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## Perceptions of Pre-Service Music Educators Regarding Participation in Competitive Band Events

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THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF MUSIC

PERCEPTIONS OF PRE-SERVICE MUSIC EDUCATORS REGARDING  
PARTICIPATION IN COMPETITIVE BAND EVENTS

By

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This thesis is dedicated to my dad,  
for his unconditional love and support, for teaching me to  
work hard and enjoy life, encouraging me to pursue my dreams,  
and believing in me always. He will forever be my hero.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of pre-service music education majors regarding participation in competitive concert and marching band events. Participants ( $N = 168$ ) were undergraduate pre-service music education majors who participated in band through high school and college. The participants were from seven universities located in Florida ( $n = 2$ ), Kentucky ( $n = 3$ ), and Ohio ( $n = 2$ ). Music education majors from these universities were asked to complete a two-section questionnaire regarding participation in competitive marching band and concert band events. The first section included six questions relating to music education majors' previous high school band experiences with competitive marching band and concert band events. Section two included seven Likert-type questions pertaining to music education majors' feelings about pressure to compete and importance of participating in competitive marching band and concert band events.

Results indicated music education majors' high school bands generally attended one to two concert band contests/festivals per year, but the number of marching band competitions attended in a year was inconsistent between band programs, with responses ranging from zero marching band competitions per year to more than ten in a school year. The amount of concert and marching band events attended varied by state. While pre-service music education majors expected to receive pressure to participate in competitive events as band directors, there was an inconsistency among variances regarding the amount of pressure received and from where they would receive pressure. Music education majors expected to receive the most pressure from peers/colleagues in all areas. Participation in concert band and non-ranked/non-rated events was slightly more important to music education majors than participation in competitive marching band events. However, all events were rated with some importance.



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

Competition is prevalent in many aspects of American culture, including sports, business, politics, product commercials, and in the home (Miller, 1994). As education reflects the society in which it exists, there is little doubt that competition exists in many forms throughout American schools (Howard, 1995). Music education is no exception. Miller (1994) stated that the arts become a casualty to social conditions in which they reflect. Thus, competition has shown its presence in many forms throughout music education in America.

Competition in music can stem from anything as small as seating placements in a school ensemble to auditions for a select group, solo and small ensemble festivals, large ensemble festivals, show choir contests, or marching band contests (Howard, 1995). A contest, as defined by Larue (1986), includes an organized event in which a group or individual is evaluated by an adjudicator and provided with a rating. Ratings can include “superior” or “division I,” trophies, awards, or designations of “best in class” or “grand champion” (Larue, 1986).

Perhaps the most well known type of contest in school music programs consists of a large group ensemble performing for a panel of adjudicators. Forbes (1994) describes this form of adjudication as involving a large ensemble, such as a concert band or marching band, which performs live for a panel of adjudicators. The performance is evaluated across various designated traits, for example: note accuracy, rhythmic accuracy/ precision, tone quality, intonation, balance, expressivity; or in marching band: music, visual, show concept, percussion. Once the adjudicators assign a score for each trait, categories are totaled to conceive an overall score. Adjudicators’ scores are then averaged to ascertain a combined overall score, and in some cases a placement in a rank order (Forbes, 1994).

Although band contests were held locally in the states since 1915, the event that began the national spread of this type of competition was The Schools Band Contest of America held in Chicago, Illinois in June of 1923 (Rohrer, 2002). This “tournament,” as was referred to by the press, was created by instrumental manufacturing companies as a propaganda effort to improve sales and salvage their struggling businesses. Thirty bands participated in the contest and

received monetary awards in relation to their placement. In the end, the instrument manufacturers viewed the event as a success, but many band directors deemed the contest itself a failure. Regardless of the outcome, The Schools Band Contests of America introduced competitions at the national level (Holz, 1962; Moore, 1972). The first National School Band Contest occurred three years later in Fostoria, Ohio in 1926, and the first National School Orchestra Contest followed in 1929 (Larue, 1986).

The widespread emergence of large ensemble competitions in the early half of the twentieth century has since become a vehicle for educational and musical debate, and continues to be a controversial topic among music educators in the field. Research on competition in music has spanned from student, director, administrator, and parent perceptions of competition to the effects of competition on factors such as motivation, retention, and performance goals. Arguments in support of competition claim that competition increases student interest and enrollment, provides incentives to work hard, increases motivation, encourages high quality music, sets standards for performance, and improves public relations (Howard, 1995; Rohrer, 2002).

Proponents for competition have suggested preparing for contests can be co-achieved with promoting a healthy approach to learning and lifelong participation in music if used properly (Howard, 1995; Parkes, 1983). Parkes (1983) argued competition should be based on a comprehensive approach, which would encourage appropriate use of preparation time, positive attitudes towards learning and competition, the application of previously learned materials, and encouragement of public performance experiences. Another supporting study found that music competitions could provide students with a sense of accomplishment, help music programs to meet high performance standards, and provide clear instructional goals with a means of evaluation (Hurst, 1994). In further agreement, both Larue (1986) and Wery (1996) found improvements in overall motivation or the spirit of students as a result of participating in competitive music events. Some music educators and school administrators, however, believed the value of participating in large ensemble competitions merely outweighed the negative aspects (DeuPree, 1968).

To the contrary, there have been many arguments criticizing the use of competition in music. Battisti (1989) stated “There are currently high school band programs that are geared toward entertainment and the short-term reward of competitive recognition rather than toward

the development of musical skills, understanding, creativity, and the long-term appreciation of great music” (p. 23). Many arguments such as Battisti’s stress an overemphasis on competitive aspects, that winning becomes the goal instead of comprehensive musicianship, too much time spent preparing for competitions deviates from learning and creative music making, competition is not used for educational reasons, and problems involving the adjudication and rating process (Howard, 1995; Rohrer, 2002).

Some music educators have argued that competition breeds an environment focused almost completely toward winning or receiving a high rating (Hines, 1995; Hosler, 2002; Larue, 1986; Mercer, 1990). A study by Johnson (2010) concluded the more time choral programs spent preparing for competitive show choir competitions, the less time they spent learning classical music and comprehensive musicianship. Similarly, an investigation by Rogers (1985) found band directors rated students’ personal benefits, such as discipline, responsibility, and self-esteem, as having the most value in the participation in marching competitions, and rated musical benefits the lowest. Some band directors noted concerns regarding the overemphasis of marching competitions (Rogers, 1985).

Researchers have also suggested that competition fails because there are few winners and many losers (Austin, 1990; Howard, 1995). Austin (1990) and Howard (1995) both argued competition could result in diminished performance, increased anxiety, lowered self-esteem, or discontinued involvement. Minimizing competitive pressure and emphasizing instructional feedback has been advocated as a way to help more students focus on personal growth (Austin, 1990).

Perhaps one of the most common criticisms of competition relates to its role in director decisions regarding curriculum or rehearsal goals. Sheldon (1994) researched the effect of competitive and noncompetitive performance goals on student perceptions of performances. Her findings suggested students might apply a different degree of importance to competitive performances than non-competitive performances. It may be perceived that students put forth more effort in preparing for a competition than for other performances (Sheldon, 1994). Johnson (2010) concluded that preparation for different types of choir competitions had a direct correlation to the curricular decisions of choir directors.

