adults and their engagement in music learning, ensemble participation, and drumming ensemble participation, this qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study addressed a gap regarding the topic of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation and its influence on SEL. The focus on fifth-grade students attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas provided information about a demographic group unexamined in the available literature. Music educators in similar environments can apply the insights gained through the research to further inform extra-curricular ensemble instruction, social-emotional development, and cross-curricular pedagogical decisions.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Overview

The purpose of this qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study was to examine student and parent/guardian perceptions of the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on the social-emotional learning of fifth-grade students attending a Title I school within a suburban, North Texas school district. Literature research indicates a place where the process of learning within a drumming ensemble and social-emotional development meet. Examination of drumming practices and instruction in social-emotional development provides a foundation supporting the outcomes of this study involving students in a North Texas school district attending a suburban Title I school.

Chapter Two presents a review of literature relevant to the topic studied. A systematic review of the literature was conducted to examine potential connections between music participation and social-emotional learning in a Title I environment. The first section includes the theoretical framework surrounding social-emotional learning and musical ensemble participation. The second section of Chapter Two begins with reviews of literature defining and contextualizing social-emotional learning and music ensemble participation. This section continues with analyses of common pedagogical approaches in both social-emotional learning and drumming ensembles as well as the shared focus between both pedagogies on leadership, restoration, and relationships. The second section of Chapter Two also describes the effects of general music learning and ensemble participation on social-emotional development, including increasing self-confidence, self-control, and positive peer interactions, and concludes with a discussion of literature defining and describing Title I and its significance both to education in general as well as specifically to music education. Chapter Two wraps up with an analysis of the

literature and how the study addresses a gap in the research concerning extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation and how the social-emotional learning of fifth-grade students in a Title I environment is affected.

### Theoretical Framework

An interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) was conducted as a way of making meaning from student and parent/guardian perceptions of the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on social-emotional learning.<sup>119</sup> An inquiry design closely connected to philosophical and psychological foundations, the qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study involved interviewing participants and their parents/guardians.<sup>120</sup> The research included what Creswell and Creswell described as “the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants.”<sup>121</sup> More specifically, the IPA approach sought to orient the fluidity of the participants’ perceptions of drumming-influenced SEL by way of personal narratives in juxtaposition to static objective events.<sup>122</sup> The researcher followed a semi-structured interview format with a set of questions applied to guide the interview and which then allowed opportunities to probe ideas or interests raised by the participants.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Katarzyna Peoples, *How to Write a Phenomenological Dissertation: A Step-by-Step Guide* (Los Angeles, SAGE Publications, Inc., 2021), 117.

<sup>120</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2018), 13.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Virginia Eatough and Jonathan A. Smith, “Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis,” in *Analysing Qualitative Data in Psychology*, ed. Evanthia Lyons and Adrian Coyle (London: SAGE Publication, Ltd., 2007), 36.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 41-2.

## Howard Gardner: Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Psychologist Howard Gardner researched cognitive development from the perspective of his personal experiences as a musician and avid participant in other areas of the arts.<sup>124</sup> Gardner's early experiences learning to play the piano contributed to his later recognition of the general absence of the arts in scientific literature and thus propelled his desire to identify a place for music and the arts in academic psychology.<sup>125</sup> From the context of this arts-minded perspective, Gardner developed his theory of multiple intelligences while composing a chronicle of "what had been established about human cognition through discoveries in the biological and behavioral sciences."<sup>126</sup> Unlike previous yet incongruent research purporting multiple intelligences, Gardner's work uncovers substantial validation from a diversity of sources as to the existence of autonomous intelligences bearing distinct characteristics.<sup>127</sup> He concluded that the intelligences are localized within different areas of the brain, and unimproved intelligences have the potential for later development when applied as a framework for instruction.<sup>128</sup>

Tests assessing children's abilities to apply language and think abstractly were consistently and liberally, almost exclusively, administered to measure intelligence for over three-quarters of a century.<sup>129</sup> While recognized as a significant advancement in psychology and

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<sup>124</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, ix.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., x.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>128</sup> Sergey Alekseevich Sedov, "Modern Lessons' Construction Based On the Taxonomy of Pedagogical Objectives and the Multiple Intelligences Theory," *International Journal of Educational Management* 33, no. 2 (2019): 253, accessed June 19, 2022, <https://www-emerald-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJEM-01-2018-0029/full/html>.

<sup>129</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 16-7.

the measurement of intelligence, these instruments favor environments of formal schooling as well as students accustomed to standardized written assessments.<sup>130</sup> Intelligent quotient assessments, commonly referred to as IQ tests, offer isolated insights into disparate topics of knowledge without any indication of a person's future cognitive growth potential.<sup>131</sup> Gardner, disenchanted by the focus on an individual's IQ as the singular measurement of aptitude, sought to explain what he viewed as relatively independent competencies of human intellect.<sup>132</sup> In his efforts to expand the classifications for intellectual competencies, he acknowledged the never-ending progression of discovery through evidence emerging from observations across cultures, scientific research, and the need to review, organize, and advance educational study.<sup>133</sup> Yet Gardner held to his convictions that intelligence can indeed be identified and classified so as to prove beneficial to educators and researchers.<sup>134</sup>

Gardner determined two prerequisites must be present for an intellectual competence to qualify as an intelligence.<sup>135</sup> An individual must possess the capacity for resolution of difficulties or problems, potentially leading when appropriate to an effective outcome or product. Subsequently and in contribution to problem-solving skills, an inclination toward an intelligence means the individual is able to find or create problems, resulting in the attainment of new knowledge.<sup>136</sup> Therefore, according to Gardner, "the prerequisites are a way of ensuring that a

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<sup>130</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 17.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 64-5.



human intelligence must be genuinely useful and important, at least in certain cultural settings.”<sup>137</sup> Gardner viewed the prerequisites for the consideration or rejection of an intelligence as the acknowledgment and recognition of the value to society of human intellectual competencies.<sup>138</sup>

Certain characteristics serve to determine the legitimacy of a prospective intelligence, although no formula yet exists for determining whether or not an intellectual competence qualifies as an intelligence. Gardner stated that the dominant indicator of the presence of an intelligence is the potential for brain damage to result in the isolation of that faculty.<sup>139</sup>

Individuals who possess an exceptional human ability amidst unexceptional performances in other areas shed insight into the presence of an intelligence through the natural isolation of the competence.<sup>140</sup> The natural tendency for humans to engage in a system of symbols for

communicating knowledge and representation potentially serves to define an intelligence.<sup>141</sup>

Some of the other characteristics include the development of a core operation or set of operations, a recognizable developmental history in the individual of the intelligence, and tests conducted within experimental psychology demonstrate how certain abilities manifest themselves within the same intelligences.<sup>142</sup> In the wake of examination of what qualified (and disqualified) a competence as an intelligence, Gardner categorized intelligences as linguistic,

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<sup>137</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 65.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 67-8.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 70-1.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 68-70.

musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and personal, which consists of intrapersonal and interpersonal.

### Personal Intelligences

Gardner identified two distinct yet related personal intelligences: intrapersonal and interpersonal. The inward knowledge of self encompasses intrapersonal intelligence.<sup>143</sup> At its core, intrapersonal intelligence involves how and the extent to which someone accesses personal feelings: the discernment, labeling, symbolic coding, and engagement of emotions to guide choices in behavior.<sup>144</sup> Intrapersonal intelligence involves at its basic level the ability to perceive pleasure from pain and respond according to the distinction. A person with advanced intrapersonal intelligence detects and symbolizes feelings which are complex and highly differentiated.<sup>145</sup> Interpersonal intelligence involves looking outward and the core capacity to notice other individuals and make distinctions between their moods, motivations, temperaments, and intentions.<sup>146</sup> Typically, a young child possesses basic interpersonal intelligence, which includes the ability to detect the moods of people in the child's setting. Advanced interpersonal intelligence entails reading the desires and intentions of many other individuals and potentially acting upon this knowledge.<sup>147</sup>

Because symbolization and the interpretation of experiences varies across and within cultures, personal intelligences take on more forms than other intellectual competences.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 253.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 254.

Furthermore, both personal intelligences interact with, and act upon, each other, and understanding personal intelligences requires acknowledging the codependence of intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences.<sup>149</sup> Comprehension of personal intelligences also demands recognition of the cultural influences acting upon the symbolization of feelings and the shaping of sense of self, the latter of which, according to Gardner, balances the weights of inner feelings with pressures from other individuals.<sup>150</sup>

The development of personal intelligence begins with the relationship and interactions between an infant and the caregiver, most often the mother.<sup>151</sup> From toddler through preschool years, children learn to understand the world symbolically in addition to physical and sensory discernment.<sup>152</sup> Gardner referred to the five-year period between the beginning of the school years and the inception of adolescence as middle childhood.<sup>153</sup> During middle childhood, children position themselves within their network of friends while beginning to manipulate mentally the possible outcomes of interactions with individuals and groups by examining the perceived position of other people.<sup>154</sup> Moving into adolescence, young people cultivate their relationships based on psychological and emotional support, displaying a formation and maturation of identity through the intermingling of self-awareness and social awareness.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 255.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 256.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 260.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 264.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 265.

## Musical Intelligence

Musical talent emerges at an early age, often within the first couple of months of infancy, and prior to the appearance of other gifted abilities.<sup>156</sup> Environment and access to resources are known to influence the extent to which a child develops and exhibits musical competence. At the same time, the foundational elements of music, which include pitch, rhythm, and timbre, are central to varying degrees within the music from one culture to another and work together or independently to create a structure in which even the most inexperienced listener can find something to appreciate.<sup>157</sup> From infancy, a typical child begins developing the ability to sing as well as to match rhythmic structures. As a toddler, a child explores small, common intervals and the spontaneous creation of songs, and by school age, children can generally reproduce songs with which they are familiar.<sup>158</sup> While the growth of musical intelligence slows around the age of eight or nine, with the right training and cultural stimulation, children can attain musical achievement. Although the reasons are unclear, a correlation exists between the amount of musical training a student receives and the likelihood of drawing on both sides of the brain to solve problems.<sup>159</sup>

Gardner emphasized the need for a set of abilities which are core to all participation in the musical experiences of any culture.”<sup>160</sup> He stated that children who come in regular contact with music likely possess these core abilities.<sup>161</sup> He illustrated the progression of developing core

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<sup>156</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 105.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*

abilities of music intelligence through the processes engaged in musical composition, pointing out that composition begins at the point in which an idea manifests itself and begins to take shape.<sup>162</sup> The composer develops the musical idea, which always relates to, resembles, returns to, or references the original inspirational theme.<sup>163</sup> Some people possess the ability to compose music without hesitation. For any consumer of music, though, the ability to discern the content of musical material requires, to even a most basic extent, an understanding of compositional practices.<sup>164</sup> Those lacking a natural abundance of musical intelligence who receive proper training combined with musical exposure can develop the ability to quickly acquire requisite skills, the assimilation of which demonstrates Vygotsky's zone of proximal development.<sup>165</sup>

#### Relationships Between Personal Intelligence and Musical Intelligence

Music has a relationship with the intelligences through superficial properties held in common, although it does not share core operations with other intellectual competencies and is consequently considered by Gardner to be an autonomous intelligence.<sup>166</sup> Music induces, captures, and communicates knowledge about emotions; people, to varying degrees, possess and display emotions. Therefore, a natural intersection of musical intelligence and personal intelligence exists in emotions, a relationship that hints at a possible shared subcortical connection with feelings. At the time of Gardner's *Frames of Mind* publication, this suggestion

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<sup>162</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 107.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 109-10.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 133.

was supported primarily by anecdotal evidence, with only remote neurological proof available in the literature.<sup>167</sup>

### **Lev Vygotsky: Sociocultural Theory**

Psychologist Lev Vygotsky's writings included reflections on education, even though education is not philosophical by nature.<sup>168</sup> By proximity to the functions of thinking and the intellectual engagement involved within education, Vygotsky drew philosophy and education closer to a point of intersection.<sup>169</sup> Vygotsky saw the mind as social, necessitating the analysis of intellectual development in consideration of the external environment and not just within the individual.<sup>170</sup> Sociocultural theory emerged from Vygotsky's main ideas of how learning leads development.<sup>171</sup> Learning emerges from the mutual contributions of intellect and affect and does not occur in a vacuum or for its own sake.<sup>172</sup> Instead, learning happens as a result of children engaging in their surrounding communities of activity, whether at home, in school, or within structured or unstructured social settings.<sup>173</sup> Fundamentally, Vygotsky believed that higher mental functioning such as logical memory and thinking originates in the social life of humans.

Vygotsky introduced, per the sociocultural theory, the concept of a zone of proximal development (ZPD), a zone in which children can learn when provided assistance by others who

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<sup>167</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 131.

<sup>168</sup> Derry, *Vygotsky: Philosophy and Education*, 1.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>171</sup> Ninah Beliaevsky, "Revisiting Vygotsky and Gardner: Realizing Human Potential," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 40, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 2, accessed June 14, 2022, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4140226>.

<sup>172</sup> Hedges, "Contemporary Principles to Lead Understanding," 1057.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 1061.

are more capable in their families and cultures.<sup>174</sup> Another concept explored by Vygotsky included that of mediation, which Hedges explains as a term used to describe “the cultural tools and processes humans use to make sense and meaning from, experiences and events significant to their lives, including relationships with people.”<sup>175</sup> Vygotsky further investigated the idea that experiential and scientific concepts co-exist and mutually contribute to the learning of children, with the former gradually recontextualized into the latter, usually through mediation.<sup>176</sup> He believed that socio-dramatic play specifically and play in general held the most significant position in forming a ZPD through children’s interactions with language, whether spoken or written.<sup>177</sup> Vygotsky reasoned that play, and therefore learning, must be authentic and relevant to the communities and cultures in which children grow. Consequently, communication, equipment, resources, and language play a fundamental role in learning through play.<sup>178</sup>

The ideas propelling the research of Barbara Rogoff align with Vygotsky’s play-centered, contextual learning concepts of sociocultural theory.<sup>179</sup> Rogoff’s work indicates how the willingness and eagerness of children to participate in informal community activities defines their learning experiences.<sup>180</sup> Although often assumed inferior to formal learning, informal learning offers a unique fusion of the emotional and intellectual domains absent from traditional theories. For this reason, Rogoff purports how the argument can be made in favor of

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<sup>174</sup> Hedges, “Contemporary Principles to Lead Understanding,” 1057.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 1058.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

reconsidering educational pedagogies, an argument supported by the ways in which informal learning is participatory, collaborative, and entrenched in meaningful activity.<sup>181</sup>

The research of Gordon Wells focuses on and demonstrates the role of the learner as a participant and the significance of adults creating authentic learning environments for children.<sup>182</sup> His ideas align with Vygotsky's concerning the influence of play and the role of communication on intellectual development. Wells expands the qualifications of communications by, in Hedges' words, "noting that music, gesture, movement and dance are part of a broader communicative and representational toolkit that children draw on to express their motivations and messages."<sup>183</sup> As a way of ensuring engagement and motivation on the part of the learners, Wells promotes inquiry-oriented pedagogy and curriculum, which directly aligns with the argument presented by Judith Lindfors that inquiry and curiosity are universal.<sup>184</sup> Lindfors proposes that inquiry involves a child's character, skills, and knowledge while drawing on perspectives gained through a variety of experiences and the attempts to understand those experiences through questions which are personally meaningful to the child.<sup>185</sup>

Pedagogical practices, from Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective, include rich and dynamic informal strategies selected with consideration given to the topic, content, and context. However, regardless of the intentionality of pedagogical decisions and implementation by the educator, the adult holds a position of power in relation to the child. Peer relationships, therefore,

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<sup>181</sup> Hedges, "Contemporary Principles to Lead Understanding," 1059.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 1059-60.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 1060.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 1061.



hold an important position in sociocultural learning because of increased reciprocity in power and reduced limits or constraints on learning through exploration.<sup>186</sup> The significance of play as a zone of proximal development leads to the realization and processing of children’s reality, experiences, and understandings.<sup>187</sup>

Vygotsky believed that the environments in which children learn include interactions between what is personal and what is social for children.<sup>188</sup> When reflecting on a child’s social and emotional development, the environment must be taken into consideration as playing a part in learning.<sup>189</sup> The setting and circumstances around which social-emotional learning occurs influence the outcomes, creating what Vadenboncoeur and Collie describe as a unified function between experiences in social environments and the psychological operations within human relationships.<sup>190</sup> According to Daniels, the design and practice of the school environment “constitutes a form of collective social activity with specific forms of interpersonal communication.”<sup>191</sup> The relationship, dialectic in nature, is therefore affected by the interactions between interpersonal and socio-cultural levels of association.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Hedges, “Contemporary Principles to Lead Understanding,” 1063.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> Jennifer A. Vadenboncoeur and Rebecca J. Collie, “Locating Social and Emotional Learning in School Environments: A Vygotskian Perspective on Learning as Unified,” *Mind, Culture, and Activity* 20, no. 3 (July 2013): 205, accessed June 12, <https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/full/10.1080/10749039.2012.755205>.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 205-6.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>191</sup> Harry Daniels et al., “Changing Schools: A Study of Primary Secondary Transfer Using Vygotsky and Bernstein,” *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 40, no. 7 (2019): 902, accessed May 4, 2022, <https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/pdf/10.1080/01425692.2019.1601546?needAccess=true>.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

## Related Literature

### Drumming

Drumming in a group provides opportunities to develop social and emotional growth consistent with assets gained through positive youth development.<sup>193</sup> A sense of community, inclusion, and equality emerges from the circular formation in which group drumming is often conducted.<sup>194</sup><sup>195</sup> For many cultures, drumming offers a relevant and integral means of non-verbal, rhythmic dialogue engaged in the functions of communication.<sup>196</sup> Silverman explains that, “viewed globally, ‘music’ is a vastly diverse and multifaceted personal, artistic, social, cultural, historical, spiritual, and gendered human practice.”<sup>197</sup> Silverman further states how, in many cultures, music does not stand alone as a singular act of performance but instead connects the cultural and social contexts in which musical activities such as drumming, dancing, and singing occur.<sup>198</sup>

Drumming brings together a group of learners working toward a common outcome through the shaping of social relationships formed within the creation of music.<sup>199</sup> Research suggests that participation in drumming activities promotes a young person’s development of

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<sup>193</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming,” 2.

