

A STUDY ON FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAMS IN
SECONDARY SCHOOLS

By

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors previously associated with challenges facing in-service instrumental music educators in northwest North Carolina. Two research questions guided the study: 1) How do instrumental music educators in northwest North Carolina rate factors that may influence their programs? and 2) To what extent are the following factors relevant to instrumental music educators: school size, student involvement, geographic location, budget, and support?

The Rural Instrumental Music Teacher Survey was constructed by the researcher using a five point Likert-type scale. The 38-item questionnaire was distributed to 84 instrumental music educators in northwest North Carolina, of which, 56 were returned and used for analysis (N=56). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the questionnaire data. Results from the data suggest that class offerings are perceived to be adequate within perspective schools, but scheduling conflicts are rated as problematic, and to a greater extent with educators who are service multiple schools. Regardless of school size, instrumental music educators choose to participate in large ensemble adjudicated events, with a less clear picture of school participation in small ensemble

or solo events. All survey participants agreed they have high student participation in other school and community extra-curricular activities. Geographic location was rated as less of a hindrance for access to music retailers than it was for access to university outreach. Budget considerations received inconclusive results. Music educators valued the support received from all sources and deemed them important to the overall success of the music program; the perceived amount of support received was strongest from parents and school level administration.

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SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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By
Charles B. Evans

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Chapter I: Introduction

School instrumental programs are unique in the challenges they present for their instrumental music teachers. In some schools, these challenges may manifest as deficiencies specifically affecting opportunities for students in school music programs. Small schools may not have a large enough student population to make up a large instrumental ensemble and thus, issues with incomplete instrumentation can occur. Other schools may struggle to employ one full-time music educator; class offerings may be limited because of the teacher availability.

Few studies have been published that examine specific factors impacting rural music or instrumental music education and there are no studies specific to rural instrumental music education in North Carolina. Unless the problems facing rural instrumental music educators have been identified, it is difficult to determine how to best serve the students in these communities. It is anticipated that a better understanding of factors that influence rural instrumental music education will serve as a catalyst for future research in this area.

Though every music education program is different, music programs in small, rural schools may present the instrumental music teacher with obstacles specific to the context of being small and rural. For example, curricular offerings and student access to instrumental music educators are examined in the literature, but a consensus of how this affects the overall instrumental music program remains vague and undefined. Some educators teach at multiple schools and are responsible for multiple programs of a vast range of grades and ability levels (Isbell, 2005; Wilcox, 2005). Likewise, teaching in isolated areas has been found to lead to further feelings of frustration by teachers, but have not been studied extensively in instrumental music (Bates, 2011).

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify how instrumental music educators perceive factors influencing their music programs in Northwest North Carolina. Specific questions addressed were:

1. How do instrumental music educators in northwest North Carolina rate factors that may influence their programs?
2. To what extent are the following factors relevant to instrumental music educators: school size, student involvement, geographic location, budget, and support?

Chapter II: Review of Literature

All school instrumental music programs present unique challenges for instrumental music directors. In some schools, however, these challenges may manifest as deficiencies specifically affecting opportunities for students in school music programs. For example, limited financial resources can be an enormous concern for some programs but not for others (Ester, 2009; Hicks, 2010). A smaller student enrollment (and therefore a smaller school size) affects schools from the availability of class offerings, to the number of students participating in the music program, further affecting the number of music teachers employed in a school system (Bates, 2011; Burkette, 2011; Lee, 1997). Instrumental music educators' perceptions of their jobs may also be a challenge to overcome. This perception may be based on things such as availability of resources, for example: a music supply store, or support from a college or university (Abril, 2011; Hicks, 2010; Hunt, 2009; Isbell, 2005; Serderberg, 1983). Finally, support from administration, the local community, and parents can be a music educator's greatest asset or a music program's biggest weakness (Abril, 2008; Albert, 2006; Albert, 2006). School and community support play a large role in the success of an instrumental programs.

Based on factors of limited financial resources, smaller student enrollment, teacher perception, and program support, individual schools can sometimes be left with a large hurdle to overcome when attempting to develop or maintain a successful instrumental music program. These problems appear more frequently in schools located in rural areas.

Given the unique challenges rural schools face, the current study is designed to investigate obstacles music directors feel they are faced with in instrumental music programs of rural schools. The next section of the literature review will detail the most current research on

issues of funding rural schools, issues of socioeconomic status, issues of school size, issues of curricular offerings, issues of teacher perceptions, and issues of local resources and support.

Issues of Funding Rural Schools

All public Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in North Carolina receive funding from the state to pay salaries for teachers and administrators. The state also provides LEAs with an operating budget proportionate to the number of students in the school district (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2011). Unfortunately, North Carolina state funds alone do not fully subsidize a school system's yearly budget. In secondary schools, the state pays the salary for one teacher position per twenty-six students, and the remainder of school staffing needs are paid from federal programs or local funds (Information Analysis Division of School Business, 2011). Local funds come from the county or town in which the LEA resides; as is the case of many rural counties, local economies are often not strong enough to fully fund the remaining needs of the school system. LEAs classified as low wealth are eligible for supplemental funding, which attempts to fill the gap between what the county is able to provide and what the school needs to operate (Information Analysis Division of School Business, 2011).

Issues of Socioeconomic Status

Low socioeconomic status (SES) is another common challenge for rural instrumental music programs (Albert, 2006). According to Budge (2006), the weak economy in some rural communities have hindered the infrastructure for encouraging business development and growth and caused an out-migration of highly skilled human capital. Likewise, according to Hunt (2011), some weak economies have hindered a community's ability to stay abreast of

technological advancements. A majority of rural economies are dependent on agriculture or natural resource extraction and are comprised of mainly blue-collar jobs (Bouck, 2004).

Although low socioeconomic status is not exclusive to rural communities, having a larger percentage of low SES families within a rural community has been found to negatively affect participation in instrumental music programs. In a study involving a survey of secondary school principals, Abril (2008) suggested school specific issues, such as SES of school population, are related to decreasing enrollment in instrumental music education classes. In addition, Albert (2006) and Fitzpatrick (2006) found that SES is a good indicator of how parental support is perceived by instrumental music directors and school principals; which in turn predicted student participation in instrumental music programs. Children of high-SES families may have more frequent and earlier exposure to musical activities at home because they can afford them (Abril, 2011; Albert, 2006). Early musical exposure has been shown to increase the likelihood of a student electing to begin instrumental instruction (Abril, 2011). Costs associated with participation in instrumental music programs can be a prohibitive for low-income families who may not be able to afford registration fees, rentals, lessons, or other costs to participate (Albert, 2006).

One method schools have used to level the socioeconomic playing field is to have instruments available to loan free of charge or for a small rental fee (Ester, 2008). Students who desire to be in an instrumental music class can rent or use a school-owned instrument if the financial burden of monthly instrumental rental program is too great. According to Ester (2008), “playing a loaner instrument may be a factor in reducing the negative effects on personal happiness and intellectual self-esteem that can result from lower SES” (p. 68). Schools that have the means to invest in a supply of instruments for disadvantaged children to use can greatly

increase enrollment in instrumental music programs in low SES communities (Abril, 2011). However, not all programs have the means to invest in new instruments, and directors may need to be creative in trying to acquire playable instruments for their students. Some directors have beseeched communities and benefactors for donations of instruments or funds to purchase instruments (Poliniak, 2009). Acquiring instruments for school use may involve grant programs such as the “Mr. Holland’s Opus Foundation” (“Mr. Holland’s Opus Foundation”, 2012), whose mission is to help under-funded instrumental music programs by donating instruments for students to use.