In his article *Of Students and Contests*, Howard (1995) emphasizes “Public school instrumental music is inevitably influenced by the competitive nature of our society” (p. 80).

Although research and opinions have been extensive since the beginning of the band contest movement in the 1920's, competition in music is still a controversial topic among music educators today. While some music educators feel the benefits of competition outweigh the negatives, others have discontinued participation in contests in which there are winners and losers, replacing them with festivals that provide ratings or comments only (Hines, 1995). As many of these issues have not been resolved, it is important to continue research on competition, and to search for ways of improving both the negative and positive effects competition can have on students' lifelong learning and enjoyment of music.

The purpose of the current study was to examine the perceptions of pre-service music education majors regarding participation in competitive concert and marching band events.

Specific questions included:

1. What experiences did music education majors have with competitive marching band and concert band throughout high school?
2. To what extent does participation in competitive marching band and large group concert band contests/festivals affect the amount of literature students learn throughout the school year?
3. To what extent does participation in competitive marching band and large group concert band contests/festivals affect rehearsal time?
4. Where do pre-service music education majors expect to receive pressure from regarding participation in competitive marching band and large group concert band contests/festivals?
5. Where do pre-service music education majors expect to receive pressure from to prepare and teach at a more intense level for competitive performances than non-competitive performances?
6. Do pre-service music education majors plan to place more value on preparation for competitive performances than non-competitive performances?

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

“Its strength lies in the stimulation given students to do their best; its weakness lies in the fact that it may become an end in itself” (Neil, 1944, as cited in Rohrer, 2002, p. 38). Neil’s comments from his 1944 article address the same debate regarding competition in music which researchers have sought to resolve from the mid-1900’s to today. While research involving competition in music has been extensive since the rise of the band contest movement in the 1920’s, much of the literature can be categorized into one of five main areas of focus: the history of band contests in the United States, perceptions and attitudes toward competition, influences of competition, motivational aspects of competition, and curricular or performance goals related to competition.

#### **2.1 The History of Band Contests in the United States**

The Schools Band Contest of 1923 has been referred to by researchers as the event which marked the beginning of the contest movement in the United States (Burdett, 1985; Holz, 1962; Moore, 1972; Rohrer, 2002). This, however, was not the first use of competition in music. Music competitions in vocal ensemble venues have been documented as far back as the mid-1800’s, and band contests had been held at the local level dating back to 1915 (Burdett, 1985; Rohrer, 2002). The Schools Band Contest of America held in 1923 began the national spread of competition in music (Holz, 1962; Moore, 1972). While contrasting data have been presented as to the original motivation for the contest, most research credits the financial distress of instrumental manufacturing companies (Burdett, 1985; Holz, 1962; Moore, 1972; Rohrer, 2002). The contest was held in Chicago, Illinois on June 4-6, 1923. Thirty bands competed for monetary awards reflecting their placement in the competition. The Fostoria High School Boys Band from Fostoria, Ohio was awarded first place in the contest.

Controversy regarding the organization and outcome of The Schools Band Contest of America sparked a meeting of the Committee of Instrument Affairs to refine and standardize national competition. In 1926, two years following the meeting and formation of the National School Band Association, created to oversee national band competitions, the first National Band

Contest was held in Fostoria, Ohio (Burdett, 1985; Holz, 1962; Moore, 1972; Rohrer, 2002). Since the rise of the band contest movement, many aspects of competition have evolved. Perhaps the most influential change was inspired by the debate over the placement system, leading to the development of a ranking system where bands were awarded a performance rating instead of a placement. This change became noticeable in 1932 as a result of Kansas' competition-festival approach (Burdett, 1985; Rohrer, 2002).

The growing interest in national music competitions and events led to the development of committees, organizations, workshops, and conferences across the United States. Perhaps one of the most prominent of these was an organization formed in 1976 as a summer workshop for teachers called Bands of America, currently a division of the Music for All Foundation. Music for All is a non-profit organization which hosts a number of national music competitions each year, including national marching band regionals, championships, and national concert band contests (Music for All Foundation, 2012). This organization illustrates one way in which competition is seen today at the national level.

## **2.2 Early Research on Competition in Music**

The growing interest and involvement in national music competitions initiated a rise in the amount of research involving competition in music through the 1970s and 1980s. The most prominent studies addressed competition in relation to motivation, perceptions, attitudes, and musical achievement. Temple (1973) sought to determine whether students who participated in competitive band programs that consistently received superior ratings would score higher on musical achievement and performance tests than students involved in non-competitive band programs. The Colwell Music Achievement Test and Watkins-Farnum Performance Scale were used to measure students' musical achievement and performance. Findings suggested participation in contests did not improve student sight-reading abilities or level of music achievement. Students enrolled in non-competitive band programs actually scored higher on the music achievement test than those enrolled in successfully competitive band programs.

## **2.3 Perceptions and Attitudes Toward Competition**

Throughout the 1980's research began to arise addressing perceptions and attitudes toward competition. Burnsed and Sochinski (1983) found a positive relationship between the number of competitions entered and the attitudes of students and community members towards competition. Increased participation in competitions improved the attitudes of students and

community members toward these events. Results from Burnsed and Sochinski found a difference in attitudes between college students and high school students regarding their high school marching competitions. Upperclassmen in college placed little value on their high school marching competition experience, while high school students' had an overall positive attitude regarding marching competitions. Furthermore, smaller high schools were found to have participated in more competitions overall than larger schools. While the benefits of marching band competitions were perceived as being mostly extra-musical, band directors felt pressure to compete from administrators, parents, and students.

During the same year, Rogers (1983) investigated perceptions of band directors, students, parents and administrators regarding marching band competitions. Results indicated that band directors viewed marching band competitions as a recruitment tool and believed it provided more personal benefits for students such as discipline, responsibility, and self-esteem, and fewer musical benefits. Conversely, some directors noted concerns regarding the overemphasis of marching band competitions and corp-style bands. Additionally, Rogers surveyed principals, and found they viewed marching band competitions as a way to improve public relations.

Expanding the research on perceptions of competition, LaRue (1985) surveyed band directors, band members, and parent booster members regarding their opinions on the competitive aspects of a band program. The sample included thirty high school band programs from the state of Illinois, fifteen of which had a major contest emphasis and fifteen with a minor contest emphasis. Results suggested band directors valued competition for reasons of providing student motivation, ensemble spirit, and performance standards, while band members and parents mainly valued the motivational and ensemble spirit related aspects of competition.

Narrowing the focus solely to student perceptions, Howard (1994) surveyed 1,600 high school band students from the state of Iowa, asking them to respond to questions concerning contest experience and attitudes toward competition. Student responses reported an overall enjoyment of contest participation. Students indicated that participating in contests improves both motivation and musicianship. Although students rated solo contests as causing the most anxiety, these contests were seen as being the most motivational and educational. There was also a strong positive correlation between student perceptions of their own musical ability and their motivation to participate in competitions.

Drum corps participation has also been found to have an effect on members' perceived value of competition. Zdzinski (2004) surveyed drum corps alumni regarding aspects of enjoyment, interest, success, and frustration of participating in drum corps. Among teamwork, sense of achievement, travel, performance, and social aspects, competition was found to be one of the most enjoyable and important parts of participating in a drum corps. Following participation, many drum corps alumni noted they still attend competitions or volunteer/work in some facet for the event, and many former members elect to become an instructor once they have aged-out of participation.