<sup>194</sup> Elizabeth Mackinlay, “An ABC of Drumming: Children’s Narratives About Beat, Rhythm and Groove in a Primary Classroom,” *British Journal of Music Education* 31, no. 2 (2014): 211, accessed May 11, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1539320810/fulltextPDF/8535808B22BA49C1PQ/1?accountid=12085>.

<sup>195</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming,” 2.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Marissa Silverman, “I Drum, I Sing, I Dance: An Ethnographic Study of a West African Drum and Dance Ensemble,” *Research Studies in Music Education* 40, no. 1 (2018): 5, accessed May 12, 2022, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1177/1321103X17734972>.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

<sup>199</sup> Mackinlay, “An ABC of Drumming,” 223.

discipline, teamwork, respect for others, and enhanced listening and communication skills, as well as benefits such as boosting the immune system and accelerating physical healing.<sup>200</sup>

Additionally, Mackinlay refers to “John Dewey’s simple but powerful statement that any act of expression in education is an expression of excitement.”<sup>201</sup> Working collectively in a drumming ensemble stimulates cooperation, synchronization, imitation, and learning with and through the work of others.<sup>202</sup> Ho et al. describe how the addition of group counseling into group drumming activities may lead to self-efficacy and increased collective efficacy as a result of the shared intentionality which emerges from drumming ensemble participation.<sup>203</sup>

Music is often generally connected with academic achievement as well as increases in positive attitude, self-reliance, and social aptitude.<sup>204</sup> Many cultures specifically associate drumming with rituals of healing. Because of its appeal, drumming in a group often leads to therapeutic benefits for young people, including opportunities for children to learn how to control anger, build interrelated and cohesive teams, improve self-esteem, and develop leadership skills.<sup>205</sup> With these considerations in mind, Faulkner et al. evaluated the *Discovering Relationship Using Music, Beliefs, Emotions, Attitudes, and Thoughts*, or DRUMBEAT program, in which the author noted that the program “builds on the therapeutic value of musical expression, integrating themes and discussions into the program structure that raise awareness of

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<sup>200</sup> Valerie Vinnard, “The Classroom Drum Circle Project: Creating Innovative Differentiation in Music Education,” *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin* 85, no. 2 (2018): 43, accessed May 11, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2457730734/fulltextPDF/685427DA94084AD0PQ/1?accountid=12085>.

<sup>201</sup> Mackinlay, “An ABC of Drumming,” 222.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, 212.

<sup>203</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming,” 2.

<sup>204</sup> Faulkner et al., “It Is Not Just Music and Rhythm,” 32.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

the social factors that are critical in developing healthy relationships with others.”<sup>206</sup> Faulkner et al. reported observable increased prosocial behavior and decreased antisocial/negative behavior in the participant group compared to the control group.<sup>207</sup>

Ho et al., because of the increased social, mental, and emotional risks for children in socioeconomically disadvantaged households, studied how low-income fifth-grade students were affected by participation in group drumming sessions inclusive of group counseling activities.<sup>208</sup> The quantitative research assessed fifty-four students between two intervention groups and forty-seven students within two control groups. The drumming practices were developed jointly by a drum circle mediator, an educator in public health, and the school counselor. Drumming patterns and rhythms reflected cultural diversity, and session themes focused on elements central to social-emotional development, such as self-esteem, self-awareness, awareness of others, empathy, team building, and managing stress and anger.<sup>209</sup> Ho et al. reported overall significant improvements in the intervention groups compared to the control groups in multiple areas of the study.<sup>210</sup> The outcomes suggest social-emotional benefits for low-income students participating in group drumming with additional group counseling activities.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Faulkner et al., “It Is Not Just Music and Rhythm,” 32.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, 34-5.

<sup>208</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming,” 1-2.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

## Social-Emotional Learning

Research demonstrates the essential role social and emotional learning plays in children’s successes, in learning as well as in life.<sup>212</sup> Studies indicate how the development of social-emotional skills may carry as much significance in understanding students’ future successes as their cognitive or academic skills.<sup>213</sup> Social-emotional learning embraces five interrelated core competencies reflective of behavioral, affective, and cognitive domains: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making skills.<sup>214</sup>

The term *social and emotional learning* places a positive framework of emphasis around learning within social and emotional contexts, even though other names and descriptions are applied interchangeably with SEL.<sup>215</sup> CASEL defines social and emotional learning as the progression a child follows to assimilate and employ the skills, knowledge, and outlooks “to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.”<sup>216</sup> Oberle et al. explain social and emotional learning as “the process of providing all children and adolescents with the opportunities to learn, acquire, and practise [*sic*] the social-emotional competencies needed to succeed in life.”<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Oberle et al., “Establishing Systemic Social and Emotional Learning Approaches,” 277.

<sup>213</sup> Jones and Doolittle, “Social and Emotional Learning: Introducing the Issue,” 5.

<sup>214</sup> Oberle et al., “Establishing Systemic Social and Emotional Learning Approaches,” 279.

<sup>215</sup> Jones and Doolittle, “Social and Emotional Learning: Introducing the Issue,” 3.

<sup>216</sup> “Fundamentals of SEL,” Fundamentals of SEL, accessed April 23, 2022, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

<sup>217</sup> Oberle et al., “Establishing Systemic Social and Emotional Learning Approaches,” 279.

## Social-Emotional Learning Pedagogies

Educators intent on implementing social-emotional learning pedagogies at times encounter barriers that interfere with, delay, or prevent efforts to affect SEL practices in the classroom, school, and even in the community.<sup>218</sup> In the early stages of SEL implementation, concerns center on the lack of scientific evidence around the existence of emotional intelligence.<sup>219</sup> Additionally, inconsistent definitions of social-emotional learning challenge the practices engaged to increase social and emotional maturity, resulting in an imbalanced focus on individual growth rather than social engagement, belonging, and relationship development.<sup>220</sup> Over time, however, gaps are acknowledged between social-emotional needs and social-emotional learning pedagogies, which lead to an expansion of programs and increases in the diversity of social and emotional needs addressed through SEL instruction.<sup>221</sup> As a result of the tremendous pedagogical development, Vadenboncoeur and Collie propose consideration of SEL approaches which connect the social practices within schools to social and emotional values.<sup>222</sup>

Social-emotional learning requires some manifestation of social-emotional instruction, whether direct or indirect, conscious or intuitive, subtle or overt. Sound SEL pedagogies center around relationships and are designed to expand students' social-emotional competencies and skills within supportive and caring environments.<sup>223</sup> SEL programs generally involve engaging in

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<sup>218</sup> Vadenboncoeur and Collie, "Locating Social and Emotional Learning," 204.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 204-5.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>223</sup> Oberle et al., "Establishing Systemic Social and Emotional Learning Approaches," 282-3.

any of the following general approaches: through alterations to the school climate or environment, usually through modifications to teacher practices and interactions with students, or by making adjustments to schoolwide expectations and rules; by direct instruction of specific SEL skills taught through a specific curriculum; or through the influence of students' self-perceptions as well as students' views and opinions of their environments and others.<sup>224</sup>

Consideration must be given to the diversity of needs of the student population, including recognition of and attention to cultural backgrounds and the ways in which students identify with their respective cultures.

### **Leader In Me**

The *Leader in Me* (LIM) approach, based on the principles of leadership explored in Stephen R. Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, promotes leadership in learners of all ages by engaging the unique talents and creativity of every member of a school community.<sup>225</sup>

Covey et al. explain how *Leader in Me* "starts with the belief that there is greatness in every student and every staff member."<sup>226</sup> Through LIM, leadership manifests itself both in the ways a person manages personal choices, behaviors, and purpose as well as in how someone shares knowledge, inspires others, and guides groups toward achieving goals.<sup>227</sup>

The 7 Habits follow a progression aligned with the five competencies of social-emotional learning. The first three Habits, *Be Proactive*, *Begin with the End in Mind*, and *Put First Things First*, focus on the independence of the individual, and each of these three Habits contributes to

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<sup>224</sup> Jones and Doolittle, "Social and Emotional Learning: Introducing the Issue," 7.

<sup>225</sup> Stephen R. Covey et al., *The Leader in Me*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2008): 11-12.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 38.

the expansion of self-awareness and self-management.<sup>228</sup> The move from inward growth to the outward development of relationship skills and social awareness emerges through the application of Habits 4 through 6, which include *Think Win-Win*, *Seek First to Understand then to be Understood*, and *Synergize*.<sup>229</sup> Responsible decision-making, the fifth SEL competence, is the merger of inner and outer maturation of self, just as Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw encompasses the whole person and the meaningful contributions made by individuals.<sup>230</sup>

Teaching the natural sequence of the 7 Habits in *Leader in Me* transpires through integrated instruction, direct lessons, and modeling.<sup>231</sup> The most common approach to teaching the Habits is incorporating them into instruction, often through connections found in stories but also by way of inserting relevant Habits into lessons of any subject.<sup>232</sup> Direct lessons are LIM lessons taught independently of other subject areas and are common in schools consistently implementing the LIM approach.<sup>233</sup> Teachers utilize a wide variety of instructional strategies to engage students in learning the 7 Habits in much the same way they teach content area material.<sup>234</sup> While direct lessons and integrated instruction deliver significant support for the way students learn leadership characteristics, modeling of the 7 Habits by all adult school personnel holds the highest priority in the LIM approach to learning and practicing the habits.<sup>235</sup> Modeling

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<sup>228</sup> Covey et al., *The Leader in Me*, 43.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., 53.



of leadership behavior is considered to be one of the most influential factors shaping academic success in top-performing urban schools.<sup>236</sup>

Goal setting is a critical component of self-efficacy and the advancement toward increasingly challenging goals over time.<sup>237</sup> The LIM approach places heavy emphasis on setting and tracking significantly important goals. One tool commonly used in LIM for tracking and acknowledging goal progress is Leadership Notebooks, in which students preserve their goals, progress monitors, leadership reflections, and a showcase of their best or favorite work.<sup>238</sup> Specific, timely, steady, and intentional feedback from a variety of stakeholders, not just the classroom teacher, creates a pulse of accountability essential to keeping students on track with goals and encouraging progress and adjustments toward future goal advancement.<sup>239</sup> Achieving challenging goals provides a sense of accomplishment which contributes to a student's social-emotional development.<sup>240</sup>

Successful leadership maturation embraces the contributions of families as well as stakeholders from the surrounding community. Because the LIM approach seeks to develop the whole person, the 7 Habits can be taught and applied at home in much the same ways as in the school environment. Whether by integrating the Habits into activities or tasks already performed at home, directly teaching a Habit through practical application, or modeling the desired behavior, adults create home atmospheres that reinforce the social-emotional development of

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<sup>236</sup> Covey et al., *The Leader in Me*, 53.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

their children.<sup>241</sup> Positive community connections demonstrate *Habit 4: Think Win-Win* when they result in mutually purposeful contributions between schools and businesses. Covey et al. state how “interacting with leaders from the community—artists, businesspeople, health experts, etc.—opens students’ eyes to new vistas.”<sup>242</sup> The social-emotional learning which emerges through the practice and application of the 7 Habits promotes the development of each child as a lifelong meaningful member of society.

### **Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse students comprise the majority of school populations across the US.<sup>243</sup> At the same time, the educator population includes mostly middle-class females who identify as White.<sup>244</sup> Engaging culturally responsive teaching practices in support of SEL instruction reduces the cultural disparity between educators and students. Barnes defines culturally responsive SEL as reinforcing and teaching SEL competencies by way of students’ frames of reference and their lived experiences.<sup>245</sup> Preparations for culturally responsive teaching involve teachers expanding their understanding of cultural diversity, constructing culturally relevant standards, creating a community expressive of care and interest

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<sup>241</sup> Covey et al., *The Leader in Me*, 140-1.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

<sup>243</sup> Tia Navelene Barnes and Kathleen McCallops, “Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Teaching SEL,” *Journal for Multicultural Education* 13, no. 1 (22 March 2019): 71, accessed May 24, 2022, <https://www-emerald-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/insight/content/doi/10.1108/JME-07-2017-0044/full/html>.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>245</sup> Tia Navelene Barnes, “Changing the Landscape of Social Emotional Learning in Urban Schools: What Are We Currently Focusing On and Where Do We Go From Here?” *The Urban Review* 51, no. 54 (November 2019): 600, accessed May 24, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-019-00534-1>.

in cultural diversity, developing an understanding of cross-cultural communications, and cultivating cultural similarities in classroom instruction.<sup>246</sup>

### RULER Approach

An SEL intervention program known as the RULER Approach was engaged in a study conducted by Barnes and McCallops to determine its perceived effectiveness as a culturally responsive intervention.<sup>247</sup> Focused on five critical skills of social and emotional competencies, RULER stands for “recognizing emotion in the self and others, understanding the causes and consequences of emotion, labeling emotion accurately, expressing emotion in socially appropriate ways and regulating emotions effectively.”<sup>248</sup> Children, parents, and school staff members who experienced the RULER Approach reported improvements in emotional, social, and academic competencies as well as the classroom environment.<sup>249</sup> Participants in the study, however, “saw training on the use of culturally responsive practices as foundational and something that should be achieved before an SEL intervention or training in SEL strategies is attempted.”<sup>250</sup> Educators viewed training in culturally responsive practices as an essential precursor to the implementation of SEL intervention.

### Keepin’ It REAL

Barnes, in a 2019 review of SEL interventions within urban schools over the past two decades, suggests that implementation of social and emotional learning inclusive of culturally

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<sup>246</sup> J. Christopher Roberts and Amy Beegle, *World Music Pedagogy: Elementary Music Education* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 3.

<sup>247</sup> Barnes and Kathleen McCallops, “Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy,” 72.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 78.

responsive practices supports students' mental health and increases the engagement levels of participants.<sup>251</sup> Students in urban schools engage with that which interests them, and Barnes explains that culturally responsive teaching “not only meets students' needs but also acknowledges and builds on strengths within the individual student, their family, and community.”<sup>252</sup> Barnes reports nine out of sixty-six SEL interventions studied included culturally responsive strategies, the most common of which is the *Keepin' It REAL* curriculum.<sup>253</sup> A ten-week substance use prevention program, culturally responsive actions of the *Keepin' It REAL* program include the inclusion of cultural values and the use of narratives from a variety of ethnic groups, which are incorporated into performance-based components of instruction.<sup>254</sup>

#### Restorative Practices

Children reap benefits from interventions focused on social and emotional development when such programs are implemented with fidelity.<sup>255</sup> Students considered to be at-risk encounter challenges resulting from the circumstances in which they live and the stress borne as a result of their environment. In turn, the decisions they make and behaviors they display are often in response to what happens around them, circumstances for which they have little or no control.<sup>256</sup> Because of these behaviors, children require a safe, compassionate, and positive school environment responsive to their ethnicities and cultures. Creating a culture of acceptance

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<sup>251</sup> Barnes, “Changing the Landscape,” 600.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 607.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Marisangela Siqueira de Souza, Adriana Benavides Soares, and Clarissa Pinto Pizarro de Freitas, “Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Program Among Fifth Graders, Three and Six Months Later,” *Revista Colombiana de Psicologia* 31, no. 1 (2022): 37, accessed May 24, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.15446/rcp.v31n1.83042>.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

within the school helps restore students' healing and regain their confidence.<sup>257</sup> One such SEL approach, restorative practices, focuses on the development of relationships, although most studies focus on implementing restorative practices at the secondary school level with minimal research at the elementary school level.<sup>258</sup>

Relationships are vital to the method of restorative practices. Ingraham states that “increasing the quality of relationships through a positive response to discipline among all members of the school community”<sup>259</sup> leads to increased student perceptions of safety, trust, and affirmative relationships. Safety and trust are born in and developed through restoration when someone emotionally, mentally, or physically harms another individual.<sup>260</sup> Ingraham's study of restorative practices takes place in a culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) elementary school. The restorative practices program is designed to align with the community's cultural practices and values and involves a variety of stakeholders, including students, parents, and school personnel.<sup>261</sup> Collaboration results in school-wide, preventive and CLD-appropriate services supporting mental health and life skills.<sup>262</sup> Data are collected through focus groups, interviews, and open-ended survey questions. After three years of research, the outcomes of intervention reveal fewer negative behaviors as indicated by a significant decrease in referrals,

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<sup>257</sup> Colette L. Ingraham, “Consultation and Collaboration to Develop and Implement Restorative Practices in a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Elementary School,” *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* 26, no. 4 (2016): 355, accessed May 25, 2022, <https://www.tandfonline.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/full/10.1080/10474412.2015.1124782>.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, 356.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, 361.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, 368.

from 120 in the first year to twenty in the third year,<sup>263</sup> as well as increases in collaborative relationships and additional support for restorative practices.<sup>264</sup>

**Restorative Rhythms.** Relationships contribute to social and emotional development. At the same time, self-awareness and self-efficacy hold equally important positions in how individuals respond to events, particularly trauma, in their lives. One experience that forms behavior is interacting with music.<sup>265</sup> Music contributes to the construction of the meaning of self through cultural and emotional connections with the experience of music, whether creating, playing, listening or any combination of musical participation.<sup>266</sup>

Harmon and Arpajian, acknowledging the connections between music and emotional recovery, chose to investigate the possible effects of therapeutic group drumming on the ability to address the emotions of individuals diagnosed with cancer and going through treatment.<sup>267</sup> They engaged the *Restorative Rhythms* curriculum which “uses music to contribute to the holistic care environment for people afflicted by cancer.”<sup>268</sup> The program consisted of four one-hour classes per week for four weeks. Each class included basic instruction on techniques; playing led by the facilitator, often accompanied by well-known music; improvisation, usually with participant-chosen songs; discussion about the experience of making music; and

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<sup>263</sup> Ingraham, “Consultation and Collaboration,” 370.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*, 365.

<sup>265</sup> Justin Harmon and Alexandra Arpajian, “*Restorative Rhythms: Drumming as Healing*,” *World Leisure Journal* 62, no. 1 (2020): 68, accessed May 26, 2022, <https://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/full/10.1080/16078055.2019.1611629>.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

opportunities for participants to create their own music for the purpose of telling a story.<sup>269</sup> Consistent with restorative practices, group drumming was structured in a circle and adhered to four simple expectations or norms aligned with coping mechanisms: tune into self and others, listen more than talking, leave space for others, and be in the moment.<sup>270</sup> Participants reflected that group drumming provided an outlet for negative or confusing emotions accompanied by a new skill that could be engaged in other areas of their lives.<sup>271</sup>

### **Drumming Pedagogies**

Drumming pedagogies vary as widely as the diversity of cultures from which they were originally derived.<sup>272</sup> The purposes of the approaches differ between pedagogies as well. Drumming is utilized to teach music literacy by embedding musical elements into the practices and performances engaged to meet curriculum standards.<sup>273</sup> Some instructional approaches focus on the acquisition of skills that support academic learning. Other drumming pedagogies concentrate on techniques and methods intended to cultivate social and emotional development.<sup>274</sup> When selecting a drumming pedagogy, educators must consider programs that align with the desired outcomes for students. Music educators are obligated to examine the contents and methods employed to achieve musical learning when examining and contemplating engaging in a drumming program.