Regardless of how directors attempt to level the gap of socioeconomic status, some students may still not be able to continue with instrumental music instruction. In a study by Albert (2006), students of higher SES families were found to participate in instrumental music programs longer than students from lower SES families. One reason for this may be that family financial situations may call for the student to have a job to help support the family (Kuntz, 2011).

Issues of School Size

Another obstacle instrumental directors must overcome in most rural areas is limited student population, affecting such issues as instrumentation, and curricular offerings. Low school enrollment is primarily due to low population density, directly related to geographic isolation (Budge, 2006). Sederberg (1983) suggested that on average, schools with fewer than 374 students in grades seven through twelve do not possess a student critical mass in order to offer a variety of classes in all areas. This suggestion is substantiated by other research findings that small school size restricts equal access to opportunities and classes for students as compared

to students residing in denser geographical locations (Abril, 2008; Budge, 2006). For the instrumental music educator, a smaller student body most likely yields a smaller number of students interested in music study.

The traditional expectation for a public school instrumental program is the large ensemble. Bates (2011) suggested that the bigger the band, the better the band is perceived to perform; further, he discovered at venues where bands are adjudicated, judges' awarded scores correlated closely to school size. This perception becomes an issue for directors with smaller programs, particularly when performing in public, including football games, parades, and concerts. Another barrier for smaller ensembles is that quality musical works written, published and distributed for a small concert band with mixed or limited instrumentation is scarce at best. Directors in rural areas often choose to write their own arrangements of band literature to suit their ensembles (Isbell, 2005; Poliniak, 2009) however, this may limit student exposure to traditional arrangements of classic band literature.

Issues of Curricular Offerings

The number of faculty employed at each school dictates the availability of types and varieties of classes offered; rural schools with low student enrollment are often at a disadvantage since they typically have fewer teachers (Abril, 2008; Bouck, 2004). On average, secondary schools with higher socioeconomic status offer a wider variety of music courses than their lower socioeconomic status counterparts, which is the typical demographic of small rural schools (Abril, 2011). According to Isbell (2005), students in small schools will tend to make the most of opportunities that exist. Smaller schools have fewer students to participate in all available clubs and sports; many students, especially the highest achieving students, will choose to be

involved in multiple curricular and extra-curricular activities (Kuntz, 2011). It may be difficult to have the entire ensemble attend afterschool rehearsals since many students are involved in multiple afterschool activities or jobs (Isbell, 2005; Kuntz, 2011; Sederberg, 1983).

Issues of Teacher Perceptions

Burkett (2011) indicated in a current study that many teachers in rural schools suffer additional stress from the mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) as well as limited offerings of specific content-related professional development. Due to the mandates of NCLB, such as increased graduation requirements, and reduced budgets for non-tested areas, many music educators have seen a decrease in enrollment and a decline of financial support from the school, with some music educators serving as the only music teacher for multiple schools (Hicks, 2010). These are contributing factors to many music teachers' professional discontent (Hunt, 2011, Isbell, 2005). In addition, music teachers in rural settings may have school and teaching responsibilities outside of their content area of music. According to Isbell (2005) and Poliniak (2011), rural music teachers drive school busses, coach athletic sports teams, advise music and non-music clubs, and teach classes in other curriculum areas.

Consequently, many instrumental music teachers suffer a sense of isolation, particularly if there are not other music teachers in their school or district. They may also be further away from collaborative opportunities with higher education institutions, personal performance opportunities, or opportunities for educator and students to experience live performances (Bates, 2011). Students also suffer from isolation from a wider variety of musical resources. Musical proficiency can be affected by geographical or financial access to private instruction, placing rural students at great disadvantage as compared to their urban counterparts (Bates, 2011; Lee,

1997). Musical events that seek to compare or assess performances, such as band festivals, can highlight the disadvantages generated from geographical location. Stereotypes about rural students are also present, “thereby reinforcing a still common assumption in America that rural students are less intelligent, diligent, and capable than suburban students” (Bates, p. 91, 2011).

According to Jorgensen (2010), the rural music teacher suffers as a result of being placed in a position to teach music classes in performance areas in which they may not have been adequately trained; however, the music teacher may have no choice but to teach these as the only member of the school’s music department. Bates (2011) makes a very poignant statement regarding the status quo of instrumental music teachers in rural public schools; “...because of how we are evaluated professionally on size, appearance, and sound quality, teachers in small rural schools may be perceived as less effective than their suburban or urban counterparts” (p. 91).

Issues of Local Resources and Support

The location of schools is a hindrance, particularly when it comes to the availability of supplies for musical studies. In most rural communities, there is not enough demand for a local music store to supply instruments for purchase or rental, instrument accessories, private lessons, and repair services. In these cases, the nearest music retailer might send a representative to visit the school once a week, or less, to pick up or drop off instruments and bring supplies (Wilcox, 2005). This is inconvenient for teachers and students across the board, from purchasing supplies to repairing instruments in an emergency.

Along with the lack of access to musical resources, the immediacy of support for a music program is paramount for the rural instrumental music teacher. Though it is essential everywhere

to be an advocate to promote program awareness and support, advocacy is especially critical in rural areas (Hunt, 2011; Wilcox, 2005). Administrative support is crucial to advancing the mission of the music program and incorporating that mission into the greater school vision. In order for administrators to view music programs as a necessary part of the school, they must understand the necessity and mission of the program (Abril, 2008). One contributing factor to rural music teachers' professional discontent is poor administrative support (Hunt, 2011).

Support swings both ways, as very often instrumental music programs are a great source of pride for the community. Therefore, rural music teachers need to be sensitive to concerns of the community in order to be successful (Isbell, 2005). Sensitivity to community concerns includes expectations for the school band, such as participation in local parades and formal ceremonies, as well as considering the audience when choosing literature for these events (Hunt, 2011).

Finally, parental support is essential for student success and student motivation (Isbell, 2005). Parents need to be on board with their child's learning and therefore, need to understand the purpose of music education. Having parent support is critical to the overall success of many band programs, as parents have been known to assist instrumental music directors through assisting with routine administrative tasks, driving busses or equipment trucks, setup or moving equipment, chaperoning trips, assisting with fundraisers, and sometimes as music coaches or private teachers (Isbell, 2005).

Conclusion

Every music education program faces its own challenges; however, the music programs in small, rural schools as a whole have similar obstacles to overcome. According to the research, problems found in rural settings include, 1) funding inequities, 2) decreasing enrollment in low SES schools, 3) reduced class offerings, 4) feelings of isolation and frustration faced by many teachers, 5) reduced local resources, and 6) lack of administrative and parental support. It is important for instrumental music educators to identify any or all factors that specifically affect their individual band program. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify perceived factors of instrumental music educators that influence their music programs in Northwest North Carolina. Specific questions addressed were:

1. How do instrumental music educators in northwest North Carolina rate factors that may influence their programs?
2. To what extent are the following factors relevant to instrumental music educators: school size, student involvement, geographic location, budget, and support?