#### **2.4 Competition and Motivation**

In the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Austin (1988) explored the manipulation of competition as a variable in experimental music research. Using pretest/posttest data from a Musical Achievement Test and Self-Concept in Music Scale, Austin measured self-concept, musical achievement, and achievement motivation of forty-four fifth and sixth grade band students following adjudication of a solo performance. Students were split into two groups, competitive (rated) and non-competitive (comments only). Following one month of preparation in private lessons, students performed their solos for an adjudicator, received ratings and/or comments, and completed a post-test questionnaire. Results of the questionnaire indicated significant gains in self-concept for both groups participating in the adjudicated event and no difference in achievement motivation between the groups. However, musical achievement scores rose significantly in the rated group only. According to results of this study, competition had no negative affects on students.

Concerned by limitations of his previous study, Austin (1991) conducted a second study examining competitive versus non-competitive goal structure in solo and ensemble contests. Set up in a similar fashion as Austin's first study, forty-eight fifth and sixth grade band students were assigned to one of two groups, competitive or non-competitive. This time, however, students in the competitive group were told their goal was to perform well enough to receive a score in which they would be rewarded with a ribbon. Different color ribbons were awarded for higher scores and no ribbon was awarded if the score received was lower than fourteen. Students in the non-competitive group were told their goal was to perform as well as they possibly could, and they would all receive a ribbon for participating. Results found no significant difference in performance between students who were told to prepare a solo for a rating and a ribbon



correlating to their score, and those who were given a ribbon for participation. This study confirmed results from Austin's previous study, which suggested that participating in competition does not generate superior levels of student motivation or music achievement. Implications suggested participation in solo and ensemble events regardless of competition could improve student motivation, self-concept, and music achievement. Austin (1991) suggested music educators should question the use of competition as a motivational and educational tool.

The use of competition as a motivational tool was not only seen in outside events, but also in the band class. Chandler, Chiarella, and Auria (1988) investigated student motivation in relation to band challenges. Students were given a questionnaire which asked them to rate, on a seven-point Likert-type scale, demographic information pertaining to attitude about instrument, chair placement, number of challenges, practice habits, and lessons. Students were then asked to indicate personal reactions (attitudes) regarding where each of them thought they should be placed, chair aspirations, satisfaction with current level, success, and enjoyment, and attributions influencing one's performance such as technique, effort, musical ability, difficulty of instrument, help from the director or others, and luck. Results indicated students who felt successful on their instrument and were satisfied with their level of performance would challenge for chair placement and would attribute success to internal factors such as effort, technical ability, and natural musical ability. Students who were not satisfied with their level of performance, and perceived this as failure, attributed the failure to external factors and would avoid challenging for chair placements. Amount of practice time correlated highly with the number of challenges in which a student participated. The researcher suggested students who do not challenge often in class or who are not satisfied with their instrument may be potential dropouts of the program and should be given attention by the band director. These "at risk" students need to develop technical knowledge and skills and obtain practice with reinforced feedback in order to begin to feel successful and enjoy playing.

Daniel (2006) conducted a more recent study regarding placements in band class, where he investigated the effects of seating placement on the motivation and self-esteem of high school band students. Using a motivating factors scale, self-concept in music scale, and self-esteem of music ability scale, Daniel surveyed thirty-one high school band students enrolled in a suburban Ohio band program. Participants were surveyed prior to placement and seating auditions, immediately following auditions, and one-month after auditions. The pretest/posttest design

sought to determine immediate and long-term effects of audition results. Findings suggested there were no significant long-term effects on student motivation or self-esteem due to band placement and seating. Although there was an initial decrease of motivation and self-esteem of students who placed in the second band, the follow-up posttest given one month later indicated an increase in both categories.

Inconsistent with research suggesting competition is perceived as increasing motivation, Schmidt (2005) found a negative correlation between competition and motivation among middle school and high school band students. Surveying 300 music students in grades seven through twelve, Schmidt gathered data concerning motivational orientations (mastery, intrinsic, individual, cooperative, competitive, ego, approach success, avoid failure) and relationships between motivation, self-concept, and attitude in band. Findings suggested students responded best to cooperative learning and personal mastery of skills through intrinsic motivation, as opposed to competitive or ego based motivation.

### **2.5 Extra-musical Factors Related to Competition**

Perceptions regarding competition and the effects of competition on student motivation have not been the only concerns of researchers in the area of evaluated music events. Many articles written by music educators have expressed concerns with the fairness and inconsistency in the adjudication process. Bergee addressed some of these concerns through a line of research examining extramusical influences on solo and ensemble ratings. Bergee and Platt (2003) completed the first study in the line of research by examining extramusical influences on solo and ensemble ratings, collecting data from two Midwest states' 2001 and 2002 Solo and Ensemble Festivals. Data were obtained through a database provided by each states' assistant executive director of high school activities association. Data were separately analyzed for each variable at the festivals. Independent variables consisted of time of day (divided into eight time categories), type of event (solo or ensemble), school size (divided into five categories), and performing medium (solo or ensemble). The dependent variable was the overall rating. Significant differences were found between the time of day of performances, types of events (solo/ensemble), and school sizes.

The second study in the line of research by Bergee and McWhirter (2005) was a replication and extension of the first. Added variables included geographical area and district expenditure. The extension also used logistic regression techniques to determine variables as

predictors of high ratings. Results of the replication confirmed the 2003 results, but also found a significant difference between vocal and instrumental performing mediums. Results of the extension suggested afternoon scheduling, students from large schools with high expenditures, and vocal solos were predictors of high ratings.

Bergee and Westfall (2005) conducted a third study to determine the stability of the theoretical model developed from the previous two studies by checking them against data from the following year's festival ratings. In strong agreement with both of the previous studies, time of day, type of event, and school size all had a significant effect on ratings. Contrasting data were found in the areas of geographical district and performing medium.

Bergee (2006) then measured the data of the 2004 festival against the data from the 2002 and 2003 festivals by using internal and external cross-validation in attempt to confirm the model. Overall, validation was mostly attained. Conclusions from Bergee's line of research would suggest that extramusical variables are indeed factors in predicting ratings received at solo and ensemble events. Consistent predictors of higher ratings included performing later in the afternoon as opposed to the morning, performing as a soloist as opposed to an ensemble, and entering the contest from a large, high-expenditure, metropolitan-area school.

## **2.6 Competitive Curricular and Performance Goals**

As participation in competitive music events developed into common practice, researchers began investigating the effects of competition on the curricular and performance goals of directors and students. Sheldon (1994) sought to determine whether high school band members would evaluate a performance differently if they thought it was in preparation for a contest versus a spring concert. The researcher divided three different bands into two groups each. While both groups in each band listened to the exact same excerpts, one group was told they were listening to a dress rehearsal before a spring concert, and the second group was told they were listening to a dress rehearsal before a state contest. Results indicated the groups who thought they were listening to a contest rehearsal rated the performances higher in all categories. Implications of these results suggested students do not view competitive performance goals the same as non-competitive performance goals.