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<sup>269</sup> Harmon and Arpajian, “*Restorative Rhythms*,” 72.

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>272</sup> Wood, et al., ““To the Beat,”” 71.

<sup>273</sup> Vinnard, “The Classroom Drum Circle Project, 43.

<sup>274</sup> Wood, et al., ““To the Beat,”” 71.

## Drum Circles

A drum circle typically includes a group of people playing drums or smaller handheld percussion instruments, and is a pedagogical approach born through a movement beginning in the 1990s.<sup>275</sup> Although based on the Drum Circle model, contemporary drum circle pedagogies do not necessarily follow a singular standard instructional approach but instead consist of musical engagement addressing the common purpose of making music in a group setting.<sup>276</sup>

Drum circles, often facilitated by one or two people, are driven by the community environment they foster. Some facilitators design instruction around dedicated rhythm practice while others emphasize improvisation without a pre-determined curriculum path.<sup>277</sup>

Snow and D'Amico's qualitative study includes twelve sessions lasting one hour each and conducted within the school day.<sup>278</sup> The co-facilitated sessions were led by a music therapy clinician serving as the lead researcher and by a professional percussionist who taught private lessons.<sup>279</sup> Each session focused on acquiring and practicing basic techniques on djembes in hand-drumming used as initial warm-ups for each session. Rhythms were introduced and included in rehearsal activities such as drum battles, call and response, and drum dialogues.<sup>280</sup> Participants were encouraged to musically lead the group and to support, respect, and listen to each other. Approximately half of the students reported that participation in the group helped

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<sup>275</sup> Snow and D'Amico, "The Drum Circle Project," 14-5.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., 18-9.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., 19.



increase self-confidence and motivation and contributed to reduced anger and stress.<sup>281</sup> Most of the participants described how they felt better about themselves as a result of working in a drumming ensemble.<sup>282</sup>

### Rhythm-based strategies

Drumming mimics the essential functions of life through beat, pulse, and rhythm.<sup>283</sup> Ross emphasized relationships between the human body, emotions, and music by stating “in harnessing this fundamental concept of rhythm as an organizing agent, rhythm-based strategies can be defined as the utilization of rhythmic elements to create, express, and guide successful therapeutic experiences.”<sup>284</sup> Rhythm-based strategies provided individual and group engagement opportunities accessible to everyone, including students with varying degrees of disabilities.<sup>285</sup> Instruction was designed to meet each person’s initial functioning skill level and then evolved in accordance with the needs of participants and growth of group contributions.<sup>286</sup> Application of rhythm-based strategies in Ross’s study revealed steady increases both in positive participant contributions and in demonstration of appropriate behavior.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Snow and D’Amico, “The Drum Circle Project,” 34.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Sherri Ross, “Utilizing Rhythm-Based Strategies to Enhance Self-Expression and Participation in Students With Emotional and Behavioral Issues: A Pilot Study,” *Music Therapy Perspectives* 34, no. 1 (2016): 100, accessed June 8, 2022, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1797893739/4E1749BEBEA44DBAPQ/24?accountid=12085>.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid., 104.

## World Music Drumming

World Music Drumming (WMD), an eighteen-month pilot project initiated in 1996, currently offers a curriculum comprised of thirty-two lessons spread over seven units.<sup>288</sup> Each unit culminates in an *Ensemble*, which is the assembling together of all musical parts. Taught using oral tradition, students of all ages and skill levels learn through observation and imitation.<sup>289</sup> Author of the WMD curriculum Will Schmid emphasized the significance of utilizing nonverbal instruction “to speed up the pace and to improve other forms of communication besides verbal clues.”<sup>290</sup> WMD units draw on the music and drumming traditions of the Caribbean and West Coast Africa, and learning orally/aurally focuses students’ listening and memory.<sup>291</sup>

The principal elements of the lessons incorporate the use of objectives, cultural connections, techniques, and assessments. The focus of World Music Drumming pedagogy is less about developing percussionists and more about the enjoyment derived from engaging in a drumming experience.<sup>292</sup> However, discipline in techniques on drums and auxiliary instruments contributes to self-control and an increased respect for musical traditions of other cultures.<sup>293</sup> A circular formation is recommended for rehearsals because the circle not only allows students to

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<sup>288</sup> Will Schmid, *World Music Drumming* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2015), 10.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*

hear and see each other but also aligns with musical structures in the African and Latin American cultures explored through WMD.<sup>294</sup>

Most of the WMD lessons introduce vocabulary words, while every session embraces a keyword that exemplifies some of the primary concepts taught within each independent lesson.<sup>295</sup> Examples of keywords include respect, focus, and listen; the words connect musical concepts and elements to social-emotional development, as in showing *respect* for the drums, *focusing* on the musical contributions of others, and *listening* to how one's part contributes to the musical product of the group.<sup>296</sup> Formal and informal formative assessments are extensions of the learning taking place in each WMD lesson. Summative assessments are included in the WMD curriculum as a tool for demonstrating what students know and are able to perform.<sup>297</sup>

#### World Music Pedagogy

World Music Pedagogy, although not specifically a drumming pedagogy, heavily emphasizes music performed with percussion instruments, naturally inclusive of drumming, and exposes students to a variety of music from cultures worldwide.<sup>298</sup> World Music Pedagogy consists of five dimensions, referred to as phases, in which students engage with music in varying capacities. The first phase, Attentive Listening, introduces children to music from a likely unfamiliar culture through a focused and guided listening experience.<sup>299</sup> Children interact with the music through drumming, movement, body percussion, clapping, or almost any musical

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<sup>294</sup> Schmid, *World Music Drumming*, 13.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*.

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>298</sup> Roberts and Beegle, *World Music Pedagogy*, 3.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

participation during the Engaged Listening dimension.<sup>300</sup> Similar to Engaged Listening, the third dimension of Enactive Listening involves students replicating as much as possible musical selections without the support of the selection.<sup>301</sup> Phase four, Creating World Music, involves what the name implies: creating music by extending, improvising, arranging, and composing.<sup>302</sup> The listening selection is placed into a cultural context within the fifth phase, Integrating World Music.<sup>303</sup>

Engaging in World Music Pedagogy begins with selecting a musical culture for exploration followed by the selection of music from within that culture. Care must be taken to consider the authenticity of musical content as well as the transmission of teaching and learning the musical selections.<sup>304</sup> Musical selection requires a mindfulness to the characteristics to which children's interests are drawn.<sup>305</sup> Furthermore, students need access to culturally diverse instruments in addition to those typically found in an elementary music classroom, and a high-quality sound system improves the experience when listening to music from cultures unique to students' own.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> Roberts and Beegle, *World Music Pedagogy*, 3.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid., 16-7.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid., 19.

## DRUMBEAT

The school-based approach *Discovering Relationships Using Music—Beliefs, Emotions, Attitudes, and Thoughts*, or DRUMBEAT, originally came into existence as a drug prevention program.<sup>307</sup> Developed through a combination of cognitive behavioral therapy and music, DRUMBEAT aims to improve social competencies and self-esteem and thereby reduce isolation and alienation.<sup>308</sup> Although not African drumming, the DRUMBEAT program shares the common theme of community building and musical accessibility with African drumming programs.<sup>309</sup>

DRUMBEAT requires ten weeks for program implementation, and the setup is in a drum circle with students playing hand drums.<sup>310</sup> Participants learn a variety of rhythms during the first six weeks. The final four weeks include the construction of the rhythms into an improvisational performance the students will share with the school.<sup>311</sup> Improvisation is critical both in personal expression as well as working cooperatively and connectedly with others.<sup>312</sup> Through learning how to improvise on the drums, students acquire skills needed to adapt to new situations.<sup>313</sup> No prior musical knowledge or experience is required to participate in DRUMBEAT.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>307</sup> Wood, et al., “To the Beat,” 72.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid.

<sup>309</sup> Simon Faulkner, “DRUMBEAT: In Search of Belonging,” *Youth Studies Australia* 30, no. 2 (June 2011): 13, accessed June 5, 2022, <https://search-informit-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/epdf/10.3316/ielapa.026584545409338>.

<sup>310</sup> Wood, et al., “To the Beat,” 72.

<sup>311</sup> Faulkner et al., “It Is Not Just Music and Rhythm,” 33.

<sup>312</sup> Faulkner, “DRUMBEAT: In Search of Belonging,” 10.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>314</sup> Faulkner et al., “It Is Not Just Music and Rhythm,” 33.

## Modern African Classical Drumming

In 1994, Meki Emeka Nzewi, a professor at the University of Nigeria, designed a program for drumming instruction known as Modern African Classical Drumming, or MACD.<sup>315</sup> MACD emerged from an interest in preserving indigenous African performing arts for future advancement.<sup>316</sup> In the case of djembe drumming, Nkosi and van Niekerk explain how preservation is achieved “by notating the drum music and capturing the indigenous idioms that informed it to fit into contemporary strategies of music learning and performance.”<sup>317</sup>

Three basic tones are applied when djembe drumming: slap tone, high tone, and bass.<sup>318</sup> Advancement as a performer depends on mastery and experience, not levels or grades.<sup>319</sup> Improvisation serves a fundamental role in both the musical intentions of drumming and as a medium for expressing emotions.<sup>320</sup> MACD is holistic, inclusive of whole-body performance while encompassing the African performing arts.<sup>321</sup> Furthermore, MACD functions as a communal activity, with the soloist serving more as a leader than in a virtuosic display of musicianship.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> David Absolum Nkosi and Caroline van Niekerk, “Modern African Classical Drumming: Contemporary African Drumming Practice for a Multicultural Music Curriculum,” *Muziki: Journal of Music Research in Africa* 14, no. 1 (18 September 2017): 124, accessed June 1, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2017.1324250>.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid., 126.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid., 133.

Djembe is the drum of choice for MACD, but any drum with a single membrane and wooden body serves as an adequate substitute.<sup>323</sup> Deep bass tones are created with cupped hands in the center of the drum, high tones are produced by striking the rim surface of the drum with index fingers, and slap tones involve a closed drum stroke created by four firm fingers slapped on the rim of the drum.<sup>324</sup> MACD utilizes Western rhythmic notation combined with symbols representing the drum tones.<sup>325</sup> In the evolution from oral tradition to notated rhythmic practice, compositions in MACD are written and read in the Western classical convention.<sup>326</sup> Five musical concepts guide MACD pedagogy: identify and create phrases; create movement; highlight different tones within repetitive musical ideas; balance dynamics; emphasize contrast by creating temperament.<sup>327</sup>

### **Summary**

Chapter Two was informed by the social, emotional, and musical considerations within the theoretical framework of Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and the social and emotional focuses of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory. Reviews of the literature also supplied data concerning the influences of musical involvement and music ensemble participation on social-emotional development in various learning settings. These studies included children and young people at varying stages of development and ranging in age from early elementary into adulthood. The researcher identified gaps in the literature concerning extra-curricular drumming

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<sup>323</sup> Nkosi and van Niekerk, "Modern African Classical Drumming," 128.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid., 129.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid., 135.

ensemble participation in a Title I elementary school. The research conducted in this study sought to examine the perceived effects on social-emotional learning of fifth-grade students participating in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble within a Title I elementary school in the northern region of Texas.



## CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

### Introduction

This qualitative research was conducted for the purpose of evaluating the perceptions of fifth-grade students and their parents/guardians concerning the effects of participation in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble on students' social and emotional learning while attending a Title I school within a North Texas suburban school district. To ascertain how students received and responded to the drumming ensemble and social-emotional learning pedagogies, the qualitative research engaged a hermeneutic interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach. The extra-curricular drumming ensemble was available to all students enrolled in fifth grade at Paul Elementary School, a Title I elementary campus within a suburban region of North Texas. Participants for the study were selected based on their longevity of attendance at PES. Interviews conducted with the student participants and their parents/guardians provided baseline and summative data concerning overall perceptions of each child's initial social and emotional condition and subsequent development over the duration of the research.

### Research Design

Phenomenological research provides insights into the events and circumstances contributing to and affected by a person's experiences and is driven by the objective of understanding the meaning of lived experiences.<sup>328</sup> The current study was conducted for the purpose of examining the phenomenon created by fifth-grade students' perceptions of the effects on social-emotional learning by extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation in a North Texas suburban Title I school. The research engaged a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological approach which utilized interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). The

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<sup>328</sup> Peoples, *How to Write a Phenomenological Dissertation*, 3.

objective of IPA was the exploration and examination of fifth-grade students' personal lived experiences and the ways in which participants made sense of those experiences within their own personal and social worlds, specifically the meaning held by the participants of particular events or experiences.<sup>329</sup> The IPA approach was dynamic and the researcher held an active position in the process.<sup>330</sup> The research was conducted through a two-stage process known as double hermeneutic, in which the participants attempted to make meaning from their lived drumming ensemble experiences followed by the researcher's endeavors to understand the participants' perceptions.<sup>331</sup> Throughout the study, the researcher adopted alternative analyses and interpretations of the participants' explanations of their experiences while also developing interrogative experiential accounts.<sup>332</sup>

All fifth-grade students at Paul Elementary School (PES) were offered the opportunity to take part in the extra-curricular drumming ensemble. Out of 74 fifth-grade students, eight agreed to join the ensemble. Paul Elementary School's population is highly transient, with an average of 38% of students transferring into or out of PES each year.<sup>333</sup> In an effort to minimize potential influences on social-emotional development from students' previous musical learning experiences with music educators other than the researcher, only members of the drumming ensemble in their fifth or sixth year attending PES were considered as prospective participants in

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<sup>329</sup> Eatough and Smith, "Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis," 35-6.

<sup>330</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>333</sup> "Class Roster: Attendance Report," Class Roster, accessed May 25, 2023, revised May 1, 2023, <https://tac.mckinneyisd.net/TAC/ClassRoster?SectionKey=1815122&CourseSession=1&Course=0560-95&Room=B101%20&RecordType=Course&Building=118&BuildingName=Albert%20and%20Iola%20Lee%20Davis%20Malvern%20Elem&Description=5th%20Grade%20Music&StaffID=116603&Certified=True&Cycles=T&Periods=6%20%20%20%20&MarkingPeriods=Q1%2C%20Q2%2C%20Q3%2C%20Q4>.

the study. Previous drumming experience was not a requisite to involvement in the drumming ensemble nor a requirement for participation in the study. All fifth-grade members of the ensemble eligible to contribute to the study were given the option to participate or remain in the group without taking part in the research. Of the ten eligible fifth-grade members of the drumming ensemble as well as their parents/guardians invited to participate in the research, three students and four adults accepted the invitation.

The three fifth-grade participants who volunteered to take part in the study completed interviews concerning self-perceptions of their personal social-emotional development. The parents/guardians of the student participants were interviewed independently of their children. For both students and adults, the interview format was semi-structured, guided by the organization of the questions and allowing the student participants and their parents/guardians opportunities to tell their stories.<sup>334</sup> In alignment with interpretive phenomenological analysis, the stories told through responses to the interview questions concentrated on perceptions by the student participants and their parents/guardians of the students' self-confidence, self-control, and abilities to conduct positive interactions with peers. The perceptions of participants' self-awareness varied: responses from participants and adults ranged from perceptions of minimal to adequate or strong perceptions of self-confidence, self-control, and positive peer interactions.

Follow-up interviews were conducted several weeks later to provide participants and parents/guardians the opportunity to again share their stories regarding their perceptions respectively of their own or their child's self-confidence, self-control, and ability to positively interact with peers. Analysis began with multiple detailed readings of the responses to gain a

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<sup>334</sup> Eatough and Smith, "Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis," 42.

complete perspective of participants' stories.<sup>335</sup> Emergent and consistent topics were identified, organized into thematic clusters, and examined against the data, then refined and examined for further thematic connections.<sup>336</sup> The researcher then produced an account describing the relationship between the participants' responses and the interpretive analysis conducted by the researcher of their responses.<sup>337</sup> The responses indicated minimal changes to the phenomenon of participants' perceptions of self-awareness. The answers given by parents/guardians suggested they perceived detectable increases in their child's self-awareness.

Thirty-five-minute drumming sessions were held before school on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Each session included a warm-up and a full lesson, condensed lesson, or partial lesson from the World Music Drumming program. Sessions were led primarily in the oral tradition but with limited verbal communication. The researcher taught WMD *Unit 3: Highlife*, a series of eight lessons centered around cultural connections to the West Coast of Africa and *Unit 4: Latin American 2-beat*, a six-lesson unit derived from music of the Caribbean.<sup>338 339</sup> Despite the contrast between *Unit 3* and *Unit 4* in representation of two different continents, similarities existed between certain rhythm patterns as well as the basic two-beat feel of the culminating *Ensemble* products (outcomes/performances) presented at the end of each Unit.<sup>340</sup> Shared qualities meant that the two Units were naturally compatible with each other in ways that many

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<sup>335</sup> Eatough and Smith, "Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis," 45.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid.

<sup>338</sup> Schmid, *World Music Drumming*, 40.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid., 57.

skills learned in *Unit 3* transferred to *Unit 4* and provided a foundation for assembling the rhythms into a cohesive product.

### Variables

This research focused on how both the fifth-grade study participants at a Title I campus situated in a suburban community in North Texas as well as the students' parents/guardians perceived the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on the student participants' social and emotional learning. The variables present in the study included social-emotional development and the content of the drumming sessions. The drumming lessons adhered to a suggested sequence for the selected Units from *World Music Drumming*. The perceptions of the participants derived from involvement with the drumming ensemble and the effects of participation on social-emotional learning.

### Questions and Hypotheses

The study was conducted with a focus on answering the following questions:

**Central RQ 1:** What are the perceptions of fifth-grade students regarding the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on social-emotional learning while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas?

**Sub-Question 1:** How are social-emotional learning pedagogies aligned with drumming ensemble pedagogies?

**Central RQ 2:** What are the perceptions of parents/guardians of fifth-grade students regarding the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on social-emotional learning while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas?

The following hypotheses were tested:

**H1:** The perceptions by fifth-grade students of the effects on social-emotional learning of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas will include increasing participants' self-confidence, self-control, and positive peer interactions.