Chapter III: Methodology

Purpose of the Study

Every music education program faces challenges; however, the music programs in small, rural schools have specific obstacles to overcome. Problems associated with music education programs in rural settings according to existing research include, a) funding inequities, b) decreasing enrollment in low SES schools, c) reduced class offerings, d) feelings of isolation and frustration faced by many teachers, e) reduced local resources, and f) lack of administrative and parental support. It is important for instrumental music educators to identify any or all factors that specifically affect their individual band program. By identifying universal factors, instrumental music educators and future music educators can be better informed to make decisions for their band program. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify perceived factors of instrumental music educators that influence their music programs in Northwest North Carolina. Specific questions addressed were:

1. How do instrumental music educators in northwest North Carolina rate factors that may influence their programs?
2. To what extent are the following factors relevant to instrumental music educators: school size, student involvement, geographic location, budget, and support?

Participants

Participants in this study were professional instrumental music educators currently employed in public secondary schools in northwest North Carolina. Participation was dependent upon employment at schools inside the footprint of the Northwest District as identified by the North Carolina Bandmaster's Association.

According to the North Carolina Bandmaster's Association's bylaws, the Northwest District is made up of the following Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and select schools: Mitchell County, Burke County, Avery County, Watauga County, Caldwell County, Ashe County, Alleghany County, Wilkes County, Alexander County, Catawba County: Newton-Conover City Schools, St. Stephens High School, Bandys High School, Fred T. Foard High, Bunker Hill High, H.M. Arndt Middle School, Riverbend Middle School, Mill Creek Middle School, Jacobs Fork Middle School, Iredell County, Yadkin County, Surry County, Davie County, Stokes County, Forsyth County and Davidson County (NCBandmasters.org). Individual email contact information was found through the Northwest District website directory of registered directors (<http://nwdba.weebly.com/directory.html>). Not all instrumental music educators choose to participate in district or state activities and refrain from registering with the district. To obtain these email addresses, the researcher looked up each LEA outlined by the NC Bandmasters to be in the footprint of the Northwest District and cross-referenced schools that are currently registered against schools that are not registered. Through the individual district website, and subsequently individual school websites, email contact for instrumental music teachers was acquired.

The National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) revised code for classification of geo-centric location categories (2010) will be used to define the term *rural area*. The NCES recognizes four major local categories: city, suburban, town, and rural; each is broken into three subcategories. For the purpose of this study, rural will be defined as areas located outside of urbanized centers or urban clusters which contain a population of less than 25,000 (Rural Education in America, 2006).

Data Collection Instrument

A survey instrument (Appendix A) was created using Survey Monkey[®] (Finley, 2009). The researcher constructed the survey based on factors from the literature review that could influence instrumental music programs using a Likert-type scale. Factors identified were: a) issues of funding rural areas; b) issues of socioeconomic status; c) issues of school size; d) issues of curricular offerings; e) issues of teacher perceptions; f) issues of local resources and support. Included in the survey was a demographic component to assess approximate school size, ensemble size, and grade levels taught. The survey was designed to uncover instrumental music director attitudes toward: a) curriculum offerings; b) class scheduling; c) student involvement; d) availability of resources; e) availability of instruments; f) how often the school participates in organized musical activities or festivals; g) how often students are involved in different music activities outside of the school day; and h) how often students are involved in activities in addition to music ensembles.

Finally, the survey was intended to measure instrumental music educators' perception of received support from: a) administration at the district level; b) administration at the school level; c) community; d) parents; e) student body; f) fellow music faculty; and g) non-music faculty. Additionally, the survey sought to find how instrumental music educators value the support received in relation to the overall success of their program.

Data Collection Procedures

Participation Recruitment. An email with an invitation containing a hyperlink to participate in the study was sent to eligible participants on March 7, 2012. Participation in this study was voluntary. The invitation email contained consent information (Appendix B)

affirming no identifying information would be recorded and that information shared through the survey would be used in preparation of a master's thesis and future presentations by the researcher. The email was sent to 84 instrumental music educators. By clicking on the link, participants agreed to the consent information. A follow-up email was sent to the all invited participants one week after the initial invitation on March 14, 2012 as a reminder to complete the survey if they have not already done so.

Data Collection. The survey was open for a period of 14 days, from March 7, 2012 through March 21, 2012, on Survey Monkey[®] (Finley, 2009). Upon completion of the survey, submitted results were electronically collected using Survey Monkey[®] (Finley, 2009). The raw data was compiled and analyzed for results.

Data Analysis Procedures

For research question one and two, descriptive statistics were utilized to determine the degree to which specific problems associated in the literature align with rural North Carolina instrumental music teachers' identification and what special issues arise from the survey.

Restatement of Questions

The purpose of the present study was to examine the following research questions:

1. How do instrumental music educators in northwest North Carolina rate factors that may influence their programs?
2. To what extent are the following factors relevant to instrumental music educators: school size, student involvement, geographic location, budget, and support?

Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of the present study was to examine the following research questions:

1. How do instrumental music educators in northwest North Carolina rate factors as influencing their programs?
2. To what extent are the following factors relevant to instrumental music educators: school size, student involvement, geographic location, budget, and support?

Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Data

Participants for this study were in-service public school instrumental music educators in the footprint of the Northwest District as specified by the North Carolina Bandmaster's Association. The total number of instrumental music educators in this district was 83 and all were invited to participate in this study through an E-mail invitation from the researcher on March 7, 2012. A reminder E-mail was sent to all participants on March 14, 2012. The researcher double-checked the E-mail addresses to ensure the invitation was delivered to each educator; through www.SurveyMonkey.com (Finley, 2009), feedback was provided on the status of each email sent. After finding some E-mail addresses had been labeled as undeliverable, a request for participation was sent to the Northwest District listserv where the instrumental music educators offered usable email addresses. A final E-mail reminder with the Survey Monkey[®] link was then sent out to potential participants on March 22, 2012.

The Rural Instrumental Music Teacher Survey (RIMTS; Appendix A) was administered for a period of 18 days. Sixty-two survey responses were collected, which gave the researcher a response rate of 75%. However, of those 62 submissions, six were incomplete and were

excluded from the analysis. Fifty-six were complete responses and were utilized in this analysis (N=56).

The survey included questions intended to gather contextual information by asking participants to enter information about the grade levels taught, number of schools serviced, size of those schools, and number of students participating in the largest ensemble. Of the complete responses submitted (N=56), 14 participants work at high schools exclusively and 17 participants work at middle schools exclusively. Twenty-five participants work at multiple schools; of those, 20 participants work at high school and middle school, one participant works at multiple middle schools, and four participants work at both a middle school and elementary school. Student enrollment at the largest school in which participants taught is detailed in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Student Population Distribution