In 2009, the Florida Bandmasters Association (FBA) adopted a document outlining policies, procedures, and fundamentals to be followed by an ideal high school band program. The document, titled *Best Practices for High School Bands*, was created through the

collaboration of a select committee of high school band directors from the state of Florida (Dell, Luce, Reinecke, Singletary, Thornton, & Watford, 2009). Sections of the document addressing concert band festivals/competitions stated that advanced and intermediate level concert bands should participate in the Florida Bandmasters Association District Concert Band Music Performance Assessment (MPA) each year and should participate in the Florida Bandmasters Association State Concert Band Music Performance Assessment at least three out of five years, or at the director's discretion with intermediate level bands. Suggestions regarding marching band competitions included participation in the Florida Bandmasters Association Marching Band Music Performance Assessment, which is held once per year, and limiting participation in non-FBA marching band festivals/competitions to 0-2 per year. The document also defined in-school class time spent on marching band instruction as to not exceed 25% for the advanced level concert band, 50% for the intermediate level concert band, and 75% for the remedial level concert band.

Examining the incorporation of these guidelines in band programs, Groulx (2010) sought to determine the influence of director teaching style and personality on ratings at concert and marching band events by examining correlations between thirty-eight predictor variables and the following five criterion variables: marching and concert festival ratings, state concert band ratings, Florida Marching Band Coalition marching competition scores, frequency of attendance of concert and marching band festivals, and balance between concert and marching band. The Five-Factor Model of Personality and Gumm's Music Teaching Style Inventory were used to develop predictor variables, which included thirty personality traits and eight teaching styles. Surveying 176 band directors from the state of Florida, Groulx found that time efficiency had a strong correlation with all five criteria. While most bands were balanced between concert band and marching band, 15.7% were more marching oriented. Results showed no significant difference in marching band ratings between balanced programs and marching oriented programs. However, balanced programs attended significantly fewer marching competitions and scored significantly higher in concert band events.

While curriculum in the previous study was addressed in terms of distribution of time, Droe (2006) addressed literature, and the role of music preference and selection in the music education curriculum. In his review, Droe found that the music selected by the director typically becomes the curriculum for the class. He also cited studies affirming the influence of social and

peer pressure involving music preferences. Social pressures from peers and adults have been found to influence musical choices, musical preferences, and reasons for participating in music ensembles (Alpert, 1982; Droe, 2006; Frederickson, 1997).

The effects of competition on curriculum have not only been addressed in band, but also in chorus. Johnson (2010) investigated the relationship between competition and curricular practices of choral directors in the state of Indiana. Choral directors surveyed were asked to report the amount of time they spent during the school day on a variety of musical and non-musical activities during the show choir competition season of the year. Reported time distribution from choral directors indicated the greater the time spent preparing for show choir competitions during the school day, the lesser the time spent focusing on comprehensive musicianship, including National Standards addressing music literacy, history, culture, cross-curricular discussions, and exposure to a variety of repertoire. There was also a negative correlation between the time spent on choreography and the overall comprehensive curricular score.

## **2.7 Summary**

Researchers have addressed many facets of competition in music over the past sixty years. Topics have ranged from the history and development of contests to perceptions of competition and effects of competition on various factors. While several studies have focused on perceptions of in-service music educators, students, parents, and administrators, few have addressed perceptions of pre-service music education majors. Limited research has also been sought after in the area of competitions' effects on teaching goals. This study hopes to provide insight as to pre-service music education majors' perceptions regarding the effects of competition on teaching. The purpose of the study was to examine the perceptions of pre-service music education majors regarding participation in competitive concert and marching band events. Specific questions included:

1. What experiences did music education majors have with competitive marching band and concert band throughout high school?
2. To what extent does participation in competitive marching band and large group concert band contests/festivals affect the amount of literature students learn throughout the school year?

3. To what extent does participation in competitive marching band and large group concert band contests/festivals affect rehearsal time?
4. Where do pre-service music education majors expect to receive pressure from regarding participation in competitive marching band and large group concert band contests/festivals?
5. Where do pre-service music education majors expect to receive pressure from to prepare and teach at a more intense level for competitive performances than non-competitive performances?
6. Do pre-service music education majors plan to place more value on preparation for competitive performances than non-competitive performances?

# CHAPTER THREE

## METHOD

### 3.1 Participants

Participants ( $N = 168$ ) were undergraduate pre-service music education majors who participated in band through high school and college. The participants were from seven universities in the Midwest and Southeast regions of the United States. Participating universities were located in Florida ( $n = 2$ ), Kentucky ( $n = 3$ ), and Ohio ( $n = 2$ ). Sheldon's (1994) criteria for highly competitive, moderately competitive, and non-competitive schools were used to identify a diverse population of participants by state. The researcher used the competitions and participants database on the Music for All, Inc. (2010) website to determine highly competitive, moderately competitive, and non-competitive states on a national and regional level. Ohio and Kentucky were among the most competitive states involved in Bands of America regional and national events, while Florida was minimally represented in Music for All band competitions, but competed more often on a local and state level (Florida Bandmasters Association, 2011). Specific universities in each of the respective states were selected as a convenience population in which the researcher had access to visit.

An initial e-mail was sent to music education professors at universities in Florida, Kentucky, and Ohio regarding participation in the research study (Appendix A). Faculty contact information was obtained using university websites. Follow up e-mails concerning specific details on which classes would participate and meeting times were sent following faculty responses. Representation included two universities in Florida, three universities in Kentucky, and two universities Ohio. Total participants ( $N = 168$ ) included freshman through senior music education majors, with a focus on band, from Florida ( $n=75$ ), Kentucky ( $n=60$ ), and Ohio ( $n=33$ ).

### 3.2 Questionnaire Construction

The survey instrument (Appendix B) used for this study was a two-section questionnaire developed by the researcher, based on previous studies by Sheldon (1994) and Johnson (2010). Sheldon (1994) investigated the effect of competitive and non-competitive performance goals on

student perceptions of performances, while Johnson (2010) examined the relationship between competition and curricular goals of choir directors. The first section of the questionnaire, based on Johnson (2010), included six questions regarding music education majors' previous high school band experiences. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they recalled their high school band director discussing the importance of achieving a particular rating or ranking, whether or not their high school bands participated in the district or state concert or marching band contests/festivals and if they recalled the rating received, how many marching band competitions and concert band contests/festivals the band participated in during the participant's senior year in high school, how many pieces of concert music was learned throughout the year during the participant's senior year in high school, and how many hours per week on average the band rehearsed for marching band and concert band during the fall and spring. Participants were also asked if they had been involved in drum corps.

The second section of the questionnaire was developed based on results and implications from Sheldon (1994), and with the aid of experienced researchers and experts in the field of music education. Section two included seven questions pertaining to undergraduate music education majors' feelings about competitive performances and rehearsal goals. Using a seven-point Likert-type scale, 1 being none and 7 being very much, participants were asked to rate the following items pertaining to their future career as a band director: the extent to which he/she expects to receive pressure to participate in competitive marching band and concert band contests/festivals from peers/colleagues, administration, parents, and students, the extent to which he/she expects to receive pressure to achieve the highest rating/rank in marching band and concert band adjudicated events from peers/colleagues, administration, parents, and students, the extent in which rehearsing for a large group contest or competition is more important than rehearsing for a school performance, the importance or value of participating in competitive marching band and concert band contests/festivals, and the importance of non-ranked/non-rated performance opportunities. Demographic information included location of university, year in school, major, and major instrument.

Following construction of the questionnaire, the researcher submitted an application for review to the Florida State University's Institutional Review Board Human Subjects Committee. The study and all resources were approved prior to distribution of the questionnaires (Appendix E).