**H2:** Social-emotional learning pedagogies may be aligned with drumming ensemble pedagogies through a shared focus on leadership, restoration, and relationships.

**H3:** The perceptions by parents/guardians of fifth-grade students of the effects on social-emotional learning of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas will include increasing participants' self-confidence, self-control, and positive peer interactions.

#### Researcher Positionality

The researcher, while conducting this study, operated in the role of music educator at Paul Elementary School, the school where the research was conducted. During that time, she was serving in her eighth year as the music teacher at PES, year twelve teaching in Texas public schools, and in her sixteenth year as a music educator. In addition to her teaching experience in Texas, the researcher taught music in public schools in Guam and Florida and served as a substitute teacher for the Department of Defense schools in Sicily, Italy. While teaching in Florida, the researcher served on a district curriculum and assessment team for elementary music education. The researcher completed Level I of World Music Drumming certification in 2018, holds Levels I and II of Kodaly certification, participated in numerous Orff-centered workshops, and led extra-curricular choirs and drumming ensembles over the course of her teaching career.

Each of the researcher's students received fifty minutes of music instruction from the researcher per week for the entirety of the school year. The curriculum included the exploration of musical elements and concepts through singing, movement, and playing instruments. The music teacher offered an extra-curricular choir and an extra-curricular drumming ensemble. Rehearsals for both extra-curricular ensembles were held before or after school in the music room of Paul Elementary. Because the study was designed to control for minimal social-emotional development in the musical learning setting, fifth-grade student attendance contributed to the researcher's positionality. Twenty-nine of the fifth-grade students attended the researcher's music classes for six consecutive years, from kindergarten through fifth grade. Fifteen of the fifth-grade students attended four to five years and eighteen attended two to three years. The school year in which the research was conducted was the first year twelve of the fifth-grade students attended Paul Elementary and therefore only attended the researcher's music classes for one year.

## Participants and Setting

### Population

Participants in this study were selected from the fifth-grade students participating in the extra-curricular drumming ensemble at Paul Elementary School. 64.9% (forty-eight) of students in fifth grade qualified for free or reduced lunch. Out of seventy-four students, twenty-one (28.4%) qualified for placement in the bilingual program as non-proficient in speaking, reading, and/or writing in English.<sup>341</sup> 39.2%, or twenty-nine, of the fifth-grade students attended PES consecutively for six years, from kindergarten into fifth grade.

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<sup>341</sup> "5<sup>th</sup> Grade Music," Class Roster, accessed May 26, 2023, last revised May 1, 2023, <https://tac.mckinneyisd.net/TAC/ClassRoster?SectionKey=1736389&CourseSession=1&Course=0560-95&Room=B101%20&RecordType=Course&Building=118&BuildingName=Albert%20and%20Iola%20Lee%20D>

## Setting

The population of the four most inhabited north Texas counties, including Collin, Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant, totaled 6,567,515 as of 2020, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.<sup>342</sup> At that time, the population of the county in which the study took place was estimated at 1,006,038.<sup>343</sup> 261,112 of that county's residents were under the age of eighteen, approximately 15% of the 1.7 million total children in the north Texas region.<sup>344</sup> 17,381 (6.7%) of the children in the county where the study was conducted lived in households deemed below the poverty thresholds, almost 10% lower than the north Texas total of 16.2%, or 273,263 children (see Table 1).<sup>345</sup> In 2020, the poverty thresholds for the forty-eight contiguous states ranged from \$17,839 for a two-person household (one child, one adult) to \$50,035 for a household with one adult and eight or more children.<sup>346</sup> 182,917 (70%) of all children residing in the county in which the study was performed were enrolled in public schools, compared to 68%, or 1,148,034, of all children in the North Texas region (see Table 2).<sup>347</sup>

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avis%20Malvern%20Elem&Description=5th%20Grade%20Music&StaffID=116603&Certified=True&Cycles=T&Periods=6%20%20%20%20&MarkingPeriods=Q1%2C%20Q2%2C%20Q3%2C%20Q4.

<sup>342</sup> "Age and Sex," American Community Survey, accessed July 1, 2022, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=denton%20county,%20tx%2Bcollin%20county,%20tx%2Bdallas%20county,%20tx%2Btarrant%20county,%20tx&tid=ACSST5Y2020.S0101>.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

<sup>344</sup> "Children Characteristics," American Community Survey, accessed July 1, 2022, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=denton%20county,%20tx%2Bcollin%20county,%20tx%2Bdallas%20county,%20tx%2Btarrant%20county,%20tx&tid=ACSST5Y2020.S0101>.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid.

<sup>346</sup> "Poverty Thresholds by Size of Family and Number of Children—2020," Poverty Thresholds, last revised May 9, 2022, accessed July 2, 2022, <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html>.

<sup>347</sup> "Children Characteristics," American Community Survey.



**Table 1: Children in poverty in the North Texas region**

County Name	Total Population of Children per County	Number of Children in Poverty	Percentage of Children in Poverty
Collin	261,112	17,381	6.7
Dallas	678,413	148,572	21.9
Denton	210,211	17,657	8.4
Tarrant	540,079	89,653	16.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,688,122</b>	<b>273,263</b>	<b>16.2</b>

**Table 2: Children attending public schools in the North Texas region**

County Name	Total Population of Children per County	Number of Children Attending Public Schools	Percentage of Children Attending Public Schools
Collin	261,112	182,917	70.0
Dallas	678,413	458,535	67.6
Denton	210,211	144,747	68.9
Tarrant	540,079	361,835	67.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,688,122</b>	<b>1,148,034</b>	<b>68.0</b>

The study took place on the Paul Elementary School campus, a school located within the region commonly referred to as North Texas and situated in a suburban community north of Dallas. PES is one of twenty elementary schools feeding into five middle schools and, subsequently, three high schools. Although PES receives Title I funding, PES belongs to a district that strives to provide equitable, state-of-the-art resources districtwide through budgeting and the allocation of bond monies.

#### Instrumentation

The research involved interviews with three students and four of their parents/guardians and was conducted as a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study utilizing interpretive phenomenological analysis. Both central research questions focused on student and parent/guardian *perceptions* of social-emotional learning. Conducting interviews, therefore, allowed adequate opportunities for the participants to openly express their personal views, insights, and opinions concerning the effects on SEL of participation in an extra-curricular

drumming ensemble. Participants in the study were fifth-grade students who took part in the extra-curricular drumming ensemble and who attended consecutive years at Paul Elementary School starting in kindergarten or first grade and continuing through fifth grade.

Parents/guardians of the fifth-grade student participants also were invited and took part in the research.

### Procedures

The intention of this qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological research was to make known student and parent/guardian perceptions of social and emotional development through the context of the lived experience of participating in a drumming ensemble. This section explains the research process that was undertaken, including how all participants were selected as well as a chronology describing the events of the study. The researcher sought and received IRB approval from Liberty University (approval number IRB-FY22-23-848), and permission was granted by the researcher's school district to conduct the study at Paul Elementary School.

### **Participant Recruitment**

All fifth-grade students at PES were offered the opportunity to join the extra-curricular drumming ensemble. Students were eligible to participate in the study if they attended PES for five or six consecutive years, starting in kindergarten or first grade. Their parents/guardians were given the opportunity to be part of the research. Consent forms were distributed to eligible and interested drumming ensemble members and their parents/guardians. The consent forms informed the potential participants of the purpose and procedures of the study, a statement declaring how no incentives or compensation was to be given in exchange for participation, details concerning the protection of privacy and the confidentiality of all participants, and

instructions on how to withdraw from the study. Signed consent forms were returned to the researcher prior to initiating the interviews.

### **Chronology of Study**

Shortly after returning to school following Spring Break, eligible student participants and their parents/guardians attended a meeting at PES detailing the topic of study, the purpose of the research, the anticipated timeline, procedures for the collection of data, informed consent, and the option to withdraw from the study without affecting student participation in the drumming ensemble. Interested and eligible participants were given one week to return signed informed consent forms. At the close of the one-week window, interviews were scheduled with all student and adult participants and held at PES prior to or following the regular school day schedule. Data collection occurred by way of recorded semi-structured interviews. Data analysis commenced following the collection of data as outlined in the following section.

### **Data Collection**

Interviews provide crucial opportunities to focus on learning while drawing upon students' lived experiences within the structure of phenomenological research.<sup>348</sup> Because of philosopher Martin Heidegger's investigations of lived experiences, phenomenology affects educational research by addressing experiences often overlooked in education as well as through the understanding that the phenomenological concepts developed by Heidegger can be employed with all concrete forms of experience, which includes education.<sup>349</sup> Heidegger's awareness of

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<sup>348</sup> Debra A. Morgan, "Analysing Complexity: Developing a Modified Phenomenological Hermeneutical Method of Data Analysis for Multiple Contexts," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 24, no. 6 (2021): 656, accessed September 2, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2020.1847996>.

<sup>349</sup> John Quay, "Learning Phenomenology with Heidegger: Experiencing the Phenomenological 'Starting Point' as the Beginning of Phenomenological Research," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 48, no. 5 (28 April 2015): 485, accessed September 4, 2022, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2015.1035632>.

experience resulted in phenomenological questioning and led the researcher of the present study to ask questions regarding the experience of student involvement in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble and the potential influence such participation has on social-emotional development.<sup>350</sup>

The collection of data for this study occurred by way of audio- and video-recorded semi-structured interviews conducted by the researcher with each student and adult participant in the music room at PES. Designed for the flexibility of participant responses, the semi-structured interviews included the researcher reading each question to the participant and recording the answers as each response was given. The researcher allowed for relevant discussion and elaboration with ideas pertinent to the research topic and which reflected the phenomenon of the participants' perceptions concerning the lived experience of drumming ensemble participation.

The interviews were transcribed using *Otter.ai*. *Otter.ai* provided automated transcriptions and was integrated with Zoom so that the interviews were audio- and video-recorded. The researcher reviewed the transcripts with the original recordings to ensure accuracy. Transcripts were then uploaded into the Delve coding tool for analysis.

Thematic analysis utilizing Delve coding software allowed for the opportunity to discover themes in the transcribed interviews. Delve offered a resource for efficient, flexible, and evolutionary qualitative data analysis by uploading the transcripts into the software. According to Ho, Chiang, and Leung, "thematic analysis is a strategy and tool that provides a rich, detailed, and complex account of the data."<sup>351</sup> In hermeneutic phenomenological studies, the discovery of

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<sup>350</sup> Quay, "Learning Phenomenology with Heidegger," 492.

<sup>351</sup> Ken H.M. Ho, Vico C.L. Chiang, and Doris Leung, "Hermeneutic Phenomenological Analysis: The 'Possibility' Beyond 'Actuality' in Thematic Analysis," *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 73, no. 7 (July 2017): 1760, accessed September 3, 2022, <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/pdf/10.1111/jan.13255>.

themes is less about the recurrence of thematic patterns and more about the sense of the structure of meanings represented in human experience.<sup>352</sup>

### **Coding**

The researcher utilized Delve coding software for the coding process. Through thematic analysis, the interview transcriptions were examined and assembled by theme with respect to the meaning and perspectives of each participant in the study as well as by themes relevant to the central research questions. A hierarchy of codes was then developed and assigned to the themes according to their significance in relation to the central research questions.

### **Interview Questions**

The interview questions for this phenomenological study are included in Appendix A and were created by the researcher to focus on both Central Research Questions (CRQs). All questions were formulated for the purpose of providing participants with ample opportunities to identify, describe, and explore their perceptions of social-emotional development because of participation in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble. Drumming ensemble rehearsals commenced approximately one month into the Fall semester. The researcher conducted recorded semi-structured interviews for this study approximately six months into the drumming rehearsal season.

The initial six interview questions were generated pertaining to the CRQs for the student participants. The first interview question provided an opportunity for student participants to candidly share their thoughts and feelings regarding their participation in the drumming ensemble. Allowing the students to express themselves was significant because of the analogies between real-life experiences and involvement in a drumming group shared by Faulkner et al. in

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<sup>352</sup> Ho, Chiang, and Leung, "Hermeneutic Phenomenological Analysis," 1760.

their study.<sup>353</sup> The purpose of the second question was to allow student participants the opportunity to describe how the experience of playing the instruments made them feel. Ho et al. examined the effects of engagement in a structured drumming experience on social-emotional behavior and identified correlations between drumming involvement and social-emotional development.<sup>354</sup>

Questions three and four were designed to provide the researcher with insights concerning students' perceptions of their responses to mistakes when rehearsing. The questions correlated with the five core competencies of social-emotional learning: self-awareness, self-monitoring, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making skills.<sup>355</sup> Interview questions five and six were intended to provide feedback in support of CRQ1 concerning students' perceptions of the ways in which drumming ensemble participation potentially affected their own social and emotional development.<sup>356</sup>

Parents/guardians were asked five initial questions created with the intention of providing feedback for CRQ2. Questions one and two were designed to allow for parent/guardian perceptions about how their student sees him- or herself within the drumming ensemble as well as to provide the researcher with insights concerning the extent to which parents/guardians support their students' drumming ensemble participation. By requesting perceptions from parents/guardians, the researcher anticipated contributing to a gap in the research concerning the

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<sup>353</sup> Faulkner et al., "It Is Not Just Music and Rhythm," 32.

<sup>354</sup> Ho et al., "The Impact of Group Drumming," 11.

<sup>355</sup> Oberle et al., "Establishing Systemic Social and Emotional Learning Approaches," 279.

<sup>356</sup> Snow and D'Amico, "The Drum Circle Project," 34.

involvement of parents/guardians in the assessment of their students' social-emotional learning.<sup>357</sup>

The researcher designed questions three and four to elicit parent/guardian perceptions of their students' social and emotional awareness and development, including their students' control over reactions and responses to adverse situations. The responses to these questions were intended to contribute to the limited research available concerning behaviors observed by parents/guardians and the influence on their children of the behavior from other students.<sup>358</sup> The purpose of question five was to contribute to the understanding of CRQ2 regarding parent/guardian perceptions of drumming ensemble participation on their students' social-emotional learning. As the primary witnesses to their students' behaviors, parents/guardians were ideally positioned to share insights concerning their students' social-emotional development.<sup>359</sup>

#### Data Analysis

The researcher sought to reveal the perceptions fifth-grade students and their parents/guardians had regarding the effects of the lived experience of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on the phenomenon of social-emotional learning. A detailed description of the steps involved in data analysis follows. Figure 1 includes a flowchart depicting the data analysis and thematic unification process.

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<sup>357</sup> Stephen N. Elliott et al., "Parents' Assessments of Students' Social Emotional Learning Competencies: The SSIS SEL Brief Scales—Parent Version," *Family Relations: Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Family Science* 71 (05 November 2021): 1103, accessed August 28, 2022, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1111/fare.12615>.

<sup>358</sup> Staci M. Zolkoski et al., "Social-Emotional Learning In Rural Schools: Parents' Perspectives," *Kappa Delta Pi Record* 57, no. 1 (12 January 2021): 44, accessed August 28, 2022, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.1080/00228958.2021.1851587>.

<sup>359</sup> Stephen N. Elliott et al., "Efficient Assessment of the Whole Social-Emotional Child: Using Parents to Rate SEL Competencies and Concurrent Emotional Behavior Concerns," *School Mental Health* 13, no. 2 (2 March 2021): 392, accessed August 28, 2022, <https://link-springer-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/content/pdf/10.1007/s12310-021-09429-7.pdf>.

## Transcription

*Otter.ai* transcription software was used to transcribe individual interviews. The researcher then performed initial reviews of individual transcriptions with the intention of discerning the comprehensive stories told by each participant during the interview process. Throughout subsequent reviews of the transcriptions, the researcher conducted denaturalized transcriptions by removing all unnecessary, superfluous, and/or repetitious comments, also known as response tokens, such as “uh huh,” “so,” “you know,” and “well.”<sup>360</sup> The intention behind employing denaturalized transcription was to maintain focus on the content of the participants’ stories and minimize distractions caused by the response tokens or utterings considered impertinent to the meaning of the interviews.<sup>361</sup> The researcher repeatedly reviewed each transcript to ensure that the interviews were accurately transcribed.

## Coding

The researcher utilized Delve coding software for the coding process. The researcher conducted a preliminary thematic analysis, during which the interview transcriptions were examined and assembled first by theme with respect to the meaning and perspectives for each participant in the study and then by themes as related to the central research questions. As part of the coding process, the transcripts were organized into smaller groupings by codes and themes, providing specific points of reference for a variety of topics and functioning in a similar way to the index in a book.<sup>362</sup> The coding method involved iterative categorization (IC), in which the

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<sup>360</sup> Daniel G. Oliver, Julianne M. Serovich, and Tina L. Mason, “Constraints and Opportunities with Interview Transcription: Towards Reflection in Qualitative Research,” *Social Forces* 84, no. 2 (December 2005): 1277, accessed September 5, 2022, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3598499>.

<sup>361</sup> *Ibid.*, 1284.

<sup>362</sup> Jochen Glaser and Grit Laudel, “Life With and Without Coding: Two Methods for Early-Stage Data Analysis in Qualitative Research Aiming at Causal Explanations,” *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 14, no. 2



broad areas of focus identified in the interviews were isolated and examined separately from each other.<sup>363</sup> A hierarchy of codes was then developed according to their significance in relation to the central research questions. For example, coding revealed a significant number of responses concerning students' perceptions of self-awareness, one of the five social-emotional competencies. These codes were given high priority due to the proximity of their association with the first central research question.

## **Synthesis**

The researcher assembled the coded material thematically by interview questions during the synthesis stage of data analysis. The researcher extracted and compiled specific examples and experiences from the participants' stories, told through the semi-structured interviews, as iterations of the themes which were isolated during the coding stage of analysis. The researcher then organized the situational narratives into general narratives. The themes of the narratives were assembled into generalized contexts referring to the responses in comprehensive terms of *most*, *many*, or *some*. An example includes how most student participants experienced a broad spectrum of positive emotions when playing the drums or other auxiliary instruments. Many student participants expressed specific feelings of happiness when playing the drums or other auxiliary instruments.

## **Thematic Unification**

The researcher organized the themes into general descriptions to depict the participants' overall perceptions regarding the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on

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(2013): 14, accessed September 3, 2022, <https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1356976111?pq-origsite=summon>.