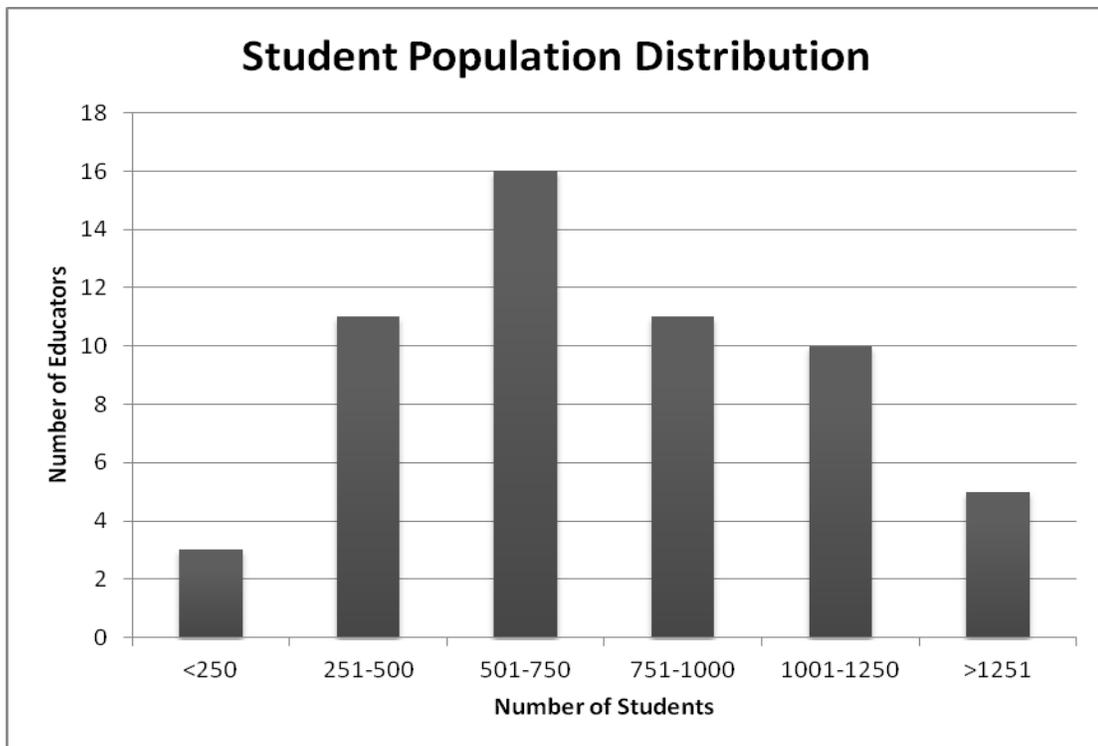


Table 1 illustrates the number of instrumental music educators by schools size separated by the level taught: High School; Middle School; High and Middle School; Multiple Middle Schools; or Middle and Elementary Schools. In the instances where a director taught at multiple schools, the participant was asked to provide student population for the largest of the schools serviced.

Table 1

Number of Instrumental Music Educators in Various Schools of Various Sizes

| | <250 | 251-500 | 501-750 | 751-1000 | 1001-1250 | >1251 | Total |
|-------------------------------|------|---------|---------|----------|-----------|-------|-------|
| High School | | | 1 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 14 |
| Middle School | | 4 | 8 | 4 | 1 | | 17 |
| High and Middle Schools | 1 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 2 | | 20 |
| Multiple Middle Schools | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Middle and Elementary Schools | 1 | 2 | | 1 | | | 4 |
| Totals | 3 | 11 | 16 | 11 | 11 | 4 | 56 |

Instrumental music educators were also asked to indicate their largest ensemble for student membership. Four (7.1%) responded to have ensembles of less than 25 students; six (10.7%) responded to have ensembles in excess of 100 students; ten (17.9%) reported a largest ensemble between 51 and 75 students; eleven (19.6%) see an ensemble between 76 and 100 students; and twenty-five (44.6%) indicated their largest ensemble was between 26 and 50 students (Table 2).

Table 2

Largest Ensemble Membership

| Ensemble Size | Frequency | Cumulative Frequency | Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|---------------|-----------|----------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| >25 | 4 | 4 | 7.1% | 7.1% |
| 26-50 | 25 | 29 | 44.6% | 51.7% |
| 51-75 | 10 | 39 | 17.9% | 69.6% |
| 76-100 | 11 | 50 | 19.6% | 89.2% |
| >100 | 6 | 56 | 10.7% | 100% |

Survey Descriptive Analysis

The survey was divided into five sections. Each section contained statements relating to factors found in the literature that affect rural instrumental music education programs. Based on the review of literature, the five major factors selected for the sections were 1) school size, 2) student involvement, 3) geographic location, 4) budget, and 5) support. The distribution of questions is found in Table 3.

Table 3

Distribution of Questions

| Category | Variable |
|---------------------|--|
| SCHOOL SIZE | 5a. Students in my music program are able to take instrumental music classes without conflict with required classes. |
| | 5b. The current offerings of instrumental music classes at my school meets the needs of my students. |
| | 6a. After School Rehearsals |
| | 6b. Large Group Adjudicated Events |
| | 6c. Solo/Ensemble |
| | 6d. School Sponsored Band Trips |
| STUDENT INVOLVEMENT | 6e. Honor Bands |
| | 5c. Students in my instrumental ensembles are also involved in other extra-curricular activities. |
| | 7a. Other Music Ensembles. |
| | 7b. Sports. |
| | 7c. After School Jobs. |

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| | 7d. School Sponsored Extra-Curricular Activities. |
| | 7e. Student's Responsibilities with Families. |
| | 7f. Student's Involvement with Religious Activities. |
| GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION | 5d. There is a reputable music retailer in my school's community. |
| | 5e. Representatives from a music retailer visit my school on a regular basis. |
| | 6f. Private Lessons |
| | 6g. University Outreach |
| BUDGET | 5f. I feel that I have the necessary financial resources to effectively teach my students. |
| | 5g. My school has enough available usable instruments for students to use if they cannot provide one on their own. |
| SUPPORT | 8a. School Level Administration Support Importance |
| | 9a. School Level Administration Perceived Support Received |
| | 8b. District Level Administration Support Importance |
| | 9b. District Level Administration Perceived Support Received |
| | 8c. Community Support Importance |
| | 9c. Community Perceived Support Received |
| | 8d. Parents Support Importance |
| | 9d. Parents Perceived Support Received |
| | 8e. Student Body Support Importance |
| | 9e. Student Body Perceived Support Received |
| | 8f. Fellow Music Faculty Support Importance |
| | 9f. Fellow Music Faculty Perceived Support Received |
| | 8g. Non-Music Faculty Support Importance |
| | 9g. Non-Music Faculty Perceived Support Received |

Table 4 provides statements from the survey in order of appearance in the RIMTS survey paired with the corresponding category. A five-point Likert-type scale was used for each section of statements to measure extent of participant agreement.