The initial questionnaire was piloted using graduate and undergraduate music majors not included in the study. The purpose of the pilot was to determine the following information regarding the questionnaire: 1) clarity of instructions, 2) ease of completion, and 3) amount of time required for completion. Results of the pilot indicated the questionnaire would take three to five minutes to complete. Minor changes were made in terms of formatting on the front side of the questionnaire for clarity and ease of completion. Question 10 was reworded for consistency with the term concert band instead of ensemble.

### **3.3 Administration**

The questionnaires were administered at the convenience of professors to music education classes and ensembles at participating universities. The researcher administered the questionnaires herself at five of the seven universities. Due to travel constraints, experienced researchers at the remaining two universities proctored the questionnaires. Consent forms were distributed to the classes (Appendix C) and specified instructions were read aloud by either the researcher or proctor prior to administration of the questionnaires (Appendix D). Students were not required to participate in the questionnaire. Participation was anonymous and had no effect on students' grades in the class. Copies of the consent form were available to students who requested one for his/her records. Questionnaires were handed out by the researcher or proctor to consenting participants and collected immediately upon completion. Completed consent forms and questionnaires were placed in an envelope and sealed. Proctors from universities the researcher did not attend placed completed consent forms and questionnaires in a sealed envelope addressed to the researcher, which he/she mailed back the following day. All consent forms and questionnaires were stored in a locked filing cabinet for one year. Data input by the researcher from the questionnaires were stored on a password-protected computer for one year. After one year, all forms and data were destroyed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

Music education professors from seven universities were contacted requesting class participation in this study. Professors at all seven schools elected to participate in the study (100% response rate). The location of participating universities included Florida ( $n = 2$ ), Kentucky ( $n = 3$ ), and Ohio ( $n = 2$ ).

Individual participants were undergraduate music education majors enrolled in classes at each university. Of the students enrolled in these classes, 182 students voluntarily elected to participate in the study. Fourteen questionnaires were not fully completed, resulting in a total of 168 questionnaires used for this study (92.3% completion rate). Of the total number of students who completed the questionnaire ( $N = 168$ ), forty-one were freshmen, forty-seven were sophomores, thirty-seven were juniors, and forty-two were seniors. Additionally, seventy-five participants attended college in Florida, sixty participants attended college in Kentucky, and thirty-three participants attended college in Ohio. Of the 168 participants, only twenty had participated in drum corps during high school or college. Demographic information is outlined in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

*Demographic Information*

| Type of Participants              | Total | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Florida                           | 75    | 44.6%      |
| Kentucky                          | 60    | 35.7%      |
| Ohio                              | 33    | 19.6%      |
| Freshman                          | 41    | 24.4%      |
| Sophomore                         | 47    | 28.0%      |
| Junior                            | 37    | 22.0%      |
| Senior                            | 42    | 25.6%      |
| Participated in Drum Corps        | 20    | 11.9%      |
| Did not participate in Drum Corps | 148   | 88.1%      |

The first research objective was to identify music education majors' previous high school band experiences concerning participation in competitive marching band and concert band events. A total of six questions were asked pertaining to participants' personal high school band experiences. A seven-point Likert-type scale was used to determine how often participants' band directors discussed the importance of achieving a particular rating or ranking. Responses ranged from 0 (never) to 7 (daily), with a mean of 4.01, mode of 5, and standard deviation of 1.95.

While 86.9% of the participants indicated their band program participated in the district or state concert band contest/festival, only 75.0% participated in the district or state marching band competitions (Table 4.2). Of the music education majors who participated in their district or state concert band contest/festival, 76.0% recall receiving the highest awarded rating. 77.8% of the music education majors who participated in their district or state marching band competitions also remember receiving the highest awarded rating. Most music education majors

who participated in the district or state concert and/or marching band contests/festivals remember receiving the highest or second highest rating awarded at the event (91%).

Table 4.2  
*District or State Contest/Festival Participation*

| Event Participation  | Total | Percentage |
|----------------------|-------|------------|
| <b>Concert Band</b>  |       |            |
| Yes                  | 146   | 86.9%      |
| No                   | 19    | 11.3%      |
| N/A                  | 3     | 1.8%       |
| <b>Marching Band</b> |       |            |
| Yes                  | 126   | 75.0%      |
| No                   | 33    | 19.6%      |
| N/A                  | 9     | 5.4%       |

The number of competitive events participants' high school band programs attended each year varied greatly. While the majority of participants' high school bands attended one to two concert band contests/festivals per year (71.4% total), the number of marching band competitions attended was much more spread, ranging from zero to more than ten per school year. Thirty participants (17.9%) did not participate in any competitive marching band events, and sixteen participants (9.5%) attended ten or more competitive marching band events per school year. The remaining 72.6% of responses was distributed somewhat evenly between one and seven events, with a smaller percentage of participants who attended eight (6.0%) or nine (1.79%) events. The total number of competitive marching and concert band events attended per year can be found in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3  
*Number of Competitive Events Attended per Year*

| Number of Events | Marching Band |            | Concert Band |            |
|------------------|---------------|------------|--------------|------------|
|                  | Total         | Percentage | Total        | Percentage |
| 0                | 30            | 17.9%      | 18           | 10.7%      |
| 1                | 20            | 11.9%      | 57           | 33.9%      |
| 2                | 17            | 10.1%      | 63           | 37.5%      |
| 3                | 17            | 10.1%      | 21           | 12.5%      |
| 4                | 17            | 10.1%      | 6            | 3.6%       |
| 5                | 10            | 6.0%       | 1            | 0.6%       |
| 6                | 16            | 9.5%       | 2            | 1.2%       |
| 7                | 12            | 7.1%       | 0            | 0.0%       |
| 8                | 10            | 6.0%       | 0            | 0.0%       |
| 9                | 3             | 1.79%      | 0            | 0.0%       |
| 10+              | 16            | 9.5%       | 0            | 0.0%       |

Due to the large spread of responses, a one-way analysis of variance test (ANOVA) was used to test differences between states. Results of the analysis showed a significant difference between the three states in the number of marching band competitions attended per year,  $F(2,165) = 21.65, p < .001$ . Results from a *post hoc* Tukey HSD Test indicated respondents from universities in Kentucky ( $M = 5.90, SD = 3.30$ ) attended a significantly higher number of marching band competitions per year than those from Ohio ( $M = 3.58, SD = 3.54$ ) and Florida ( $M = 2.64, SD = 2.12$ ). Results of a one-way ANOVA also showed a significant difference between states in the number of concert band contests/festivals attended per year,  $F(2,165) = 21.65, p < .01$ . Results from a *post hoc* Tukey HSD Test indicated respondents from universities in Kentucky ( $M = 1.38, SD = 0.83$ ) attended a significantly fewer number of concert band contests/festivals per year than those from Florida ( $M = 2.00, SD = 1.10$ ). A comparison by state of the number of competitive events attended per year may be found in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4  
*Number of Competitive Events Attended per Year by State*

| State    | <u>Marching Band Events</u> |           | <u>Concert Band Events</u> |           |
|----------|-----------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|
|          | <i>M</i>                    | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i>                   | <i>SD</i> |
| Kentucky | 5.90                        | 3.30      | 1.38                       | 0.83      |
| Ohio     | 3.58                        | 3.54      | 1.64                       | 1.34      |
| Florida  | 2.64                        | 2.12      | 2.00                       | 1.10      |