<sup>363</sup> Joanne Neale, "Iterative Categorization (IC): A Systematic Technique for Analysing Qualitative Data," *Addiction* 111, no. 6 (June 2016): 1100, accessed September 5, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.13314>.

social-emotional learning. Figure 1 illustrates the data analysis and thematic unification process. Thematic unification involved the researcher extracting the unique, implicit themes common to each participant’s story and summarizing the descriptions into a unified phenomenological discourse present in the context of the central research questions. In this study, the student participants indicated feeling a combination of nervousness and excitement during drumming rehearsals. They explained how these feelings resulted in mild to moderate frustration over mistakes and that their frustration stemmed from a desire to deliver their best performance. The adult participants held shared perceptions about many social-emotional benefits emerging from their students’ participation in the drumming ensemble. A couple of examples include increases in self-control as well as a desire to be proactive about going to bed earlier on the nights before morning rehearsals or increased interest in creating a routine centered on the rehearsal and performance schedule of the drumming ensemble.

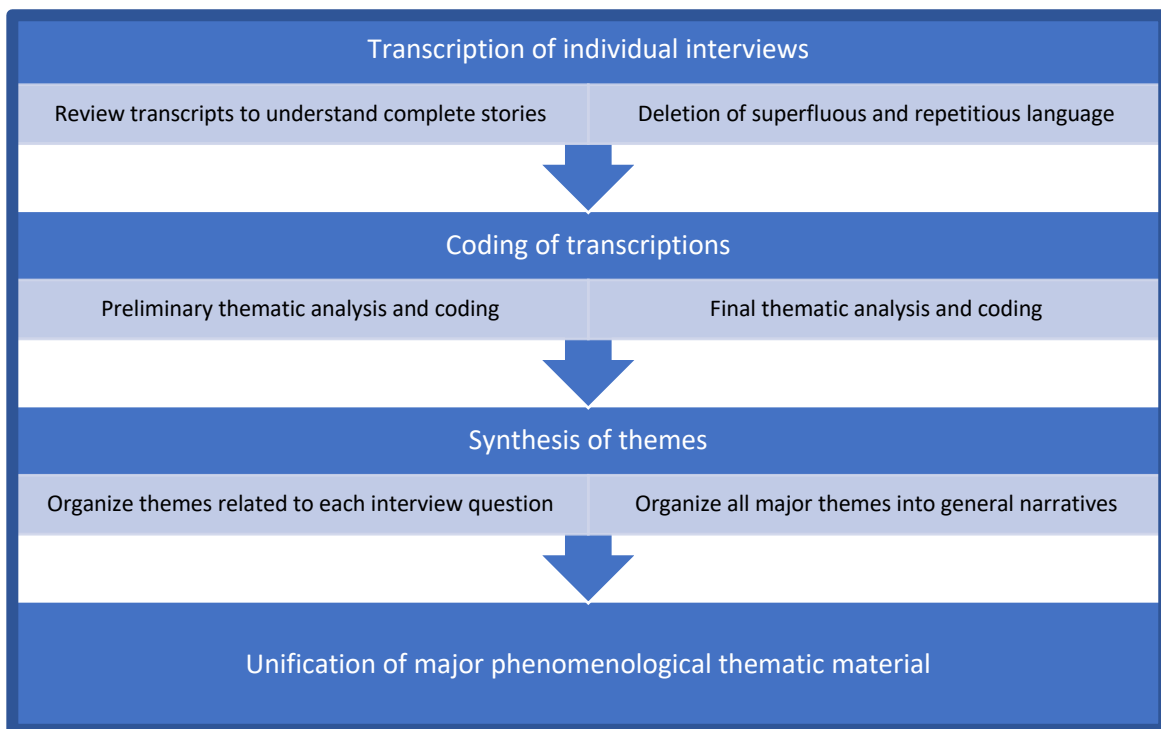


Figure 1: Flow chart of the data analysis and thematic unification process

## Trustworthiness

Research conducted utilizing the phenomenological methodology is often subject to questions concerning the trustworthiness of the process and its outcomes.<sup>364</sup> Guba focuses on the following four common questions of trustworthiness concerning phenomenological research: truth in the outcomes, applicability within other contexts, consistency of findings in replicated or similar studies, and neutrality of the researcher.<sup>365</sup> Guba engages the terms credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, respectively, for application within naturalistic research such as the phenomenological approach. This section elaborates on the definitions of Guba's four terms of trustworthiness and the researcher's applications of each.

### **Credibility**

Credibility refers to the extent to which the outcomes of the study authentically represent reality. Peoples highlights the following eight procedures to ensure credibility: prolonged engagement and observation, triangulation, peer review, negative case analysis, explanation of researcher bias, member checking, rich descriptions, and external audits.<sup>366</sup> The researcher utilized three of the eight procedures to ensure the credibility of this study, including peer review, explanation of researcher bias, and member checking.

### Peer Review

The researcher enlisted the assistance of a colleague to conduct a peer review. The colleague currently holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Music Education and is employed by the

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<sup>364</sup> Egon G. Guba, "Criteria for Assessing the Trustworthiness of Naturalistic Inquiries," *Educational Communication and Technology* 29, no. 2 (Summer 1981): 75, accessed October 30, 2022, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30219811>.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid., 79-80.

<sup>366</sup> Peoples, *How to Write a Phenomenological Dissertation*, 69-71.

same school district as the researcher. The peer review resulted in modifications to the methods employed both for research and data analysis as well as changes to some of the grammatical applications throughout the study.

#### Explanation of Researcher Bias

The researcher served in the capacity of facilitator and sponsor for the drumming ensemble, as described in the section concerning the researcher's position at Paul Elementary School. The researcher, therefore, held the bias that participation in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble would result in positive social and emotional development outcomes for students.

#### Member Checking

Member checking involves a review of the transcriptions by the participants to determine accuracy.<sup>367</sup> The participants in this study were given the opportunity to review the transcriptions of their interviews to ensure the validity of the data each participant conveyed. The interpretations of the participants' transcriptions were also reviewed by the participants to confirm the accuracy of the researcher's analyses of the transcriptions.

#### Transferability

Transferability refers to the potential effectiveness and application of the study in other settings.<sup>368</sup> Detailed descriptions of the student and adult participants, the phenomenon of their perceptions, procedures utilized for the study, social-emotional learning components of the *Leader In Me*, and the structure of the World Music Drumming program contribute to the

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<sup>367</sup> Peoples, *How to Write a Phenomenological Dissertation*, 70.

<sup>368</sup> Burchett, Helen E. D. et al., "When Can Research From One Setting Be Useful in Another? Understanding Perceptions of the Applicability and Transferability of Research," *Health Promotion International* 28, no. 3 (September 2013): 419, accessed October 28, 2022, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45153236>.

transferability of this study into other sociological settings. Transferability does not necessarily result in the transfer of a study to a different context, nor does the potential for transferability guarantee a transfer of outcomes.<sup>369</sup>

### **Dependability**

Dependability indicates the consistency of the data and that the findings can be repeated.<sup>370</sup> The research included a thorough explanation of the double hermeneutic phenomenological process followed when conducting this study.<sup>371</sup> The systematic procedures present by nature of Heidegger's hermeneutic circle provided a reliable research process through which to examine the perceptions of the participants.<sup>372</sup> Additionally, the investigative process engaged during the study underwent a third-party committee review to confirm the dependability of the research.

### **Confirmability**

Confirmability refers to the level of neutrality of the research as shaped by the participants' responses and not through bias or interest from the position of the researcher. The researcher provided full disclosure of positionality as sponsor for the drumming ensemble and music teacher at PES. Neutrality was increased using *Otter.ai* to create transcriptions and by employing Delve software to conduct coding, thus increasing the degree of confirmability of the study.

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<sup>369</sup> Burchett, Helen E. D. et al., "When Can Research From One Setting," 419.

<sup>370</sup> Peoples, *How to Write a Phenomenological Dissertation*, 84.

<sup>371</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.*

## Ethics

Ethical considerations given to this study included the need for institutional review board (IRB) approval to conduct research with minors and their parents/guardians. Consent forms were completed by willing participants after attending a meeting detailing the topic of research, the purpose of the study, the projected timeline, procedures for data collection, informed consent, and the option to withdraw from the study without affecting student participation in the drumming ensemble or the relationship with the researcher as the students' music educator.

Another area of ethical consideration included researcher positionality. At the time of the study, the researcher held the position of music teacher at the site where the research was conducted. In addition to receiving IRB approval, the researcher sought and received permission from the district's Department of Accountability and Evaluation and the principal of Paul Elementary School to conduct research on-site with students who attended music classes taught by the researcher. Furthermore, the researcher provided a statement indicating that participation in the research and/or the drumming ensemble would have no influence on the expectations for achievement nor result in favoritism within the music-learning experience during or outside of the regular school day.

## Summary

This hermeneutical phenomenological study was conducted for the purpose of determining the perceived effects on social-emotional learning of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation by fifth-grade students in a suburban Title I school located in North Texas. Participants included students and their parents/guardians, and data was collected through the researcher's notes and by way of semi-structured interviews conducted individually with each adult and student participant. The researcher transcribed, coded, and synthesized the data

shared by the participants, resulting ultimately in the unification of thematic material as was pertinent to the central research questions for this study.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Overview

This hermeneutic phenomenological study examined the lived experiences of participating in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble and the perceptions of the participants and their parents/guardians of the effects on social-emotional learning. Chapter Four includes a description of the setting and the participant demographics. The chapter continues with the details of the data collection process and the results of the study, concludes with a summary of the chapter.

### Setting

The study occurred at a Title I elementary school in a suburban school district located in the northern region of Texas. All interviews were conducted confidentially in the music room, the same location in which all drumming ensemble rehearsals were conducted. The interview schedule was arranged according to the availability of the participants and their parents/guardians. To accommodate a variety of schedules, interviews were completed following the conclusion of the regular school day and on weekends.

### Participants

Eligible research participants were fifth-grade students who participated in Paul Elementary School's non-auditioned drumming ensemble. An additional eligibility requirement included continuous enrollment at PES from kindergarten or first grade into fifth grade. At least one parent/guardian was required to participate with their child. Out of fourteen drumming ensemble musicians, ten met the continuous enrollment criteria. Three students and four parents agreed to participate in the study, including two mothers of two student participants and both the mother and father of the third student participant. Although Paul Elementary School hosts a



bilingual program for Spanish-speaking English language learners, none of the student research participants qualified for the bilingual program and were instead in the monolingual program. All seven participants attended the initial and follow-up interviews as requested for the research.

### Data Collection

The collection of data occurred through initial interviews conducted individually with the student participants, Crystal (S1), Chayce (S2), and Loegano (S3) (all names are pseudonyms), as well as their parents. Poor conditions resulted in an unusable recording of Chayce's (S2) initial interview, in which only about ten percent of his responses were audible. As a result, a second initial interview was conducted. Additional data were gathered from all seven of the same participants during follow-up interviews conducted three to eight weeks after the initial interviews. The researcher conducted a total of fifteen interviews. Due to the inaccessibility of content within Chayce's initial recording, data were extrapolated from fourteen out of fifteen interviews. The interviews ranged in duration from six minutes to just over eleven minutes. Each interview was audio and video recorded on Zoom, and the recordings were uploaded into *Otter.ai* for transcription. After the transcriptions were reviewed for accuracy, the researcher utilized Delve coding software for the coding of thematic material.

### Results

The results of the study are presented in three sections. The first section includes the emergent themes resulting from the analysis of the seven usable initial interviews and those developed during the exploration of the seven follow-up interviews. The second section discusses how, as Peoples states, the "themes are combined to form a composite summary of the phenomenon."<sup>373</sup> The final section demonstrates the relationships of thematic material to the

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<sup>373</sup> Peoples, *How to Write a Phenomenological Dissertation*, 78.

central research questions through a general account summarizing the lived experiences related to drumming ensemble participation and social-emotional learning.

**Situated Narratives (Themes)**

The researcher recorded all interviews via Zoom. The recordings were transcribed via *Otter.ai* transcription software. After reviewing and editing the transcriptions for accuracy, the researcher conducted coding analyses of the fourteen usable interviews. Meaning units were identified and coded. Themes developed as shared opinions, emotions, and experiences emerged concerning social-emotional learning in the setting of extra-curricular drumming ensemble rehearsals and performances.

Code analysis yielded five themes, and five shared themes emerged from both sets of adult interviews. Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 illustrate the themes and the participant(s) with whom the thematic topics are associated.

**Table 3. Student Themes from Initial Interviews**

Theme	Crystal (S1)	Chayce (S2)	Loegano (S3)
Enjoyment	X	X	X
Unique Experience	X		X
Mistakes	X	X	X
Confidence	X	X	X
Inclusion	X		

**Table 4. Student Themes from Follow-up Interviews**

Theme	Crystal (S1)	Chayce (S2)	Loegano (S3)
Enjoyment	X	X	X
Unique Experience	X	X	X
Mistakes	X	X	X
Confidence		X	X
Inclusion	X	X	X

**Table 5. Parent Themes from Initial Interviews**

Theme	Crystal's Mother (P1)	Chayce's Mother (P2)	Loegano's Mother (P3)	Loegano's Father (P4)
Enjoyment	X	X	X	X
Opportunity	X	X		X
Mistakes	X	X	X	X
Responsibility	X		X	X
Maturity	X	X	X	X

**Table 6. Parent Themes from Follow-up Interviews**

Theme	Crystal's Mother (P1)	Chayce's Mother (P2)	Loegano's Mother (P3)	Loegano's Father (P4)
Enjoyment	X	X	X	X
Opportunity	X	X	X	
Mistakes	X	X	X	X
Responsibility	X	X	X	X
Maturity	X	X	X	X

### Student Themes

**Interview Question 1—Theme: Enjoyment.** All three student participants perceived the drumming ensemble as “fun” or an experience that made them feel happy during their initial interviews. Chayce (S2) stated, “The [drumming ensemble] is *fun*.” Crystal (S1) discussed how “It feels *fun* to have these other people and to know my contributions.” With respect to playing his favorite instrument, Loegano (S3) said, “I don’t really smile often. But that kind of just puts...it kind of just adds this,” as he pointed to a slight upturn at the corner of his mouth.

The students grew more expansive with their responses in the follow-up interviews. Crystal (S1) described how, “It’s kind of disappointing that I can’t do the [drumming ensemble] over the summer because I really did *enjoy* it.” Chayce (S2) explained, “I think [drumming ensemble] was very *fun*, because we...could do things that [we] wouldn’t normally do.” Loegano (S3) unhesitatingly stated, “I *liked* it. It was *fun*.”

**Interview Question 2—Theme: Unique Experiences.** Crystal (S1) initially described her experience in the drumming ensemble as a “*musical home*.” She explained how “this is my *special thing*” and “it feels like something I am so used to that I could legitimately do it in my sleep.” Early in her follow-up interview, Crystal (S1) described her ensemble experience as “*almost magical*.” About a minute later, she commented that playing the instruments “feels very *familiar*,” a remark redolent of her “musical home” comment made during the initial interview. When asked how she felt about other students leading the drumming ensemble, Crystal (S1) stated, “I love it. It’s very *immersive*...we are also helping to control the performance.”

Chayce (S2) focused on a concern he had during his initial interview when he stated, “I feel nervous that I’m going to mess up.” Weeks later, in his follow-up interview, Chayce (S2) made a completely different remark. “I feel excited because there’s a lot to deal with, like auxiliary instruments,” was his answer to how he felt when playing the instruments. Likewise, Loegano’s (S3) attention went to playing the auxiliary instruments. Regarding the use of the primary drumming ensemble instruments, the tubanos, he said, “I kind of just do it. I kind of just use it.” On the other hand, he explained that “The cowbell, which is probably my favorite of all them...I like it,” and playing the cowbell put a little smile on his face.

**Interview Questions 3 and 4—Theme: Mistakes.** When asked about their responses to their own mistakes during rehearsals, the students gave varied responses. Crystal (S1) used the word *surprised* twice in her initial interview and once in her follow-up interview when elaborating on her emotional response to making mistakes. Her solution, as she mentioned in both interviews, was to identify the mistake and “I immediately fix it. And it’s pretty much it. I just fix it.” Loegano (S3) emphasized his desire to avoid failure, especially when playing his favorite instrument, the cowbell. On the topic of making mistakes, Loegano (S3) stated, “When it comes

to the cowbell, I do get mad, because in my opinion, the cowbell's kind of easy, and if things are easy, I don't like messing up." Chayce (S2), in his initial interview, simply stated, "I feel calm" when describing his response to his own mistakes as well as to the mistakes of others. In his follow-up interview, however, Chayce (S2) remarked about how he feels eager to do better, or for others to do better, after making mistakes.

Discussion about self-reflection often accompanied the dialogue around mistakes. If Crystal (S1) identified a mistake in her own performance, she attempted to immediately correct the error. Chayce's (S2) self-reflection manifested itself in the context of his contributions to the successes or failures of the group. Perhaps the most recognizable demonstration of self-reflection, however, took place when Loegano (S3) pulled out his phone during his follow-up interview to play a recording of a mistake he made during a concert. While sharing the recording with the researcher, he made the statement, "I listen to it all the time, thinking about my past mistake."

**Interview Question 5—Theme Confidence.** Crystal (S1) and Loegano (S3) both identified feelings of confidence in their own abilities and the abilities of others. Crystal (S1) commented that, although leading the ensemble sometimes made her nervous, once the group started playing, her thoughts went to "Oh yeah, I got this. I'm not gonna mess up. And I doubt they will either." Loegano (S3) had the same level of confidence regardless of whether an adult or a student oversaw rehearsals and performances. His hope was that the leader did not fail, because "If the leader fails, then I probably failed." Chayce (S2) suggested that he had confidence in the abilities of others to lead the ensemble by stating, "If they're leading clearly, then I might feel more calm."

**Interview Question 6—Theme: Inclusion.** All three student participants perceived their participation in the drumming ensemble as an experience in which they felt included and recognized the inclusion of others. Regarding his decision to join the drumming ensemble, Loegano (S3) stated, “I mean, I don’t think I had to, but I wanted to and did.” Chayce (S2) perceived his inclusion in the drumming ensemble as a direct correlation with his contributions to, and successes of, the performances. He explained, “If I was one of the reasons they had a good performance, they would probably feel good of [sic] themselves because they were a part of the good performance.” Crystal (S1) stated, “Most of the time, because I work so independently, it feels, it feels fun to have these other people and to know my contributions.” By answering, “It feels like people are more *included*” when asked about other students leading rehearsals, Crystal (S1) demonstrated her cognizance of opportunities which promoted a sense of belonging within the ensemble.