Table 4

Questions and Corresponding Category

| Variable | Category |
|--|---------------------|
| 5a. Students in my music program are able to take instrumental music classes without conflict with required classes. | School Size |
| 5b. The current offerings of instrumental music classes at my school meets the needs of my students. | School Size |
| 5c. Students in my instrumental ensembles are also involved in other extra-curricular activities. | Student Involvement |
| 5d. There is a reputable music retailer in my school's community. | Geographic Location |
| 5e. Representatives from a music retailer visit my school on a regular basis. | Geographic Location |
| 5f. I feel that I have the necessary financial resources to effectively teach my students. | Budget |
| 5g. My school has enough available usable instruments for students to use if they cannot provide one on their own. | Budget |
| 6a. After School Rehearsals | School Size |
| 6b. Large Group Adjudicated Events | School Size |
| 6c. Solo/Ensemble | School Size |
| 6d. School Sponsored Band Trips | School Size |
| 6e. Honor Bands | School Size |
| 6f. Private Lessons | Geographic Location |
| 6g. University Outreach | Geographic Location |
| 7a. Other Music Ensembles. | Student Involvement |
| 7b. Sports. | Student Involvement |
| 7c. After School Jobs. | Student Involvement |
| 7d. School Sponsored Extra-Curricular Activities. | Student Involvement |
| 7e. Student's Responsibilities with Families. | Student Involvement |
| 7f. Student's Involvement with Religious Activities. | Student Involvement |
| 8a. School Level Administration Support Importance | Support |
| 8b. District Level Administration Support Importance | Support |
| 8c. Community Support Importance | Support |
| 8d. Parents Support Importance | Support |
| 8e. Student Body Support Importance | Support |
| 8f. Fellow Music Faculty Support Importance | Support |
| 8g. Non-Music Faculty Support Importance | Support |
| 9a. School Level Administration Perceived Support Received | Support |
| 9b. District Level Administration Perceived Support Received | Support |
| 9c. Community Perceived Support Received | Support |
| 9d. Parents Perceived Support Received | Support |
| 9e. Student Body Perceived Support Received | Support |
| 9f. Fellow Music Faculty Perceived Support Received | Support |
| 9g. Non-Music Faculty Perceived Support Received | Support |

School Size. Selections from sections five and six from the survey correspond with the factor of school size. Section five includes statements arranged to indicate agreement on a five-point Likert-type scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. Section six includes statements arranged to indicate agreement on a five-point Likert-type scale: 1 = Always, 2 = Very Often, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Rarely, 5 = Never. The mean, mode, range, and standard deviation for each statement are illustrated below (Table 5).

Table 5

Statistical Responses for School Size

| Variable | Mean | Mode | Range | SD |
|--|------|------|-------|------|
| 5a. Students in my music program are able to take instrumental music classes without conflict with required classes. | 3.14 | 2 | 4 | 1.43 |
| 5b. The current offerings of instrumental music classes at my school meets the needs of my students. | 3.25 | 4 | 4 | 1.15 |
| 6a. After School Rehearsals | 2.82 | 2 | 4 | 1.06 |
| 6b. Large Group Adjudicated Events | 2.30 | 1 | 4 | 1.24 |
| 6c. Solo/Small Ensemble Festivals | 3.61 | 5 | 4 | 1.25 |
| 6d. School Sponsored Band Trips | 2.68 | 3 | 4 | 1.16 |
| 6e. Honor Bands | 2.36 | 2 | 4 | 1.08 |

The means from section six range from a low of 2.30 to high of 3.61. The entire range of the Likert-type scale was used in all items. For items 5a and 5b the mode is two (disagree) and four (agree) respectively. For items 6a and 6e the mode was two (very often). Item 6b had a mode of 1 (Always); 6c, Mo = 5 (Never); and 6d, Mo = 3 (Sometimes). The standard deviation for all items relevant to school size was between 1.06 and 1.25 with the exception of item 5a (students are able to take instrumental classes without conflict with required classes) which resulted a standard deviation of 1.43 indicating a larger distribution of results.

Student Involvement. In addition to school size, selections from sections five and seven in the survey also addressed student involvement. Participants were asked to indicate how often their students were involved in various musical activities. Section five includes statements arranged to indicate agreement on a five-point Likert-type scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. Section seven utilizes a five-point Likert-type scale beginning with 1 = Always, 2 = Very Often, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Rarely, 5 = Never. The mean, mode, range, standard deviation, maximum, and minimum for each statement are illustrated below (Table 6).

Table 6

Statistical Responses for Student Involvement

| Variable | Mean | Mode | Range | SD | Max | Min |
|---|------|------|-------|------|-----|-----|
| 5c. Students in my instrumental ensembles are also involved in other extra-curricular activities. | 4.70 | 5 | 1 | 0.46 | 5 | 4 |
| 7a. Other Musical Ensembles | 4.11 | 5 | 3 | 0.95 | 5 | 2 |
| 7b. Sports | 2.61 | 3 | 4 | 1.16 | 5 | 1 |
| 7c. After School Jobs | 3.50 | 3 | 4 | 1.24 | 5 | 1 |
| 7d. School Sponsored Extra-Curricular Activities | 2.95 | 3 | 4 | 0.96 | 5 | 1 |
| 7e. Student's Responsibilities with Family | 3.11 | 3 | 3 | 0.93 | 5 | 2 |
| 7f. Student's Involvement with Religious Activities | 3.57 | 4 | 3 | 0.87 | 5 | 2 |

In selections from section seven, the means range from a low of 2.61 for statement 7b (sports) to high of 4.11 for statement 7a (other musical ensembles). The entire range of the Likert-type scale was used in items 7b, c, and d. Items 7a, e, and f only had a range of 3, with the choices indicating three, four, and five (sometimes, rarely, and never) on the Likert-type scale. The mode for item 5c was five (strongly agree). For items 7b, c, d, and e, the mode

equals three (sometimes). Student's involvement with religious activities received a mode of four (rarely). Conflict with other musical ensembles received a mode of five (never). The standard deviation for items 5c, 7a, 7d, 7e, 7f are all less than one indicating a distribution of scores less than one on the Likert-type scale. For item 7b, the standard deviation was 1.16, and for item 7c, standard deviation was 1.24 indicating results were distributed at a wider interval and increasing the margin of error.

Geographic Location. Several selections from sections five and six also correspond with the factor of geographic location. Section five includes statements arranged to indicate agreement on a five-point Likert-type scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. Section six includes statements arranged to indicate agreement on a five-point Likert-type scale: 1 = Always, 2 = Very Often, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Rarely, 5 = Never. The mean, mode, range, and standard deviation for each statement are illustrated below (Table 7).

Table 7

Statistical Responses for Geographic Location

| Variable | Mean | Mode | Range | SD |
|---|------|------|-------|------|
| 5d. There is a reputable music retailer in my school's community. | 3.68 | 5 | 4 | 1.50 |
| 5e. Representatives from a music retailer visit my school on a regular basis. | 4.25 | 5 | 3 | 1.22 |
| 6f. Private Lessons | 3.52 | 4 | 4 | 1.03 |
| 6g. University Outreach | 3.98 | 5 | 4 | 1.17 |

For statement 5d (location of a music retailer in the school's community), the mean is 3.68 with a range of four and standard deviation of 1.50 indicating a wide range in the mean score. For selection 5e (music retailers visiting schools), the mean is 4.25 with a range of 3 and

standard deviation of 1.50. The mode for both selections is five. For selection 6f (private lessons), the mean is 3.52 with a mode of 4 and a standard deviation of 1.03. For selection 6g (university outreach), the mean is 3.98 with a mode of 5 and a standard deviation of 1.17. The range for both selections utilized the entire scale.

Budget. Statements from sections five correspond with the factor of budget. Section five includes statements arranged to indicate agreement on a five-point Likert-type scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. The mean, mode, range, and standard deviation for each statement are illustrated below (Table 8).

Table 8

Statistical Responses for Budget

| Variable | Mean | Mode | Range | SD |
|--|------|------|-------|-----|
| 5f. I feel that I have the necessary financial resources to effectively teach my students. | 2.73 | 4 | 4 | 1.3 |
| 5g. My school has enough available usable instruments for students to use if they cannot provide one on their own. | 2.68 | 2 | 4 | 1.3 |

For both selections, the entire range of the Likert-type scale was used. The standard deviation for both selections was 1.31.