The amount of literature participants learned per year in high school ranged from as few as three pieces of music to as many as twenty-five pieces of music ( $M = 10.54$ ,  $SD = 6.82$ ). Participants indicated their high school band programs spent more time rehearsing for marching band in the fall than in the spring, and spent more time in the fall rehearsing for marching band than for concert band. Participants reported the opposite in terms of concert band, spending more time rehearsing in the spring than in the fall. The amount of hours spent rehearsing for marching band in the fall was ( $M = 8.81$ ,  $SD = 4.56$ ) and in the spring was ( $M = 0.73$ ,  $SD = 2.45$ ). The amount of hours spent rehearsing for concert band in the fall was ( $M = 4.65$ ,  $SD = 2.70$ ) and in the spring was ( $M = 6.58$ ,  $SD = 2.45$ ). The amount of hours rehearsed may be found in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5  
*Total Rehearsal Hours per Week*

| Time of Year  | Mean | Mode | Standard Deviation |
|---------------|------|------|--------------------|
| Marching Band |      |      |                    |
| Fall          | 8.61 | 6    | 4.46               |
| Spring        | 0.71 | 0    | 2.36               |
| Concert Band  |      |      |                    |
| Fall          | 4.64 | 5    | 2.76               |
| Spring        | 6.68 | 5    | 3.06               |

A one-way ANOVA was used to test the difference between the amount of time respondents from each state spent rehearsing for marching band and concert band throughout the year. Results of the analysis showed a statistically significant difference between the three states in regard to the number of hours respondents' high school bands rehearsed per week during the fall,  $F(2,165) = 8.34, p < .001$ . Results from a *post hoc* Tukey HSD Test indicated respondents from universities in Kentucky ( $M = 10.13, SD = 4.70$ ) spent significantly more time rehearsing for marching band in the fall than those from Florida ( $M = 7.16, SD = 3.08$ ). There was no statistically significant difference between states in the amount of hours spent rehearsing for marching band during the spring or concert band throughout the year. A comparison by state of the amount of hours spent rehearsing for marching band in the fall may be found in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6  
*Marching Band Rehearsal Hours per Week During the Fall*

| State    | Mean  | Standard Deviation |
|----------|-------|--------------------|
| Kentucky | 10.13 | 4.70               |
| Ohio     | 9.14  | 5.61               |
| Florida  | 7.16  | 3.08               |

The second research objective examined the extent to which participation in competitive marching band and large group concert band events had an affect on the amount of literature students learn throughout the school year. A Pearson Correlation Test was used to test correlations between each factor. Results indicated a statistically significant weak negative correlation between the number of marching band competitions respondents attended per year and the amount of literature learned per year,  $r(166) = -.17, p < .05$ , suggesting the more marching band competitions attended, the less literature learned in a year. There was no correlation found between the number of concert band contests/festivals attended per year and the amount of literature learned.

The third research objective examined the extend to which participation in competitive marching band and large group concert band events had an affect on the amount of rehearsal time dedicated to marching band and concert band throughout the school year. A Pearson Correlation Test was used to test correlations between each factor. Results indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between the number of marching band competitions respondents attended per year and the amount of hours spent rehearsing for marching band in the fall,  $r(166) = 0.45, p < .001$ , and in the spring,  $r(166) = 0.12, p < .05$ , suggesting the more marching band competitions a band attended, the more hours the band spent rehearsing for marching band. There was no correlation found between the number of marching band competitions attended per year and the amount of time spent rehearsing for concert band throughout the year. Results of a Pearson Correlation Test show a statistically significant positive correlation between the number of concert band contests/festivals respondents attended per year and the amount of hours spent rehearsing for concert band in the spring, suggesting the more concert band contests/festivals attended, the more time spent rehearsing for concert band



during the spring semester. No significant differences were found between the number of concert band contests/festivals attended and the amount of time spent rehearsing for concert band in the fall or marching band throughout the year.

The fourth and fifth research objective investigated where pre-service music education majors expected to receive pressure from regarding participation in competitive marching band and large group concert band contests/festivals. The fifth question specifically pertained to pressure to prepare and teach at a more intense level for competitive performances than non-competitive performances in order to receive the highest rating/rank. Music education majors were asked to rate the amount of pressure they expect to receive from “peers and colleagues,” “administration,” “parents,” and “students” in relation to each question on a seven-point Likert-type scale, 1 being none and 7 being very much. Respondents rated “peers/colleagues” highest in terms of providing pressure in all three categories: “pressure to participate in competitive marching band” ( $M = 4.07, SD = 1.91$ ), “pressure to participate in concert band contests/festivals” ( $M = 4.83, SD = 1.95$ ), and “pressure to achieve the highest rating/ranking” ( $M = 5.42, SD = 1.61$ ). “Pressure from peers/colleagues to achieve the highest rating/ranking” was rated higher than any other category. Data relating to the amount of pressure pre-service music education majors expect to receive in each category are outlined in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7  
*Amount of Pressure Pre-Service Music Education Majors Expect to Receive*

| Type of Pressure  | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|---|------|--------------------|
| <b>Participation in Competitive Marching Band</b>       |      |                    |
| Peers/Colleagues  | 4.07 | 1.91               |
| Students  | 3.95 | 2.00               |
| Parents   | 3.74 | 1.97               |
| Administration  | 3.68 | 2.03               |
| <b>Participation in Concert Band Contests/Festivals</b> |      |                    |
| Peers/Colleagues  | 4.83 | 1.95               |
| Administration  | 4.42 | 2.03               |
| Students  | 4.08 | 1.96               |
| Parents   | 4.05 | 1.88               |
| <b>Achieve the Highest Rating/Rank</b>                  |      |                    |
| Peers/Colleagues  | 5.42 | 1.61               |
| Administration  | 5.32 | 1.93               |
| Students  | 5.30 | 1.93               |
| Parents   | 5.00 | 1.96               |

A one-way ANOVA was used to test differences between sources of pressure within each category. Results of the analysis indicated a statistically significant difference between sources from which pre-service music education majors expect to receive pressure to participate in competitive marching band,  $F(3, 501) = 2.98, p < .05$ . Results from a *post hoc* Tukey HSD Test indicated “Peers/Colleagues” ( $M = 4.07, SD = 1.91$ ) were rated significantly higher in providing “pressure to participate in competitive marching band” than “Administration” ( $M = 3.68, SD = 2.03$ ), with “Parents” ( $M = 3.74, SD = 2.00$ ) and “Students” ( $M = 3.94, SD = 2.00$ ) falling in between and showing no significant difference on either side. Results also indicated a statistically significant difference between sources from which pre-service music education majors expect to receive pressure to participate in concert band

contests/festivals,  $F(3, 501) = 13.96, p < .001$ . Results from a *post hoc* Tukey HSD Test indicated “Peers/Colleagues” ( $M = 4.83, SD = 1.95$ ) were rated significantly higher in providing “pressure to participate in concert band contests/festivals” than “Administration” ( $M = 4.42, SD = 2.03$ ), “Students” ( $M = 4.08, SD = 2.00$ ), and “Parents” ( $M = 4.05, SD = 1.88$ ). A one-way ANOVA was also used to test differences between sources from which pre-service music education majors expect to receive pressure to achieve the highest rating/ranking awarded. Results of the analysis indicated a statistically significant difference between sources,  $F(3, 501) = 3.31, p < .05$ . Results from a *post hoc* Tukey HSD Test indicated “Peers/Colleagues” ( $M = 5.42, SD = 1.60$ ) were rated significantly higher in providing “pressure to achieve the highest rating/ranking” than “Parents” ( $M = 5.00, SD = 2.00$ ), with “Students” ( $M = 5.30, SD = 1.93$ ) and “Administration” ( $M = 5.32, SD = 1.93$ ) falling in between and showing no significant difference on either side. Refer to Table 4.7 for data comparing the amount of pressure by source within each category.