#### Parent Themes

**Interview Question 1—Theme: Enjoyment.** During their initial interviews, each of the four parents discussed how his or her child enjoyed or got excited about participating in the drumming ensemble. Some statements, such as “Crystal really *enjoys* the [drumming ensemble]” made by Crystal’s mother (P1), and “I feel like he’s *enjoyed* learning how to play the drums” stated by Chayce’s mother (P2), candidly reflect the parents’ perceptions of their child’s experiences with the drumming ensemble. Loegano’s mother (P3) explained how “This year, I’ve noticed a big difference, especially since he’s joined the [drumming ensemble], that he wants to go to school, and he *looks forward to* the practices and performances.” Regarding Loegano’s participation in the group, Loegano’s father (P4) remarked that “It’s brought on a lot of *positivity*, for sure” and “I can tell he really *enjoyed* doing it.” In addition to identifying his

son's feelings, Loegano's father (P4) included his own feelings about Loegano's (S3) participation by telling the researcher, "When he first approached me about it, I was *excited*."

**Interview Question 2—Theme: Opportunity.** The parents identified opportunities available to their children in connection with participating in the drumming ensemble. Loegano's mother (P3) expressed her appreciation that "he's getting...a more broad sense of some activities he can get into." Crystal's mother (P1) commented on how she thinks "it's good for her to participate in groups and work with other kids," while Chayce's mother (P2) explained, "I just enjoy seeing him getting excited about something new, feeling excited about being part of something."

Identifying a new musical connection, Loegano's father (P4) said, "I think he realized he really does enjoy opening up his world to a new musical side that I don't think he really had before."

Loegano's father (P4) explained in his initial interview how "the musical portion that he's picked up here, has kind of brought us into our own little learning how to play guitar and a little bit of a bonding experience with the both of us," an opportunity originally unforeseen by both the student and his father.

**Interview Questions 3 and 4—Theme: Mistakes.** In their initial interviews, the parents discussed their child's behavioral responses after making a mistake. Crystal's mother (P1) observed that Crystal (S1) is "more patient with herself and gives herself that understanding that she's gonna make the *mistakes*." Chayce's mother (P2) stated in her initial interview that "He makes sure he is concentrating because he likes to have things perfect," but that at times, "He gets frustrated. Sometimes that may be angry...nothing, like, too high sprung anger," observations she restated during her follow-up interview. Loegano's mother (P3) described how Loegano (S3) sometimes feels bad or sad about making mistakes and will work to correct his errors. Additionally, Loegano's father (P4) discussed how "He can get very frustrated, or he can

be very hard on himself.” In his follow-up interview, Loegano’s father (P4) shared that “There’s a level of sensitivity that I think he’s developed with *mistakes* in general.”

All four parents acknowledged their child’s perceptions of interactions with peers between the initial and follow-up interviews. On the topic of grace and understanding, Chayce’s mother (P2) remarked, “He has more *grace* for others,” and Loegano’s mother (P3) discussed how “I’ve noticed with his friends, he’s actually pretty *understanding*.” Loegano’s father (P4) explained, “That has been kind of more of a learning experience for us, is to get him to be more, I guess, *friendly*, or just *understanding* that people learn at different paces.” Crystal’s mother (P1) referenced Crystal’s (S1) tenure in the drumming ensemble when she stated, “She’s grown and matured over the last two years. And now she’s more *patient*, she’s more *understanding*.”

**Interview Question 5—Themes: Responsibility, Maturity.** Drumming ensemble rehearsals started at 7:05a.m. every Wednesday and Thursday morning. Discipline and responsibility within the context of proactively establishing a routine emerged as a common theme during the parents’ initial and follow-up interviews. All four parent participants perceived that their child demonstrated an increased willingness to launch routines that allowed for timely arrivals and preparedness for rehearsals and performances. Significant meaning units included “on track,” “self-motivated,” “structure,” “routine,” “discipline,” and “active role.”

Participation in the drumming ensemble required a commitment to focus and attention during rehearsals. In Crystal’s (S1) case, her mother (P1) reported that Crystal (S1) was also committed to practicing at home, demonstrating what she learned in rehearsals for her parents and younger sibling. Aligned with his commitment to participation in the drumming ensemble, Loegano (S3) demonstrated a willingness and eagerness to attend rehearsals, performances, and school in general, according to his mother (P3). Loegano’s father (P4) discussed his recognition



of the need for Loegano (S3) to practice to improve and grow as a musician. Chayce's mother (P2) explained practice in the context of learning from mistakes, saying "He wants to try again and try again until he gets it all right."

The theme of *maturity* encompassed a broad range of parent perceptions including confidence and patience. Loegano's mother (P3) perceived that participation in the drumming ensemble "helped improve his confidence." In a similar comment, Chayce's mother (P2) stated, "I feel like it's given him confidence to know he can try something new." Regarding changes in her daughter resulting from participation in the drumming ensemble, Crystal's mother (P1) stated, "I think within this last school year...I've seen some *maturity* in her." Loegano's father (P4) described behaviors he observed following Loegano's (S3) enrollment in the drumming ensemble, including increases in preparedness, organization, and patience.

The discussion about patience complemented the theme of *maturity* throughout both sets of parent interviews. Crystal's mother (P1) explained that "[Crystal] can help someone, then she will sit down and be patient." Loegano's father (P4) perceived the drumming ensemble as an opportunity for his son to "learn to be patient when he's learning things specifically." Chayce's mother (P2) and Loegano's mother (P3) both described how Chayce (S2) and Loegano (S3) demonstrated patience with their friends through pep talks, words of encouragement, and offering help when needed.

## **General Narrative**

### **Student Perceptions**

Each of the three student participants experienced the drumming ensemble from different perspectives. Crystal (S1) committed her fourth- and fifth-grade years to participating in the group. Chayce (S2) joined the ensemble at the beginning of this past Fall semester, and Loegano

(S3) began rehearsing with the group at the start of the Spring semester. Despite the varied lengths of time spent in the drumming ensemble, the students held much in common by way of their lived experiences during rehearsals and performances. Each student reported that participating in the drumming ensemble was a fun experience or one that made the student feel happy. According to the students, the ensemble offered an experience in which they each felt included and valued. Mistakes were part of the learning culture of the group, viewed as opportunities for the ensemble members to grow as musicians and as individuals. Almost weekly, students led segments of the rehearsals. Because of that environment, the research participants perceived student leadership to be accepted, normalized, and therefore encouraged. For students to effectively follow their peers during rehearsals and performances, an element of trust was required. The students who participated in the research indicated in their interviews that they had confidence in their peers to lead effectively and make sound decisions beneficial to the ensemble.

#### Parent Perceptions

The parent participants perceived that their children enjoyed participating in the drumming ensemble. During the interviews, the words “enjoyed,” “excitement,” and “positivity” were used to describe how the parents perceived their children felt about being in the group. The parents also perceived that participation led to increases in confidence, maturity, discipline, and patience. Motivation, a willingness to learn, overcoming obstacles, and working with others were attributes the parents associated with involvement in the drumming ensemble. No specific comments were made by the parents concerning student leadership within the drumming ensemble. Responsibility, however, was a common topic of discussion during the parent interviews. The parents perceived increased levels of responsibility through the establishment of

routines initiated by the children. The parents also attested to their children's commitment to attending early morning rehearsals and practicing on their own.

Discussion about how a child responded when making mistakes, or to the mistakes of other students, focused less on behavior within the drumming ensemble and more on a broad level. The parents shared common experiences on this topic, each one noting a general desire on the part of his or her child to correct the mistake and move on, as well as an understanding of the mistakes of others. Although a couple of parents indicated moments in which their children would feel sad or frustrated over mistakes, none of the parents described extreme or prolonged reactions by their children to mistakes, whether self-made or made by others.

#### Alignment with Research Questions

The study was guided by two central research questions and one sub-question focused on the topic of the lived experiences of students in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble. The purpose was to determine what perceived effects participation in the ensemble had on their social-emotional learning. This section aligns the themes which emerged from the interviews with the applicable research question.

#### **Central Research Question One**

*What are the perceptions of fifth-grade students regarding the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on social-emotional learning while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas?*

Participating in the drumming ensemble was an experience the students perceived as *fun*. Crystal (S1) explained, "Most of the time because I work so independently, it feels, it feels *fun* to have these other people and to know my contributions and to see others' contributions." "I think [the drumming ensemble] was very *fun*," said Chayce (S2) in his follow-up interview. In addition

to *fun*, the students described how they *enjoyed*, *liked*, and even *loved* participating in the drumming ensemble. Loegano (S3), who joined the ensemble in the middle of the school year, explained, “All my friends are doing it, then I should try it. And I tried it. Then I just stayed in there. And I started *liking* it.” In her follow-up interview, Crystal (S1) emphasized the emotional significance participation in the group held for her when she stated, “I really *enjoyed* it...like, I was actually crying when I missed it that one time.” Later in that same interview, she stated, “I love it. It’s very immersive.”

Words used by the students such as *fun*, *enjoyed*, and *liked* reinforced the emotional element of social-emotional learning (SEL). Equally as important as the emotional element of SEL, evidence of the social component was needed in the drumming ensemble. Chayce (S2) summarized the necessity of the social element when he declared, “Because all of us make a sound and if there wasn’t, if there’s only one of us, no one could hear us, but there’s more than one.” Crystal referred to the responsibility which accompanied the social aspect of leading the group when she said, “When I’m leading it, I feel like [my contributions are] a little bit more important because I’m actually, like, leading and I have a specific role.” As previously mentioned, Loegano (S3) joined the drumming ensemble because some of his friends were in the group. Yet even after one of his close friends stopped attending rehearsals, Loegano continued to show up and engage in the learning process.

The student participants perceived that participating in the drumming ensemble improved their *confidence*, both in themselves and in others. This addresses both the social and emotional elements of SEL. Crystal’s (S1) confidence in other students leading rehearsals was made apparent when she said, “Rather than just playing, they also get to lead and help other people play. And I think that was a really good idea for that to happen.” Coming into the ensemble mid-

year presented a few learning curves for Loegano (S3), but whenever possible, he took the opportunity to observe the other performers. He explained, “I don’t even think I need to listen, I could just watch...and I think everyone else did pretty good...I did like how everyone else played.” As a student who had the opportunity to lead the drumming ensemble, Chayce (S2) displayed self-confidence when he remarked that he felt proud “that we are able to lead the [drumming ensemble].”

Crystal (S1), as a two-year veteran of the drumming ensemble, made extended connections to her perceptions of different experiences with the group. In her initial interview, she described the ensemble as a “musical home,” an experience with which she was so familiar “that I could legitimately do it in my sleep.” Early in the interview, Crystal (S1) talked about how playing the drums felt “unreal” because she developed muscle memory “from drumming so long and it makes this amazing music.” During her follow-up interview, Crystal (S1) elaborated on how much she cared about and enjoyed the drumming ensemble, even going so far as to say, “It’s almost magical.”

Loegano (S3) demonstrated maturity by way of *self-reflection* and *self-assessment*. During his follow-up interview, Loegano (S3) shared a video recording of a segment from the most recent concert. In the recording, he started out playing the wrong pattern on the cowbell, his favorite instrument in the ensemble. Loegano (S3) described in the interview how “it sounds painful, but that’s painful to listen to.” When the researcher commented on how impressive it was that he listened to the recording, Loegano (S3) replied, “I listen to it all the time thinking about my past mistake.” He chose to spend time reflecting on and assessing his performance.

## Sub-Question One

*How are social-emotional learning pedagogies aligned with drumming ensemble pedagogies?*

### Student Leadership

The researcher engaged the World Music Drumming (WMD) curriculum with the drumming ensemble at Paul Elementary School (PES). The curriculum offered flexibility within a structure of musical development. However, the first objective of the WMD curriculum is not a musical objective but instead focuses on communication—listening, leaving space, and leading.<sup>374</sup> Every lesson includes a keyword, and the keyword for the first lesson is *respect*.<sup>375</sup> Learning to effectively communicate contributes to a culture of respect in the drumming ensemble, a culture in which students acknowledge the contributions of their peers as musicians and as leaders.

Paul Elementary School promotes an environment in which student leadership is normalized through the implementation of Stephen Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* within the framework of the *Leader in Me* (LIM) curriculum.<sup>376</sup> Student leadership in the drumming ensemble aligned with the culture of the school, and a student leader would, at any given time, employ any or all of the 7 Habits, often with a focus on *Habit 4: Think Win-Win* or *Habit 6: Synergize*. Crystal (S1), Chayce (S2), and Loegano (S3) each led the ensemble in various capacities throughout the drumming season. Crystal (S1) expressed that, although she initially felt “a little bit nervous,” she recognized her role as a leader of the ensemble and told herself, “I got this, I’m not gonna mess up. And I doubt that they will either.”

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<sup>374</sup> Schmid, *World Music Drumming*, 9.

<sup>375</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>376</sup> Covey et al., *The Leader in Me*, 11.

## Discipline and Responsibility

Learning how to play a new instrument or new music with fidelity requires discipline. Because much of the music in the WMD curriculum is unfamiliar to the students, successful participation in the drumming ensemble required a willingness to commit to exploring new ways of creating music. Not only were the students expected to be focused and disciplined during rehearsals, but the ensemble schedule demanded discipline and responsibility in the form of their routines the day of, or even the night before, rehearsals and performances.

The parent participants in the study frequently referred to their children's willingness to take responsibility for establishing a routine based on the ensemble rehearsal schedule. In his initial interview, Loegano's father (P4) stated how "This has helped him create a routine." He described in his follow-up interview that in the past, getting ready for bed was a struggle for Loegano (S3). Since joining the ensemble, however, "It's helped him with his day-to-day life routines as far as preparing for the next day or helping with his evening tasks." By starting "with a clear understanding of [his] destination,"<sup>377</sup> Loegano (S3) demonstrated *Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind*.

## Contributions and Inclusion

The keyword for lesson four of the WMD curriculum is *teamwork*. Meaningful and effective teamwork requires Habit 6: Synergize. The drumming ensemble saw the intersection of the two, where the contributions and inclusion of all ensemble members created synergy and teamwork. Chayce (S2) described the phenomenon in his follow-up interview: "If I was one of the reasons they had a good performance, they would probably feel proud of themselves because they were a part of the good performance." According to Crystal (S1), rehearsing with student

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<sup>377</sup> Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), 98.

leaders created an environment in which “It feels like people are more included.” Following a student leader required a different level of trust than following an adult leader, whom the students perceived as the expert. The trust that emerged during student-led rehearsals and performances contributed to the increased synergy and teamwork that developed over time in the ensemble.

### Mistakes

One of the keywords that shows up repeatedly in the WMD curriculum is *complement*. Although often used in reference to complementary rhythms, the word can also include pitch patterns and timbres. Because of the complexity of complementary patterns in one of the Units the drumming ensemble was learning, mistakes were a common part of every rehearsal during the first half of the Spring semester. Rather than allowing frustration over mistakes to control the climate of the ensemble, the students instead reacted to mistakes with a range of positive or productive responses. Some students chose to self-reflect, like Loegano’s (S3) review and analysis of what he termed as a “painful” mistake. Concerning personal mistakes, Crystal (S1) responded with “I immediately fix it.” Regarding the mistakes of others, her response was, “Well, if I can, then I, then I’ll be like, trying to help fix it without calling them out.” Crystal’s (S1) remark was an example of the “grace for others” Chayce’s mother (P2) mentioned in her initial interview, and which contributed to the students’ insight into *Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood*.

### Central Research Question Two

*What are the perceptions of parents/guardians of fifth-grade students regarding the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on social-emotional learning while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in North Texas?*



The parents in the study perceived that their children demonstrated behaviors associated with social-emotional learning (SEL). All four parents described the *enjoyment* and *positivity* their children experienced while participating in the group. Loegano's mother (P3) noted, "This year, I've noticed a big difference, especially since he joined the [drumming ensemble], that he wants to go to school, and he looks forward to the practices and performances." Loegano's father (P4) stated, "I can tell he really *enjoyed* doing it." Crystal's mother (P1) started her initial interview with the statement, "Well, Crystal really *enjoys* [the drumming ensemble]." Chayce's mother (P2) consistently iterated her perception that Chayce (S2) enjoyed being in the group. One example included her remark, "Overall, I believe he *enjoys* it, and he knows that he can do things and accomplish what he's trying to do."

The parent participants shared many perceptions regarding their children's emotional responses to *mistakes*. One common perception was how their children demonstrated patience for other students and their mistakes. "He's just more understanding if others make a *mistake* and tries to encourage them to just keep on trying," remarked Chayce's mother (P2). Crystal's mother (P1) said, "And now she's more patient, more understanding." The parents also noted changes in their children's responses to personal mistakes. For example, Loegano's father (P4) pointed out how "It's definitely helped him realize that *mistakes* aren't necessarily the end." "I feel like initially, he sometimes will feel bad about it. But I feel like it also gives him the motivation to try and improve on his *mistakes*," were comments made by Loegano's mother (P3) about his response when he makes a mistake.

Participation in the drumming ensemble created certain demands on the schedules of the students and their parents, contributing to the social component of SEL. *Preparation* was essential to ensuring timely arrivals to rehearsals on Wednesday and Thursday mornings, and

each of the parents shared the ways in which their children took *responsibility* for establishing *routines*. Loegano's father (P4) stated, "He's on, on track to where he's getting himself up and he wants to set his own alarm." Along that same line of thought, Crystal's mother (P1) shared, "So for her to set her own alarms to get up early enough to be to school an hour early on her own shows me that this is something that's really important to her." *Self-motivation, planning, and discipline* were discussed as perceived contributors to the preparation and responsibility of the students.

The parents identified other qualities in their children indicative of a wide range of emotions and which also influence social behaviors. *Confidence* was a topic shared by Chayce's mother (P2) and Loegano's mother (P3). Crystal's mother (P1) and Loegano's father (P4) each discussed their child's patience, with self and with others. Chayce's mother (P2) explained that her son's participation in the drumming ensemble led to lessons that resulted in *improvements* in his routine. She also mentioned that she encouraged him to *try something new* and how she felt that doing so was good for *brain development*. At various times in their interviews, all four parents connected drumming ensemble participation with *opportunity*, whether that meant trying something new, broadening horizons, something to look forward to, or being part of an experience. Effectively *overcoming obstacles* was a subject discussed by both of Loegano's parents (P3, P4). Other topics embraced in the interviews included a sense of purpose, interest in helping others, and nervousness ahead of a performance.