Support. Section eight in the survey addressed the perceived importance of support from various groups are to their band program. A five-point Likert-type scale was utilized, beginning with 1 = Very Unimportant, 1 = Unimportant, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important, 5 = Very Important. The mean, mode, range, and standard deviation for each statement are illustrated below (Table 9).

Table 9

Statistical Responses for Importance of Support

| Variable | Mean | Mode | Range | SD |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|-------|------|
| 8a. School Level Administration | 4.32 | 5 | 4 | 1.13 |
| 8b. District Level Administration | 4.04 | 5 | 4 | 1.13 |
| 8c. Community | 4.25 | 5 | 4 | 1.18 |
| 8d. Parents | 4.46 | 5 | 4 | 1.18 |
| 8e. Student Body | 3.75 | 4 | 4 | 1.16 |
| 8f. Fellow Music Faculty | 4.18 | 5 | 4 | 1.16 |
| 8g. Non-Music Faculty | 3.88 | 4 | 4 | 1.18 |

The means range from a low of 3.75 to high of 4.46. The entire range of the Likert-type scale was used in all items. Mode for items 8a, b, c, d, and f was five; the mode for items 8e and g was four. The standard deviation for all items was between 1.13 and 1.18.

For section nine in the survey, participants were asked to rate the level of support they have experienced during their time teaching at their current school. A five-point Likert-type scale was utilized, beginning with Low = 1, Moderately Low = 2, Moderate = 3, Moderately High = 4, High = 5. The mean, mode, range, standard deviation, maximum, and minimum, for each statement are illustrated below (Table 10).

Table 10

Statistical Responses for Support Received

| Variable | Mean | Mode | Range | SD |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|-------|------|
| 9a. School Level Administration | 3.79 | 4 | 4 | 1.12 |
| 9b. District Level Administration | 3.11 | 3 | 4 | 1.26 |
| 9c. Community | 3.55 | 3 | 4 | 1.21 |
| 9d. Parents | 3.79 | 4 | 4 | 1.19 |
| 9e. Student Body | 2.95 | 3 | 4 | 1.27 |
| 9f. Fellow Music Faculty | 4.05 | 5 | 4 | 1.14 |
| 9g. Non-Music Faculty | 3.25 | 3 | 4 | 1.08 |

The means range from a low of 2.95 on statement 9e (student body) to high of 4.05 on statement 9f (fellow music faculty). The entire range of the Likert-type scale was used in all items. The mode for items 9b, c, e, and g was three; for items 9a, and d the mode was four. The mode for item 9f was five. The standard deviation for all items ranged from 1.08 to 1.27.

Summary

Through the data collected in this study, instrumental music educators' perceptions on influencing factors on band programs among identified factors from the literature were qualified. The range for most items was found to utilize the entire Likert-type scale with the exception of items 5c (students are involved in extra-curricular activities), 5e (representatives from a music retailer visit my school on a regular basis), 7a (involvement in other musical ensembles), 7e (student's responsibilities with family), and 7f (student's involvement with religious activities).

In the following chapter, discussions of the findings for each of the factors (school size, student involvement, geographic location, budget, and support) are discussed.

Chapter V: Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine factors from research literature affecting small band programs in public schools directed by in-service instrumental educators. Research questions associated with the present study included: 1) How do instrumental music educators in northwest North Carolina rate factors which may influence their programs? 2) To what extent are the following factors relevant to instrumental music educators: school size, student involvement, geographic location, budget, and support?

To answer the research questions, a survey instrument titled *The Rural Instrumental Music Teacher Survey* (RIMTS) was designed by the researcher based on identified factors from prior studies (Appendix A). From the survey data collected, descriptive statistics were calculated. The means, mode, and range were examined to find the degree of agreement participants had with the survey statements, ordered by the selected factors of school size, student involvement, geographic location, budget.

Discussion

School Size. From the results of RIMTS, instrumental music educators stated that the current offerings of instrumental classes are adequate within their perspective schools. These ensembles tend to be active in activities outside of the school day, yet scheduling of instrumental music classes against other classes tend to be problematic. When asked to agree or disagree with the statement “5a. students in my music program are able to take instrumental music classes without conflicts with required classes,” the responses were split almost evenly between agree and disagree. However, when comparing responses with survey participants who work at

multiple schools, the response was overwhelmingly negative; 85% of these instrumental music educators disagreed with this statement. Teachers who split their day between multiple schools disagreed with the statement ($\chi = 2.1$). Participants stationed at one school generally agreed with the statement ($\chi = 4.1$). High school directors had a 50% agreement rate ($M_o = 4$), while middle school teachers stationed at one school had a unanimous 100% agreement to this statement.

When participants were asked to what degree they agreed or disagreed with the statement “5b. the current offerings of instrumental music classes at my school meets the needs of my students,” the overall popular response was agree ($M_o = 4$) but positive responses yielded only 53.6% while negative responses totaled 34% with a neutral response of 12.5%. Similarly to other statements, participants from multiple schools disagreed more frequently than the entire group; their disagreement rate was 60%.

The involvement of band programs in music festivals and other events was generally regarded as something that most instrumental music educators (82.1% answered from always to sometimes) choose to participate in. Participants responded that their students were involved in after school rehearsals between very often and sometimes ($\chi = 2.82$, $M_o = 2$), indicating participants themselves organized after school rehearsals. The kinds of after school activities were more varied. Large group adjudicated events such as Music Performance Assessment or Marching Band competitions were rated at very often with a mean response of 2.30.

Solo and small ensemble festivals were rated between sometimes and rarely for students to participate at a mean response of 3.61, but the most popular response was never ($M_o = 5$). Participants responded that students were involved in honor bands always and very often (57.1%), with 32.1% of participants selecting sometimes. This is in direct contrast with involvement with solo and small ensemble festivals.

Student Involvement. Item seven from the survey was designed to compare how often other after-school activities overlap with instrumental rehearsals or practices outside of the school day. There was universal agreement from all participants that students in instrumental ensembles are also involved in other extra-curricular activities, with an agreement rate of 100%..

Some students may be involved in multiple music ensembles. Additional musical ensembles were rated on the scale of rarely or never when overlapping with instrumental rehearsals afterschool. Students' involvement with religious activities was rated between sometimes and rarely as overlapping with instrumental rehearsals. Participants rated students involved in school sponsored extra-curricular activities between very often and sometimes, with a response mode of 3. Students' responsibilities with family was rated as sometimes (Mo = 3) and involvement with religious activities were rated rarely (Mo = 4) for overlapping with rehearsals. Sports was rated as the activity that conflicts with afterschool rehearsals the most, with participants rating of sometimes (Mo = 3); indicating that most students involved in extra-curricular activities are also involved in sports.

Participants also rated afterschool jobs between sometimes and rarely; however, it is necessary to look at teaching levels to analyzing responses from participants who service high schools; the average response for participants who choose high school only was between very often and sometimes ($\chi = 2.86$, Mo = 3).