The final research question sought to determine whether pre-service music education majors plan to place more value on preparation for competitive performances than non-competitive performances. A one-way ANOVA was used to test the difference between the importance or value respondents placed on participating in and preparing for competitive and non-competitive events. Results of the analysis showed a statistically significant difference between the amount of importance or value respondents place on each event,  $F(3, 501) = 41.73, p < .001$ . Results from a *post hoc* Tukey HSD Test indicated respondents place significantly more importance or value in “participating in concert band contests/festivals” ( $M = 5.69, SD = 1.32$ ) and “participating in non-ranked/non-rated performance opportunities” ( $M = 5.56, SD = 1.44$ ) than “participating in competitive marching band” ( $M = 4.33, SD = 1.62$ ) and “rehearsing for competitive events” ( $M = 4.33, SD = 1.62$ ). There was no significant difference between “participating in concert band contests/festivals” and “participating in non-ranked/non-rated performance opportunities”. There was also no significant difference between “participating in competitive marching band” and “rehearsing for competitive events.” Table 4.8 outlines the data relating to the amount of importance pre-service music education majors place on preparation for and participation in competitive and non-competitive performances.

Table 4.8  
*Importance of Preparation and Participation by Event*

| Rehearsal or Participation Factor  | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|--|------|--------------------|
| Importance or Value of Participating in Concert Band Contests/Festivals  | 5.69 | 1.32               |
| Importance Placed on Non-Ranked/Non-Rated Performance Opportunities  | 5.56 | 1.44               |
| Importance or Value of Participating in Competitive Marching Band  | 4.46 | 1.83               |
| Rehearsing for a Large Group Contest or Competition is More Important than Rehearsing for a School Performance | 4.33 | 1.62               |

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 Restatement of Purpose**

The purpose of the current study was to examine the effect of participation in competitive concert and marching band events on teaching as perceived by pre-service music education majors.

### **5.2 Summary of Results**

The primary findings of this study indicated that while participation in one to two concert band contests/festivals per year may be important to most band programs, there is a large inconsistency among band programs regarding the amount of emphasis placed on competitive marching band events. Respondents reported attending anywhere from zero to one high school marching band competition per year to more than ten in a year. While pre-service music education majors expected to receive pressure to participate in competitive events as band directors, an inconsistency among variances suggests they may not understand how much pressure they will receive from various sources regarding participation or success at competitive events. In general, music education majors expected to receive the most pressure from peers/colleagues in all areas. According to pre-service music education majors, participation in concert band and non-ranked/non-rated events is slightly more important than participation in competitive marching band events. However, some importance or value was placed on all events, and a large spread of responses suggests music education majors may have differing opinions or unclear visions on the importance of various aspects of a music program.

### **5.3 General Discussion**

#### **Music Education Majors' High School Band Experiences Regarding Competitive Events**

While music education majors' high school bands generally attended one to two concert band contests/festivals per year, the number of marching band competitions attended in a year was extremely inconsistent between band programs. Music education majors reported attending from as few as zero or one marching band competition per year to more than ten in a school year. The amount of concert and marching band events participants' high school bands attended varied

by state. Students from Kentucky generally attended a greater number marching band competitions and fewer large-group concert band events than students from Ohio and Florida. Consequently, students from Florida generally attended a greater number of large-group concert band contests/festivals and fewer marching band competitions than students from Kentucky and Ohio.

While students from Kentucky reported attending a significantly higher number of marching band competitions than those from Ohio and Florida, the number of events attended deviated greatly from the mean in all three states, as did the amount of hours spent rehearsing for marching band. These results may suggest that philosophies of band directors, schools, and state organizations differ considerably in regard to competitive marching band.

Although the number of marching band competitions attended by students in the state of Florida was still largely spread, reports were more consistent than both Kentucky and Ohio, and averaged just above two marching band competitions per year. Interestingly, these data closely reflect suggestions outlined in the 2009 document adopted by the Florida Bandmasters Association, titled *Best Practices for High School Bands*, for limiting participation in non-FBA marching band festivals/competitions to 0-2 per year. Other state music education associations may find the implications of these data useful in exploring the possible benefits of adopting a set of “best practices” for music educators to use as a guide for establishing well balanced and comprehensive music programs in their schools.

Of interesting note, high school band directors do seem to spend time talking to students about the importance of the rating or placement the band receives at competitive concert or marching band events, and almost all of the music education majors who participated in the district or state concert and/or marching band events recall their band receiving the highest or second highest rating awarded at the event. Further research would be necessary in order to examine the effects of these data on various factors of student perceptions and current or future involvement music.

While a small percentage of music education majors reported they had participated in drum corps, the majority of respondents have had no involvement with drum corps. A parallel may be drawn between these data and data from existing literature indicating the most enjoyable and important parts of participating in drum corps, as reported by past members, includes teamwork, sense of achievement, travel, performance, social aspects, and competition (Zdzinski,

2004). Results of Zdzinski (2004) also indicated many alumni of drum corps noted they continue involvement as volunteers and/or spectators of the activity. This is concurrent with previous literature suggesting an emphasis on competition may breed a love of competition. Interestingly, the majority of music education majors in this study reported they have not participated in drum corps. Perhaps music majors may not value competitively focused activities as much as other musical opportunities. Implications of these data may affect the amount of emphasis high school band directors place on marching band competitions in relationship to the amount of emphasis placed on comprehensive musicianship. Future research in the area of participation in drum corps should be sought after to determine its effects on future involvement with musical activities outside of drum corps.

The amount of literature students learned in high school throughout a school year ranged anywhere from three to twenty-five pieces of music, with no real consistency around any certain number of pieces. However, results did suggest there might be a negative correlation between the amount of emphasis a band program places on competitive marching band and the amount of concert literature the students learn throughout the year, suggesting the more emphasis placed on competitive marching band, the fewer pieces of concert literature learned. These data are consistent with extant literature indicating the more time choral programs spent preparing for competitive show choir competitions, the less time they spent learning classical music (Johnson, 2010).

Also concurrent with the same study by Johnson (2010), results of this study indicated there might be a positive correlation between the number of marching band competitions a band program attends and the amount of hours spent rehearsing for marching band. Similarly, the more concert band contests/festivals a band attended during the year, the more hours spent rehearsing for concert band. Perhaps the more emphasis placed on competing, the more emphasis placed on practicing for specific events. Students from Kentucky generally spent more time on average per week rehearsing for marching band than students from Florida. Future research examining the division of time between marching/drill rehearsals and musical rehearsals may be of interest in regard to competitive marching bands. The amount of time spent on concert band rehearsals for all three states were fairly consistent. This may be expected, as concert bands generally meet during an in-school class period throughout the week, with marching band rehearsals held predominantly after school. Implications of these data may assist

music educators in decisions influencing the development of a balanced and comprehensive music program.