### Summary

Chapter Four began with detailed descriptions of the setting in which the study took place, the participants who committed to being part of the research, and the data collection process. The *Results* section of Chapter Four followed and included three sections addressing the

organization of the data: Situated Narratives (Themes), General Narrative, and Alignment with Research Questions. The *Situation Narratives (Themes)* section discussed the themes that emerged from the analysis and organization of the meaning units present in the fourteen interviews conducted in the study. Because of the differences in perspectives within the context of experiencing the drumming ensemble, student themes were examined separately from parent themes. Of the twenty-five unique meaning units present in the student interviews, five themes were shared between the initial and the follow-up interviews. Data analysis of the eight adult interviews yielded five shared themes from a total of thirty-four distinctive meaning units. One of the most common themes in both sets of interviews was the perception of the drumming ensemble as *fun*. Equally significant was the theme of mistakes and the perceptions of the students and adults of how students responded to their own mistakes or mistakes made by others.

The *General Narrative* section offered a summary of the phenomena associated with the lived experiences of participation in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble. Instead of examining the lived experiences thematically, this section provided a composite view of student and parent perceptions linked with ensemble participation. As with the *Situated Narratives* sections, the *General Narrative* section provided a synopsis of the student perceptions separate from the parent perceptions. The narrative of student perceptions focused on their shared experiences within the context of varied durations of affiliation with the ensemble. The parent perceptions were mostly concerned with student involvement in the drumming ensemble but also included broader perspectives related to learning and education.

The participant responses were aligned with the Central Research Questions in the *Alignment with Research Questions* section. The questions were supported by the perceptions of the students and their parents shared during both the initial and follow-up interviews. This

section demonstrated the relationships of thematic material to the central research questions through a summary of the lived experiences related to drumming ensemble participation and social-emotional learning. Furthermore, the phenomena of lived experiences were investigated relative to social learning, emotional learning, and the interactions and interconnectedness of both.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

### Overview

This hermeneutic phenomenological study was conducted to examine the lived experiences of students participating in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble. The goal was to determine the perceived effects held by fifth-grade students and their parents/guardians that taking part in percussion ensemble rehearsals and performances had on social-emotional learning (SEL). Chapter Five begins with summaries of the study, its purpose, and the procedure used to execute the research. A summary of the findings is followed by an explanation of the limitations of the study. Recommendations for future research, implications for practical applications of the research outcomes, and the chapter summary conclude Chapter Five.

### Summary of Study

The objective of this phenomenological study was to investigate the perceptions of students and their parents/guardians regarding the effects of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation on social-emotional learning while attending a Title I school in suburban North Texas. The intention was to understand how participants and their parents/guardians perceived any changes to social and emotional development as a result of participating in a drumming ensemble beyond the traditional school day. The researcher conducted the study at a Title I elementary school campus, Paul Elementary School, encompassing grades kindergarten through fifth in a suburban region of North Texas. Eligible participants included the fifth-grade drumming ensemble members enrolled at PES since kindergarten or first grade and their parents/guardians. Data collected from student and parent interviews provided insights into the immediate and cumulative influences of participation in drumming ensembles on the social-emotional development of fifth-grade students concerning the ways in which involvement in

music ensembles affects social-emotional learning. Semi-structured interviews with eligible fifth-grade drumming ensemble participants and their parents/guardians allowed the researcher to engage a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological approach, which utilized interpretive phenomenological analysis.

### Summary of Findings and Prior Research

Research supports connections between social-emotional learning and participation in structured musical learning experiences, such as playing an instrument in an ensemble. In his study of drumming as a conductor of relationships, Varner states, “It seems like the natural playfulness of group drumming via shared rhythmic movement and expression, individual and group awareness, and the collaborative design of the activity creates a perfect alignment between both SEL and music curriculum skills.”<sup>378</sup> Thematic analysis of initial and follow-up interviews conducted with the student and parent participants yielded themes aligned with indicators of social and emotional development. Five themes of social-emotional learning (SEL) emerged, respectively, from the student interviews and the parent interviews. What follows is a comprehensive interpretation of the findings from the study. This section also includes an analysis of the findings within the context of prior research.

### Interpretation of Findings

The outcomes of Ho et al.’s study suggest that low-income populations benefit socially and emotionally from group drumming combined with group counseling activities, the intermingling of which contributed to the intervention’s effectiveness.<sup>379</sup> Ho et al. found that the

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<sup>378</sup> Edward Varner, “Group Drumming as a Conduit to Enhanced Self and Community Relationships,” *Journal of General Music Education* 35, no. 3 (April 1, 2022): 29, accessed July 10, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1177/27527646221079642> journals.sagepub.com/home/gmt.

<sup>379</sup> Ho et al., “The Impact of Group Drumming,” 15.

results of their research were consistent with similar programs aimed at improving behavioral outcomes of low-income youth.<sup>380</sup> The results of the study conducted at Paul Elementary School suggest that extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation affects social-emotional learning by increasing participants' self-confidence, self-control, and positive peer interactions. Engaging in phenomenological research, the researcher collected data from semi-structured interviews conducted with student and adult participants. According to Lashley and Halverson, the perceptions shared by each participant "provides a more complete understanding of students' social-emotional outcomes."<sup>381</sup> By reviewing initially the codes and subsequently the themes that emerged from the interviews, the researcher constructed the perceptions held by the students and their parents of the effects participation in the drumming ensemble had on social-emotional learning.

#### Student Themes

**Enjoyment.** The students identified their participation in the Paul Elementary School drumming ensemble as an experience they each enjoyed. When describing their involvement in the ensemble, they used the words "fun," "like," and "happy" in reference to playing the instruments and feeling included. This perception aligns with the self-awareness competency of social-emotional learning.<sup>382</sup> In their study focused on SEL enhanced through group musical activities, Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux observed increasing levels of pleasure, satisfaction, and emotional regulation over the course of the drumming workshops.<sup>383</sup> Varner, in studying group

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<sup>380</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>381</sup> Lashley and Halverson, "Towards a Collaborative Approach," 184.

<sup>382</sup> "Fundamentals of SEL," Fundamentals of SEL, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

<sup>383</sup> Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux, "Drumming as a Medium", 260.

drumming as a channel for relationships, states, “Drumming together produces environments where people can experience the positive emotions of joy and social connectedness.”<sup>384</sup> Crystal (S1) shared in her follow-up interview that the drumming ensemble became something she really cared about, even loved, and she expressed how she was sad to learn that the prospective summer drumming experience was cancelled.

**Unique Experience.** The drumming ensemble offered several unique experiences, including an opportunity to grow in confidence through self-reflection as well as by way of interacting with other members of the group. Chayce (S2) explained that he felt excited about playing the auxiliary instruments, a new experience from the musical learning that took place during his weekly music class. Loegano (S3) found inspiration in an auxiliary instrument, the cowbell, which he discovered during the drumming season was his favorite instrument. These insights and perceptions shared by Chayce (S2) and Loegano (S3) parallel the SEL competency of self-awareness.<sup>385</sup> Varner described how opportunities to make music with an ensemble assists students in learning how their individual roles contribute to the greater outcome of musical performance (informal or formal).<sup>386</sup> Crystal (S1) made an insightful statement about her experience when she stated that the drumming ensemble felt like a “musical home,” something with which she was so familiar “that I could legitimately do it in my sleep.” As a two-year veteran of the ensemble, Crystal’s (S1) remark was validated by the statement Hurd and Deutsch made “that positive outcomes are related to how much young people participate in the program

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<sup>384</sup> Varner, “Group Drumming as a Conduit,” 29.

<sup>385</sup> “Fundamentals of SEL,” Fundamentals of SEL, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

<sup>386</sup> Varner, “General Music Learning,” 75.



and the quality of the experience they have there.”<sup>387</sup> The recognition of personal contributions to the unique experience offered in group drumming reflects most poignantly the SEL competencies of self-awareness and social awareness while also contributing to self-management, relationship skills, and, to a lesser degree, relationship decision-making.<sup>388</sup>

**Mistakes.** Mistakes were an ever-present part of the drumming ensemble culture, whether made by the leader (adult or student) or another member of the ensemble. Varádi describes qualities of communities formed as “Group drumming builds trust in children, who can recognize each other’s achievements, exercise sympathy, and forgive mistakes through cooperation.”<sup>389</sup> The students’ interview responses concerning their reactions to their own or others’ mistakes exemplify each of the five domains of social-emotional learning: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and relationship decision-making.<sup>390</sup> The perception by the students of their reactions to their own mistakes was a determination either to identify the mistake and correct it immediately so as to continue rehearsing or identify the mistake and attempt to avoid making the same mistake in the future. When considering their reactions to mistakes made by other ensemble members, each student spoke of a confidence in their peers to correct or overcome errors and successfully perform their part on the drums or auxiliary instruments. According to Wood et al., “drumming as a group provides a medium for

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<sup>387</sup> Noelle Hurd and Nancy Deutsch, “SEL-Focused After-School Programs,” *The Future of Children* 27, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 106, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.2017.0005>.

<sup>388</sup> “Fundamentals of SEL,” Fundamentals of SEL, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

<sup>389</sup> Judit Varádi, “A Review of the Literature on the Relationship of Music Education to the Development of Socio-Emotional Learning,” *SAGE Open* 12, no. 1 (January-March 2022): 3, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211068501>.

<sup>390</sup> “Fundamentals of SEL,” Fundamentals of SEL, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

developing skills in listening, sharing, empathy, perseverance, commitment and expression of thoughts and emotions.”<sup>391</sup> The Paul Elementary School drumming ensemble offered an environment the participants perceived as safe for making mistakes and which promoted empathy for others’ mistakes.

**Confidence.** The students perceived confidence in themselves while rehearsing and performing with the drumming ensemble. This perception aligns with the SEL competency of self-awareness and contributes to the competency of self-management.<sup>392</sup> Usually one of the first to volunteer to lead a rehearsal, Crystal (S1) shared that she sometimes felt nervous prior to leading the ensemble. However, after the group started playing, her mindset changed to “I got this. I’m not gonna mess up.” Although he joined the ensemble to spend time with his friends, Loegano (S3) declared, “I started liking it...I even think I learned pretty good.” Chayce’s (S2) confidence in the leadership of others preceded his confidence in his own abilities. He followed the statement, “I feel proud that they, that we, are able to lead the [drumming ensemble]” with the remark, “If they’re leading clearly, I might feel more calm because I know I could, like, read the directions.” The symbiosis of leading and following was perceived to contribute to self-confidence not only in this study but also in that of Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux.<sup>393</sup> In their research, Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux identified that group drumming contributed to participants’ confidence, and therefore their social-emotional learning, through enhanced awareness of self and self-expression.<sup>394</sup>

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<sup>391</sup> Wood, et al., “To the Beat,” 73.

<sup>392</sup> “Fundamentals of SEL,” Fundamentals of SEL, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

<sup>393</sup> Flores, van Niekerk, and le Roux, “Drumming as a Medium”, 264.

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.*, 261.

**Inclusion.** The students saw themselves as part of a group and therefore perceived the drumming ensemble as a place of inclusion for all who were involved in the experience. StGeorge and Freeman’s study acknowledged how “music is a key part of adolescent lifestyle and a gateway to self-expression and social connectedness.”<sup>395</sup> Crystal (S1) recognized that every person in the ensemble, including herself, had an “important part” and made “contributions.” Chayce (S2) perceived that he made contributions by way of a supporting role: “If I was one of the reasons they had a good performance, they would probably feel proud of themselves.” Loegano (S3) perceived that his inclusion in the group came from his friendships with certain members and a desire to share his musical learning experiences with them. The research of Wood et al. indicated that participation in organized drumming activities influences, and provides support for, the emotional wellbeing of young people considered to be at-risk.<sup>396</sup> The researchers emphasized that while drumming is the medium for engaging students, “the other elements relating to communication skills, interacting with others and working as a group are just as integral to the program.”<sup>397</sup> Furthermore, according to Wood et al., “Participation in group drumming can also provide participants with a sense of group identity and group cohesion.”<sup>398</sup> The perception of inclusion in the current study’s drumming ensemble supports the social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making competencies of social-emotional learning.<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>395</sup> StGeorge and Freeman, “Social-Emotional Learning Through a Drumming Intervention,” 31.

<sup>396</sup> Wood, et al., “To the Beat,” 76.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>398</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>399</sup> “Fundamentals of SEL,” Fundamentals of SEL, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

## Parent Themes

**Enjoyment.** All four parent participant, when asked to describe how their child seemed to feel about participating in the drumming ensemble, included some manifestation of the word “enjoy” when describing their perceptions of their child’s emotions. “I feel like he really enjoys it” and “I believe he’s enjoying it” were the statements made respectively by Loegano’s mother (P3) and Chayce’s mother (P2). Crystal’s mother (P1) told the researcher “Well, Crystal (S1) really enjoys the [drumming ensemble],” while Loegano’s father (P4) asserted, “So, I can tell he really enjoyed doing it.” Varner’s research validates the parents’ perceptions. He describes ensemble activities as “cooperative in nature and help promote relationship skills and a positive public spirit.”<sup>400</sup> In her follow-up interview, Chayce’s mother (P2) affirmed her perceptions with the statement “I enjoy just seeing him getting excited about something new, feeling excited about being part of something.” Varner describes how participating in an ensemble initially fosters awareness of self and the function of the student as an individual with a personal responsibility to learn the designated musical part. What follows is social awareness and a recognition of the contributions students make to the objectives of the group.<sup>401</sup> Varner explains that meaningful ensemble experiences “give students the opportunity to explore these collaboration skills while actively practicing how they can positively affect their community.”<sup>402</sup> Varádi describes the relationship between music education and social-emotional learning as a synergy in which “positive emotions make students open and creative...and help them overcome challenges, thus generating further positive emotions as a result of experienced success.”<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> Varner, “General Music Learning,” 77.

<sup>401</sup> Ibid.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid.

<sup>403</sup> Varádi, “A Review of the Literature,” 2.

**Opportunity.** All four parents perceived their child’s participation in the drumming ensemble as an opportunity, although the prospects varied with each parent. Loegano’s mother (P3) referred to her son’s engagement in the musical experience of playing a variety of instruments when she said, “I’m glad there is this opportunity in an elementary level.” Chayce’s mother (P2) held a similar perception and told the researcher, “I wanted him to participate in learning some type of instrument.” Loegano’s father (P4) identified Loegano’s (S3) ensemble experience as the inspiration behind an opportunity to expand his relationship with his son through the shared experience of learning how to play the guitar, a new opportunity for both of them. Crystal’s mother (P1) perceived that the drumming ensemble offered social prospects for her introverted yet academically gifted daughter: “I think it’s good for her to participate in groups and learn to work with other kids.” Wood et al. explored the SEL opportunities accessible through a group drumming experience and determined that “drumming as a group provides a medium for developing skills in listening, sharing, empathy, perseverance, commitment and expression of thoughts and emotions.”<sup>404</sup> Wood et al.’s statement as well as the parent perceptions support the SEL competencies of relationship skills, social awareness, and responsible decision-making.<sup>405</sup>

**Mistakes.** The parents perceived mistakes as emotional learning opportunities for their children, whether in the drumming ensemble or in other areas of education. Supporting this perception is Varner’s statement, “As students engage in the artistic thinking process and the evaluation of artistic performances or presentations (National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, 2014), there is an opportunity to contribute to developing growth mindsets, celebrating student success, and

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<sup>404</sup> Wood, et al., “‘To the Beat,” 73.

<sup>405</sup> “Fundamentals of SEL,” Fundamentals of SEL, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

identifying areas for improvement.”<sup>406</sup> Chayce’s mother (P2) described how Chayce (S2) was more likely to get upset about his own mistakes than the mistakes of others. Both of Loegano’s (S3) parents provided examples of how, over the past year, Loegano identified areas of his work in which he did not feel successful and made efforts to improve and learn from his past mistakes. Loegano’s father (P4) attributed some of the improvements in his son’s acknowledgement of mistakes to Loegano’s (S3) participation in the drumming ensemble when he stated, “I think after [the drumming ensemble], I’ve noticed him start to understand that he is going to make mistakes.” Although she did not attribute the changes overtly to connections with the drumming ensemble, Crystal’s mother (P1) perceived a decline in frustration from Crystal (S1) when she made mistakes over the past two years, the same length of time Crystal was involved with the ensemble. The parent perceptions of their child’s responses to mistakes made by self and others support all five of the SEL competencies.<sup>407</sup> Zins and Elias discuss how the SEL “competencies are taught most effectively within caring, supportive, and well-managed learning environments...as a result, students feel safe and secure and are not fearful of making mistakes.”<sup>408</sup> Their study also lists improved problem-solving and planning as an SEL performance outcome.<sup>409</sup>

**Responsibility.** The researcher learned that each parent perceived increased demonstrations of responsibility in their child as a result of participating in the drumming ensemble. Three out of four of the parents, including Crystal’s mother (P1), Loegano’s mother (P3), and Loegano’s

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<sup>406</sup> Varner, “Group Drumming as a Conduit,” 29.

<sup>407</sup> “Fundamentals of SEL,” Fundamentals of SEL, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

<sup>408</sup> Zins and Elias, “Social and Emotional Learning: Promoting the Development,” 238.

<sup>409</sup> Ibid.,241.

father (P4), acknowledged specifically the adaptation of their child's routine to accommodate early morning rehearsals as an example of increased responsibility. "I think that children in general don't like waking up in the morning, but this has helped him create a routine and he gets up and he gets ready to go" was one of several statements made by Loegano's father (P4) in which he addressed Loegano's (S3) change of routine. Additional perceived indicators of improved responsibility included increases in motivation, self-discipline, desire to practice, and independence. Establishing or modifying routines to accommodate the drumming ensemble rehearsal schedule, as well as the other perceived indicators of increased responsibility, are examples of self-management and responsible decision-making, two of the five core SEL competencies.<sup>410</sup> In a relevant demonstration of improved responsibility to that identified in the current study, approximately one-third of the students in Wood et al.'s DRUMBEAT research increased their school attendance while participating in the ten-week program.<sup>411</sup>

**Maturity.** The merger of the other themes identified in this study led to parent perceptions of their child's maturation over the duration of the drumming ensemble rehearsal and performance season. In her initial interview, Crystal's mother (P1) told the researcher, "I think, at least within this last school year, she has, I've seen some maturity in her." During her follow-up interview, Crystal's mother (P1) explained how, even though she felt growth is slow, she recognized growth and maturation in Crystal (S1) over the past two years, particularly in areas of patience and understanding. Loegano's father (P4) described the cause-and-effect of Loegano's (S3) drumming ensemble participation on their household structure and routines during his initial

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<sup>410</sup> "Fundamentals of SEL," Fundamentals of SEL, accessed April 23, 2022, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.