Geographic Location. When asked about access to a reputable music retail store, 62.5% of participants stated that there was a music retailer in the school's community. Yet despite the location of schools, a large portion of the respondents (83.9%) said that representatives from these retailers visit their school on a regular basis. Private lessons and university outreach were not utilized by the participants. Private lessons were rated sometimes and rarely for students

(71.5%) and university outreach; participants rated university outreach at rarely and never (71.5%). University outreach was rated at the lowest level of program activity.

Budget. Results were mixed when asked if participants had necessary financial resources to effectively teach students. There was no clear consensus to agree or disagree. 51.8% of participants either disagreed or strongly disagreed, 39.7% either agreed or strongly agreed, and 12.5% were neutral with the statement regarding each school having enough usable instruments for student to use if they cannot provide their own.

Support. The eighth and ninth sections on the survey were designed to collect instrumental music educator's perception of how important support from different sources are to the overall success of the band program as well as the perceived received support from the same sources. For section eight in the survey, participants were asked to rate their perspective of how important the support of various groups are to their band program. Participants stated that it was important or very important to have support from school level administration (87.5%), district level administration (73.2%), community (83.9%), parents (87.5%), student body (67.9%), fellow music faculty (85.7%), and non-music faculty (73.2%).

Section nine from RIMTS was designed to rate the level of support participants experienced during their time teaching at their current school. Even though the participants rated that support from all sources as important to the overall success of the band program, the numbers generated from support received are lower in comparison. Support from fellow music faculty was ranked as the highest source of support received ($\chi = 4.05$, Mo = 5). Support from school level administration was moderately high ($\chi = 3.79$, Mo = 4), parents was moderately high ($\chi = 3.79$, Mo = 4), and community was moderate ($\chi = 3.55$, Mo = 3) in support received. Support from district level administration ($\chi = 3.11$, Mo = 3), student body ($\chi = 2.95$, Mo = 3),

non-music faculty ($\chi = 3.25$, $Mo = 3$) was rated as moderate support received.

Implications

Although the survey instrument RIMTS was not designed to gain specific insight as to why instrumental music educators do or do not feel a certain way, the study does suggest a consensus about factors that influence instrumental music programs. As identified by the literature, the following factors are discussed: school size, student involvement, geographic location, budget and support.

School Size. The focus of most band programs in northwest North Carolina seems to be the large ensemble, despite the size of the school. This study suggests the schools large enough to maintain a full time instrumental music educator had fewer issues with class scheduling and class conflicts for students. This coincides with the suggestion that schools cannot offer appropriate amount of classes, or levels of classes, in music education since the school's music professional is not on campus for the entire school day. If a teacher can only be on campus for half of the day, this limits the amount of music classes offered and increases potential class scheduling conflicts simply due to the availability of the music teacher. Yet, in spite of potential scheduling conflicts for students, which may limit student participation in large ensembles, participants stated that their students were involved in large ensemble adjudication festivals on a regular basis. This suggests that large ensembles at schools, regardless of size, are generally the focal point of instrumental music programs. This could also mean that it is a general expectation that large ensembles participate in adjudicated events, which is congruent with previous literature (Bates, 2011).

Festivals for solo or small ensembles are not as popular as most instrumental educators stated they either never or rarely participated in these events. Perhaps the reason solo and small ensemble festivals are so poorly attended can be found in the general expectations of school band programs. According to Isbell (2011), there are expectations of the school band to participate in other activities outside the school day such as community parades, football games, and other social events, and most of them involve large ensembles. There is pressure to keep administrators, community members, and the general public appeased and that may be one rational to focus on the large ensemble. Even though the participation rate of solo and small ensembles is poor, the participation rate of honor bands was high. It remains unclear from the survey results why the participation in solo and ensemble events is low. Future research is needed to indicate why one individual student event is preferred over the other.

Student Involvement. The unanimous agreement that students are involved in extracurricular activities outside of instrumental music would also then suggest that students may sometimes have conflicts with afterschool rehearsals. Sports were rated as being the most common factor in conflict with afterschool rehearsals. As sporting activities take place in schools as an extra-curricular event, conflicts are much more likely if co-curricular areas schedule after school rehearsals. What is not clear is whether this is a source of friction for band directors and students. Further research is needed to accurately describe the priorities of music-student-athletes.

One factor that does not seem to influence instrumental music programs is other music ensemble practices. Perhaps this is because, as previously stated, instrumental music educators are supported by their fellow music educators. Since music rehearsals seem to rarely overlap,

this suggests that music educators communicate and plan afterschool rehearsals to facilitate other programs.

Student afterschool jobs was not a factor for middle school and elementary school educators. This is likely due to the students not being old enough to hold a job. High school teachers rated this as a much more frequent factor. The survey did not investigate instrumental music teachers' perceptions of students afterschool jobs, thus it is unclear why students choose to take jobs afterschool or how often they must work. Yet some schools involved in this study fall in areas of low socioeconomic status (SES) and according to published literature, students in low SES areas are more likely to choose to hold afterschool jobs to help support the family (Kuntz, 2011). Further research is needed to fully understand the influence of SES on band programs. and investigate student perceptions of music courses and extra-curricular demands.

Geographic Location. Although 37.5% of participants stated that they were in schools that did not have a music retailer in the community, a large portion of the participants (83.9%) said that representatives from music retailers visit their school on a regular basis. The fact that retailers that are willing to travel to bring the music store to schools in rural locations diminishes the negative impact of geographic factor for instrumental music educators and their students when it comes to instrumental repair and supplies. Geographic location and low SES might be affecting the ability of students and their families to reach teachers and/or afford instruction. The impact of extra-curricular activities may also negatively affect participation in private instruction. Further research is needed to accurately assess perceptions and participation in private lessons.

University outreach was rated the lowest at rarely and never being a factor in instrumental music programs. This may be due to the availability of higher education resources

such as students, faculty and budget limitations; schools being located a large distance from colleges and universities; or simply participants not desiring outside help. Further research is needed to discover how universities try to reach students in rural secondary schools.

Budget. The RIMTS was designed to attempt to measure how budget impacts instrumental music programs; however, the questions regarding budget were too broad to accurately represent how instrumental music educators perceive their budgets. For one, the survey did not take into account that some programs may be funded by multiple sources, where some programs may not be funded at all. Thus, results were inconclusive to suggest how budget and financial resources are to band programs. Further research is needed to create a better snapshot of how educators perceive the factor of budget.

Support. Participants have stated that support from all sources are important to the overall success of their program, but the perceived support received stated that not all schools are receiving the same amount of support from the same sources. It is important to have support from administrators, community, parents, faculty and students, but it may also be important to know how to generate support from these different groups. It may be that some participants are better able to generate support more efficiently than others, and further research is needed to how support is generated and determine what the more effective methods of rallying support to instrumental music programs are.

Recommendations

The RIMTS was designed to begin to investigate factors from the literature that most impact rural instrumental educators from northwest North Carolina. The factors of school size, student involvement, and support are important factors affecting band programs. The factor of

geographic location is suggested to be a hindrance for university outreach but not for music retailer access. The factor of budget was inconclusive in this study.

One of the limitations for more specific conclusions was the survey design. The statements used were designed to generate a general response, not to generate specific reasons as to why the factors were seen as important or not important. Based on the response to the initial survey, it would be beneficial to design another survey to get at the perceived cause and effect of some of these factors.

The sample for the district used was strong; however, a larger sample size would allow generalization to the broad population of instrumental music educators. To achieve a larger sample size, the focus of the study might include the entire state of North Carolina, or a broader regional sample from the south or rural areas across the country.

Suggestions for Further Research

The current study is limited due to the scope of the survey. The study does however provide a brief insight as to what factors currently in-service instrumental music educators rate as obstacles and challenges to band programs. Future research can be implemented to examine middle school and high school students' beliefs on participation in individual music events such as honor bands and solo small ensemble festivals since these factors focus on individual participation, but were rated very differently in the current study. Since sports were rated as most commonly overlapping with afterschool rehearsals, further research might investigate middle school and high school student athletes from rural schools who are enrolled in instrumental music classes to examine their beliefs and priorities to sports and music.

Funding for instrumental music is sometimes a challenge for many music educators. This study was inconclusive in determining how budget and financial resources are obtained and supplied to band programs. Further investigation on budget and financing factors in instrumental music programs might expand on prior research studies done by Ester (2009) and Hicks (2010). Likewise, a qualitative study seeking to determine effective methods of rallying support to instrumental music programs from administrators, community, parents, faculty, and students would be beneficial to other music educators who do not experience strong support.

Conclusion

For instrumental music educators, challenges affecting band programs abound. Instrumental music educators are constantly finding ways to overcome these challenging obstacles. This study supports previous research suggesting that school size affects not only the size of ensembles, but also can affect the overall course offerings for the school, and may generate to scheduling conflicts for students based on availability of faculty. Student involvement, specifically afterschool jobs and athletics, is suggested to be a factor affecting music activities outside of the school day. Geographic location of schools can have negative implications for instrumental music programs; yet being isolated from commercial music sources, higher education institutions, and private instructors has not limited some programs from finding methods to minimize the negative implications. Budget may be a negative factor but further research is needed to specify to what extent it affects specific programs.

Support is needed for any program to be successful. Some schools seem to be able to generate more than others, and instrumental music educators must find a means to generate support unique to their situation. Knowledge of these factors and how to overcome them into

instrumental music programs can be helpful for the overall success of any band program and possibly can help contribute better service of students in the twenty-first century.

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Appendix A
Survey Instrument

Rural Instrumental Music Educator's Perception

Exit this survey

1. About how many students attend your primary school?

<250 | 250-500 | 501-750 | 751-1000 | 1001-1250 | >1250

2. How many students are in your largest instrumental ensemble?

1-25 | 26-50 | 51-75 | 76-100 | >100

3. Do you teach at the high school level, middle school level, or both?

High School | Middle School | I teach both levels

4. How many schools do you service?

- High school only
- Middle school only
- High school and middle school
- More than one High School
- More than one Middle School
- Middle school and Elementary School

5. Please select how well you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree

Students in my music program are able to take instrumental music classes without conflicts with required classes.

The current offerings of instrumental music classes at my school meets the needs of my students.

Students in my

instrumental ensembles are also involved in other extra-curricular activities.

There is a reputable music retailer in my school's community.

Representatives from a music retailer visit my school(s) on a regular basis.

I feel that I have the necessary financial resources to effectively teach my students.

My school(s) has/have enough available usable instruments for students to use if they can not provide one on their own.

6. In a typical school year, how often are/were your students involved in the following:

Always Very Often Sometimes Rarely Never

After School Rehearsals

Large Group Adjudicated Events (such as MPA or marching band competitions)

Solo/Small Ensemble Festivals

School Sponsored band trips

Honor Bands

Private Lessons

University Outreach (university students visiting/observing/coaching/assisting)

7. During your time teaching at your current school, how often did the following activities overlap with instrumental rehearsals/practices?

| | Always | Very Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|---|--------|------------|-----------|--------|-------|
| Other Musical Ensembles | | | | | |
| Sports | | | | | |
| After School Jobs | | | | | |
| School Sponsored Extra-curricular Activities (student council, FFA, etc.) | | | | | |
| Student's Responsibilities with Families | | | | | |
| Students Involvement with Religious Activities | | | | | |

8. Please rate your perspective of how important the support of each group is to your program.

| | Very Unimportant | Unimportant | Neutral | Important | Very Important |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|----------------|
| School Level Administration | | | | | |
| District Level Administration | | | | | |
| Community | | | | | |
| Parents | | | | | |
| Student Body | | | | | |
| Fellow Music Faculty | | | | | |
| Non-Music Faculty | | | | | |

9. Please rate the level of support you have/had during your time teaching at your current school.

Low Moderately Low Moderate Moderately High High

- School Level Administration
- District Level Administration
- Community
- Parents
- Student Body
- Fellow Music Faculty
- Non-Music Faculty

Done

Powered by **SurveyMonkey**
Create your own [free online survey](#) now!

APPENDIX B:
INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Dear Music Colleague,

You are being invited to participate in a study that will investigate your attitudes and perceptions of issues and factors that influence your instrumental music program.

Your involvement will simply consist of completing an online survey accessible by clicking on the link located at the bottom of this e-mail. The survey will take no more than 10 minutes to complete. No personal identifiers will be asked for and your responses will remain completely anonymous.

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study. Results of this study will be made available upon completion of the investigation. Participating in this study is voluntary and you will not receive any monetary compensation for participation in this study. By clicking on the link below, you give your voluntary consent to participate in this survey.

Thank you for your consideration,

Chad Evans

Music Director, Alleghany High School

APPENDIX C:
REMINDER EMAIL

Friends,

This is just a friendly reminder to participate in my study. I will need to run the survey for the next seven days, and would really appreciate your participation. The survey will take between 5 and 10 minutes to complete.

I'm really hoping that the results from this study will be able to help other directors and our district. I only have a few responses so far and would greatly appreciate your thoughts.

Thanks!!

Chad Evans

Alleghany High School

Here is a link to the survey:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx>

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

Thanks for your participation!

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx>

APPENDIX D:
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board Office
1L-09 Brody Medical Sciences Building· Mail Stop 682
600 Moye Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834
Office **252-744-2914** · Fax **252-744-2284** · www.ecu.edu/irb

Notification of Exempt Certification

From: Social/Behavioral IRB
To: [Charles Evans](#)
CC: [Cynthia Wagoner](#)
Date: 3/6/2012
Re: [UMCIRB 12-000392](#)
Factors in Rural Music Music Education

I am pleased to inform you that your research submission has been certified as exempt on 3/6/2012. This study is eligible for Exempt Certification under category #2.

It is your responsibility to ensure that this research is conducted in the manner reported in your application and/or protocol, as well as being consistent with the ethical principles of the Belmont Report and your profession.

This research study does not require any additional interaction with the UMCIRB unless there are proposed changes to this study. Any change, prior to implementing that change, must be submitted to the UMCIRB for review and approval. The UMCIRB will determine if the change impacts the eligibility of the research for exempt status. If more substantive review is required, you will be notified within five business days.

The UMCIRB office will hold your exemption application for a period of five years from the date of this letter. If you wish to continue this protocol beyond this period, you will need to submit an Exemption Certification request at least 30 days before the end of the five year period.

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

IRB00000705 East Carolina U IRB #1 (Biomedical) IORG0000418
IRB00003781 East Carolina U IRB #2 (Behavioral/SS) IORG0000418 IRB00004973
East Carolina U IRB #4 (Behavioral/SS Summer) IORG0000418