<sup>411</sup> Wood, et al., "'To the Beat,'" 75.

interview. He said of Loegano (S3), “I think it’s really helped him learn to be patient when he’s learning things specifically.” During his follow-up interview, Loegano’s father (P4) reflected on changes he recognized in his son as a result of participating in the drumming ensemble.

“Something that I wasn't expecting at all was how he was able to overcome certain obstacles a little bit more effectively,” Loegano’s father (P4) stated, adding his perceptions regarding increases in Loegano’s (S3) patience, a calmer demeanor, and a decreased likelihood of getting frustrated or intimidated by new or difficult situations. Researchers Moreno-Gomez and Cejudo identified that “the development of SEL competencies leads to greater attention for the care of others, the optimization of decision-making processes, and the improvement of self-awareness processes.”<sup>412</sup> Moreno-Gomez and Cejudo’s study determined that SEL contributed to increases in neuropsychological maturity in areas of global development, visual perception, non-verbal development, and attention.<sup>413</sup> In explanation, maturation emerges from the development of the five core SEL competencies.<sup>414</sup>

### Implications for Practice

#### **Theoretical**

This qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study was guided by Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory and Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences. The considerations of this study regarding the perceived effects of social and emotional learning of participating in an

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<sup>412</sup> Alfonso-Jose Moreno-Gomez and Javier Cejudo, “Effectiveness of a Mindfulness-Based Social-Emotional Learning Program on Psychosocial Adjustment and Neuropsychological Maturity in Kindergarten Children,” *Mindfulness* 10 (2019): 111, accessed July 12, 2023, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12671-018-0956-6>.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>414</sup> “Fundamentals of SEL,” Fundamentals of SEL, accessed July 7, 2023, <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>.



extra-curricular drumming ensemble aligned with Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). In both the ZPD and a drumming ensemble, children learn from others who possess the desired experience.<sup>415</sup> From the sociocultural perspective, pedagogical practices ideally include an abundance of informal strategies selected with consideration given to the topic, content, and context, as was demonstrated through the World Music Drumming (WMD) pedagogy implemented in this study's drumming ensemble as well as in the *Leader In Me* (LIM) social-emotional learning applications. Furthermore, peer relationships hold an important position in the framework of sociocultural learning because of increased reciprocity in power and reduced limits or constraints on learning through exploration.<sup>416</sup> The drumming ensemble offered an environment in which this sociocultural learning framework developed and grew as the students cultivated trust in each other's talents and experience.

Analysis of Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences framed the learning that transpired in the study conducted and focused primarily on musical and personal intelligences.<sup>417</sup> Two prerequisites were met for engaging intellectual competencies.<sup>418</sup> First, the nature of the drumming ensemble necessitated the resolution of problems arising from both musical and personal origins. Laying the foundation for the expansion of knowledge by way of the discovery or creation of problems satisfied the second prerequisite.<sup>419</sup> More casual than a traditional

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<sup>415</sup> Helen Hedges, "Contemporary Principles to Lead Understanding of Children's Learning: Synthesizing Vygotsky, Rogoff, Wells and Lindfors," *Early Child Development and Care* 191, nos. 7-8 (2021): 1057, accessed May 6, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2020.1849169>.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid., 1063.

<sup>417</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 63.

<sup>418</sup> Ibid.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid., 63.

instrumental ensemble, the drumming ensemble in this study nevertheless provided structured opportunities for students to expand their musical knowledge and talents.<sup>420</sup> Furthermore, the ensemble offered an environment that supported the individual student's involvement (intrapersonal) and each student's interactions with and contributions to the group's experiences with music (interpersonal).<sup>421</sup>

## **Empirical**

Many studies examine the relationship between musical involvement and social-emotional learning. The quantity of literature decreases concerning group drumming and its effects on social and emotional development. The current research was guided by Ho et al., whose study provided insights into the ways in which group drumming conducted during general music lessons affects social and emotional development of low-income students.<sup>422</sup> Wood et al. evaluated drumming as an early intervention and a means for engaging at-risk youth "by increasing self-esteem and social competencies of participants."<sup>423</sup> A gap exists, however, in the research of how fifth-grade students and their parents/guardians perceive that social-emotional learning is affected by extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation in a suburban North Texas elementary school. The data collected from interviews conducted in the current study supplied insights into student and parent perceptions of ways in which SEL competencies are influenced by participating in an extra-curricular group drumming experience within a Title I school environment.

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<sup>420</sup> Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 119.

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid.*, 253.

<sup>422</sup> Ho et al., "The Impact of Group Drumming," 1.

<sup>423</sup> Wood, et al., "'To the Beat,'" 72.

## Practical

The perceptions of this study's participants indicate positive outcomes resulting from implementing social-emotional learning pedagogies within group drumming experiences in suburban Title I schools. The researcher engaged the World Music Drumming pedagogy, an approach easily adaptive to SEL because of the innate flexibility of the curriculum. Because Paul Elementary School engaged in schoolwide implementation of the *Leader In Me*, the students in the drumming ensemble were familiar with the 7 Habits and their application within the classroom setting, including the music room, as well as non-curricular instructional school settings such as lunch, recess, and assemblies. They were then able to transfer the LIM principles into the extra-curricular drumming ensemble rehearsals and performances, merging the function of the 7 Habits with the WMD structure. The outcomes of this qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study conducted in a suburban Title I school addressed a practical need for elementary music teachers considering the inclusion of SEL practices within the broader music curriculum and specifically a drumming ensemble.

## Limitations

One limitation on this study was the inability of the researcher to control for consistent SEL-integrated instruction in environments beyond the music setting and musical learning. Inconsistency in learning about and engaging with the 7 Habits potentially occurred due to varied levels of familiarity and experience with the Habits and the *Leader In Me* approach by the Paul Elementary School staff. Although every new staff member received LIM training, a moderate level of staff turnover decreased the average length of time LIM was in practice leading up to and during the current study. Crystal (S1), Chayce (S2), and Loegano (S3) attended Paul Elementary School consecutive years from kindergarten to fifth grade, but there was a likelihood

that they interacted on a regular basis with teachers, paraprofessionals, and/or auxiliary staff members whose experience with LIM was less than their own, perhaps as much of a difference as five years.

Another potential limitation of this study was the familiarity of the students, and the parents to a lesser degree, with the researcher. In addition to serving as the drumming ensemble director, the researcher taught music at Paul Elementary School, a position maintained for eight years at the time of the study. Despite encouragement from the researcher to be honest, it is possible, maybe even likely, that the participants were uncomfortable sharing perceptions the researcher may have considered negative. Similarly, participant interview responses may have been influenced unintentionally by the researcher's body language, vocal inflections, or facial expressions. Prior to each interview, the researcher explained to the participant her intention to remain passive throughout the interview. However, each interview was likely affected by involuntary reactions from the researcher.

#### Recommendations for Future Study

This study revealed perceptions of fifth-grade students and their parents of the effects drumming ensemble participation had on social-emotional learning. One recommendation for future research involves expanding the participant group to include members of the drumming ensemble (and their parents/guardians) who completed four or five consecutive years at Paul Elementary School. A larger selection of participants still allows for consistency of SEL instruction with the music educator while providing expanded data and further insights into the perceptions of social and emotional development resulting from involvement in the drumming group.

The literature research for this study yielded drumming pedagogies and programs that are potentially viable in a suburban Title I elementary school setting. Another recommendation for future research includes engaging either the DRUMBEAT program or the World Music Pedagogy curriculum in place of World Music Drumming. Aimed at improving self-esteem and social competencies, DRUMBEAT is a ten-week program adaptable to weekly music classes or extra-curricular programming.<sup>424</sup> Naturally inclusive of drumming, World Music Pedagogy emphasizes the use of percussion instruments and exposes students to music from a diversity of cultures worldwide.<sup>425</sup>

### Summary

This phenomenological study was conducted to examine the perceptions of fifth-grade students and their parents/guardians concerning the effects on social-emotional learning of extra-curricular drumming ensemble participation while attending a Title I school in North Texas. Conducted at Paul Elementary School, a Title I campus encompassing grades kindergarten through fifth in a suburban region of North Texas, the study concentrated on the fifth-grade members of the drumming ensemble who started at PES in kindergarten or first grade and attended for four or five consecutive years prior to the study. The study was guided by Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Both theories support the perceptions by this study's participants of the ways drumming ensemble participation enhanced social and emotional development.

The research utilized interpretive phenomenological analysis within the context of a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological approach and included semi-structured interviews.

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<sup>424</sup> Wood, et al., "'To the Beat,'" 72.

<sup>425</sup> Roberts and Beegle, *World Music Pedagogy*, 3.

Student and parent initial and follow-up interviews provided data regarding the ways in which participation in a drumming ensemble influenced the social and emotional development of fifth-grade students. Coding and thematic analysis of fourteen interviews yielded five themes each from the student and parent interviews. The student themes included enjoyment, unique experience, mistakes, confidence, and inclusion. Enjoyment, opportunity, mistakes, responsibility, and maturity emerged as themes from the parent interviews. The affirmative characteristics of the themes suggest that fifth-grade group drumming participants and their parents perceive positive effects on social-emotional learning resulting from drumming ensemble participation.

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## APPENDIX A

The interview questions addressed in the semi-structured interviews with the student participants included the following:

Interview Question 1: Describe your experience participating in the drumming ensemble.

Interview Question 2: How do you feel when you are playing the drums or auxiliary instruments?

Interview Question 3: How do you react/respond when you make a mistake during drumming ensemble rehearsals?

Interview Question 4: How do you react/respond when someone else makes a mistake during drumming ensemble rehearsals?

Interview Question 5: How do you feel about other students leading the rehearsals?

Interview Question 6: How do you feel about your contributions to drumming ensemble rehearsals?

The interview questions (IQs) addressed in the semi-structured interviews with the parents/guardians of the student participants included the following:

Interview Question 1: How does your child seem to feel about participating in a drumming ensemble?

Interview Question 2: How do you feel about your child's participation in a drumming ensemble?

Interview Question 3: How does your child react/respond when he/she makes mistakes?

Interview Question 4: How does your child react/respond when others make mistakes?

Interview Question 5: Describe changes, if any, you have identified in your child because of their participation in the drumming ensemble.



## **APPENDIX B**

This study was approved under Liberty University IRB-FY22-23-848.

## APPENDIX C

### Consent

**Title of the Project:** Student and Parent/Guardian Perceptions of the Effects of Extra-Curricular Drumming Ensemble Participation on Social-Emotional Learning in a Title I Elementary School  
**Principal Investigator:** Jennifer N. Gray, Doctoral Candidate of the School of Music at Liberty University, MEd. in Elementary Education, B.S. in Music Education

#### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must either be a fifth-grade student who has attended Malvern Elementary School since kindergarten or first grade and is participating in the Drum Circle drumming ensemble or the parent/guardian of an eligible student participant. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

#### What is the study about, and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the perceptions of fifth-grade students and their parents/guardians concerning the effects of participation in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble on students' social and emotional learning while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in north Texas. The study will be conducted to determine how students receive and respond to the drumming ensemble and SEL pedagogies (teaching approaches).

#### What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Maintain consistent participation in the drumming ensemble if you are a student.
2. Participate in an initial interview which will last approximately 20-30 minutes. If you are a student, your interview will include at least six questions focused on the research topic. If you are a parent/guardian, your interview will include at least five questions focused on the research topic. The initial interview will be video recorded.
3. Participate in a follow-up interview approximately two to three weeks after the initial interview. The follow-up interview will last approximately 20 minutes and will be video recorded.
4. Review the interviews and data collected from the interviews to ensure the accuracy of your statements. Your review will take approximately 30 minutes.

### **How could you or others benefit from this study?**

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include increased awareness of the perceived effects on social-emotional learning of participation in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble by fifth-grade students attending school in a Title I environment.

### **What risks might you experience from being in this study?**

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

### **How will personal information be protected?**

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential using codes. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation and during a time when minimal individuals are present in the building, either before or after the regular school day schedule.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer within password-protected files and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer within password-protected files for three years and then erased. Only the researcher and members of her doctoral committee will have access to these recordings.

### **How will you be compensated for being part of the study?**

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

### **What are the costs to you to be part of the study?**

No costs are required to participate in the research.

### **Does the researcher have any conflicts of interest?**

The researcher serves as a teacher at Malvern Elementary School. To limit potential or perceived conflicts, the researcher will ensure that all data is stripped of identifiers. This disclosure is made

so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to allow your child to participate in this study. No action will be taken against an individual based on her or his decision to allow his or her child to participate in this study. No grades will be assigned to or affected by participation or non-participation in the study.

### **Is study participation voluntary?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision on whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Malvern Elementary School, McKinney Independent School District, or Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

### **What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?**

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next section. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

### **Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?**

The researcher conducting this study is Jennifer N. Gray. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [hidden phone number] or [hidden email]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Nathan Street, at [hidden email].

### **Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

*Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.*

### **Your Consent**

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy of this document with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

*I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.*

The researcher has my permission to video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

---

Printed Subject Name

---

Signature & Date

## APPENDIX D

### Parental/Guardian Consent

**Title of the Project:** Student and Parent/Guardian Perceptions of the Effects of Extra-Curricular Drumming Ensemble Participation on Social-Emotional Learning in a Title I Elementary School  
**Principal Investigator:** Jennifer N. Gray, Doctoral Candidate of the School of Music at Liberty University, MEd. in Elementary Education, B.S. in Music Education

#### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

Your child is invited to participate in a research study. To participate, he or she must be currently enrolled as a fifth-grade student at Malvern Elementary School, have been enrolled at Malvern Elementary School since kindergarten or first grade, and be an active participant in the Drum Circle drumming ensemble. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to allow your child to take part in this research project.

#### What is the study about, and why am I doing it?

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the perceptions of fifth-grade students and their parents/guardians concerning the effects of participation in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble on students' social and emotional learning while attending a Title I school within a suburban school district in north Texas. The study will be conducted to determine how students receive and respond to the drumming ensemble and SEL pedagogies (teaching approaches).

#### What will participants be asked to do in this study?

If you agree to allow your child to be in this study, I will ask her or him to do the following:

1. Maintain consistent participation in the drumming ensemble.
2. Participate in an initial interview which will last approximately 20-30 minutes. The initial interview will include at least six questions focused on the research topic.
3. Participate in a follow-up interview approximately two to three weeks after the initial interview. The follow-up interview will last approximately 20 minutes and will be video recorded.
4. Review the interviews and data collected from the interviews to ensure the accuracy of your child's statements. The review will take approximately 30 minutes.

#### How could participants or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include increased awareness of the perceived effects on social-emotional learning of participation in an extra-curricular drumming ensemble by fifth-grade students attending school in a Title I environment.

**What risks might participants experience from being in this study?**

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks your child would encounter in everyday life.

**How will personal information be protected?**

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential using codes.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation and during a time when minimal individuals are present in the building, either before or after the regular school day schedule.
- Data collected from your child may be used in future research studies and/or shared with other researchers. If data collected from your child is reused or shared, any information that could identify your child, if applicable, will be removed beforehand.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer within password-protected files and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted, and all hardcopy records will be shredded.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer within password-protected files for three years and then erased. Only the researcher and members of her doctoral committee will have access to these recordings.

**Is the researcher in a position of authority over participants, or does the researcher have a financial conflict of interest?**

The researcher serves as a teacher at Malvern Elementary School. To limit potential or perceived conflicts, the researcher will ensure that all data is stripped of identifiers. This disclosure is made so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to allow your child to participate in this study. No action will be taken against an individual based on her or his decision to allow his or her child to participate in this study. No grades will be assigned to or affected by participation or non-participation in the study.

**Is study participation voluntary?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to allow your child to participate will not affect your or his or her current or future relations with Malvern Elementary School, McKinney Independent School District, or Liberty University. If you decide to allow your child to participate, she or he is free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**What should be done if a participant wishes to withdraw from the study?**

If you choose to withdraw your child from the study or your child chooses to withdraw, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw her or him, or should your child choose to withdraw, data collected from your child will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

**Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?**

The researcher conducting this study is Jennifer N. Gray. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [hidden phone number] or [hidden email]. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty sponsor, Dr. Nathan Street, at [hidden email].

**Whom do you contact if you have questions about rights as a research participant?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

*Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.*

**Parental/Guardian Consent**

By signing this document, you are agreeing to allow your child to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy of this document with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

*I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to allow my child to participate in the study.*

The researcher has my permission to video-record my child as part of his/her participation in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Child’s Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## APPENDIX E

### Child Assent to Participate in a Research Study

***What is the name of the study, and who is doing the study?***

The name of the study is *Student and Parent/Guardian Perceptions of the Effects of Extra-Curricular Drumming Ensemble Participation on Social-Emotional Learning in a Title I Elementary School*, and the person doing the study is Jennifer N. Gray.

***Why is Jennifer N. Gray doing this study?***

Jennifer N. Gray wants to know what fifth-grade students and their parents/guardians believe are the effects of participating in the Drum Circle drumming ensemble on their social and emotional health.

***Why am I being asked to be in this study?***

You are being asked to be in this study because you are in the fifth grade and an active member of the Drum Circle drumming ensemble.

***If I decide to be in the study, what will happen, and how long will it take?***

If you decide to be in this study, you will:

1. Continue to participate in the drumming ensemble.
2. Participate in an interview that will last approximately 20-30 minutes. The interview will include at least six questions focused on the research topic.
3. Participate in a follow-up interview approximately two to three weeks after the initial interview. The follow-up interview will last approximately 20 minutes and will be video recorded.
4. Review the interviews and data collected from the interviews to ensure the accuracy of your answers and any statements you made during the interviews. The review will take approximately 30 minutes.

***Do I have to be in this study?***

No, you do not have to be in this study. If you want to be in this study, then tell the researcher. If you don't want to, it is OK to say no. The researcher will not be angry. You can say yes now and change your mind later. It is up to you.

***What if I have a question?***

You can ask questions at any time. You can ask now. You can ask later. You can talk to the researcher. If you do not understand something, please ask the researcher to explain it to you again.

Signing your name below means that you want to be in the study.

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Signature of Child

Date

Researcher:  
Jennifer N. Gray  
Email: [hidden email]  
Phone: [hidden phone number]

Faculty Sponsor:  
Dr. Nathan Street  
[hidden email]

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