### **Music Education Majors' Perceptions of Competitive Events in Regard to Their Future Career as a Band Director**

Consistent with existing literature by Burnsed and Sochinsk (1983) reporting that band directors felt pressure to participate in competitive events from administration, students, and parents, pre-service music education majors expect to receive some pressure to participate in competitive marching band and concert band contests/festivals. However, there was an inconsistency among variances of responses. This may indicate that while pre-service music education majors may be prepared to receive some pressure regarding participation or success in competitive music events, they may not understand from where they could receive pressure or how much pressure they may receive from various sources.

Of interesting note, music education majors expect to receive the most pressure in the area of achieving a successful rating or ranking, and expect to receive the most pressure from peers/colleagues in all areas. These data parallel extant literature regarding social pressures from peers. While peer pressure has been found to influence musical choice, musical preferences, and reasons for participating in music ensembles, results of this study suggest peer pressure may also influence other aspects of music education (Alpert, 1982; Droe, 2006; Fredrickson, 1997). These data may suggest it is important for music educators to look successful in the eyes of their peers, and be competitive with other programs at music events.

Pre-service music education majors seem to feel participating in concert band and non-ranked/non-rated events is slightly more important than participating in competitive marching band events. Although least important of the four questions pertaining to the importance or value of competitive events, music education majors seem to feel that rehearsals for competitive performances are more important than rehearsals for a school performance. However, music education majors seem to have differing opinions or an unclear vision of the importance or value of competitive events, as variances among all answers were largely inconsistent in this area as well.

While some researchers and music educators argue that a comprehensive approach to creating a balance between preparation for competitive music events and a healthy approach to learning and lifelong participation in music can be co-achieved, the large degree of inconsistent



variances found in this study indicate pre-service music education majors may not understand how to create this type of balance (Howard, 1995; Parkes, 1983). Implications of these data may suggest the importance of college curriculums including lessons addressing ways in which music education majors can incorporate and balance involvement in competitive events to be a healthy part of music programs, and how to identify and deal with pressure from various sources.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

A second pilot would have helped the questionnaire function more appropriately, as results indicated possible ambiguity of some of the questions. The range of literature high school band directors exposed their students to throughout a school year was vast. The large range of responses pertaining to this question may have been a cause of the wording on the questionnaire not specifying the amount of literature learned in one specific ensemble, as students may not have participated in a concert band during their senior year, or perhaps participated in multiple concert ensembles in a year. There may also be other variables affecting the amount of literature ensembles learn in a given year.

The same issues regarding clarity of the question and additional variables may hold cause in the amount of hours respondents indicated they spent rehearsing for marching band and concert band throughout the year. The study may have suggested a different set of results had question specified a specific ensemble and whether the rehearsal time was in-class or outside of school.

While it is important to note that current trends regarding competitive band events differ between states, the inconsistency in terminology, evaluation methods, and practices limits the validity of some of the finding in this study, as many of the questions had to be generalized in an attempt to create a “one-size fits all” questionnaire.

The use of the terms contest, festival, and performance assessment, for adjudicated events are many times used interchangeably in music education. While “contest” was the term first attached to adjudicated concert band events, once the ranking system was changed to a rating system individual states began moving away from referring to these events as a contest, or even competitive in any facet. However, there is still a gray area on this subject. For example, the term “large-group contest” is still widely used in Ohio; however, some encourage the approach that an adjudicated event is a festival or music performance assessment with no competitive aspect attached in any way. Whether respondents viewed large-group concert band events as a

competitive event in which an ensemble is competing to attain the highest rating, in some cases which are published in the state journals, or strictly an assessment of the band as an educational tool may have an effect on the outcome of results in this study.

This study may have been more effective had it been split into two separate studies, one focused on aspects of marching band competition and one focused on aspects of concert band adjudicated events, as opposed to generalizing both under one blanket statement of competitive events.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Future Research**

The current study could be replicated using a more narrow population to help solidify practices and terminology. It could also be important to examine the differences and similarities between the practices of multiple states in regard to competitive and/or adjudicated music events. It may be important to identify trends in this area across the country. The study could also provide valuable information if replicated by surveying current band directors.

While the results of this study suggested high school band directors do spend time talking to their students about the importance of the rating or placement the band receives at competitive events, future research may examine the effects of this on high school students' perceptions of competition and the relationship between band directors emphasis on competitive performances and student perceptions of competition.

Results of this study suggest the amount of time spent rehearsing for competitive marching band might be correlated with the number of competitive marching band events a band program attends per year. Future research should further examine extra-musical factors involved in competitive marching band participation, such as amount of time spent rehearsing (in and out of class), amount of money spent in various areas, amount of staff hired, the importance or display of trophies and awards, and the importance placed on winning or achieving a specific rating.

Research regarding participation in drum corps could be expanded to include high school band students from competitive and non-competitive band programs, as well as college level non-music majors involved and not involved in their college marching bands. Research could also examine the effects of the growing popularity of drum corps on high school marching band programs.

Further research should also be considered in the area of pre-service music education majors' perceptions and experiences regarding competitive music events. Results of this study indicated a great deal of inconsistency in the variances of all questions regarding expected sources of pressure to participate and importance of competitive and non-competitive events. The effects of pressure from peers and colleagues can be expanded in a multitude of directions regarding music educators and music programs today.

## APPENDIX A

### INITIAL EMAIL TO PROFESSORS

Good afternoon,

I am currently working on my thesis this semester at Florida State University, and am contacting you regarding possible participation from the undergraduate music education majors at your university. The purpose of the study is to investigate the effects of competitive performances on teaching goals in the band classroom.

Participation in this research study would include completion of a one-page, front and back questionnaire. I would be available to personally explain, hand out, and collect the questionnaires at the beginning or end of the music education classes. The total time it would take to hand out and collect the questionnaires should be less than 10 minutes.

I am hoping to include a sample of undergraduate music education majors from Ohio/Northern Kentucky and Florida to examine regional comparisons, and would love to include the students from your university. I can be available to distribute the questionnaires to classes at your convenience. I would greatly appreciate your consideration in allowing me to conduct this study at your school, as I do understand the value of class time.

If you have any further questions concerning the research study, please feel free to e-mail me at \*\*\*\*\* or call at \*\*\*\*\*. You may also contact Dr. Steve Kelly at \*\*\*\*\*.

Thank you again for your consideration,

Aimee Collins  
Graduate Teaching Assistant  
Florida State University  
College of Music

**APPENDIX B**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**



**Please indicate the following pertaining to your future career as a band director:**

|  | <b>None</b> |   |   |   |   |   |   | <b>Very<br/>Much</b> |
|--|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------------|
| 1. To what extent do you expect to receive pressure to participate in competitive marching band from each of the following?                          |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |                      |
| Peers/Colleagues:  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| Administration:  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| Parents:   | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| Students:  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| 2. To what extent do you expect to receive pressure to participate in concert band contests/festivals from each of the following?                    |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |                      |
| Peers/Colleagues:  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| Administration:  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| Parents:   | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| Students:  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| 3. To what extent do you expect to receive pressure to achieve the highest rating/rank in both concert and marching band from each of the following? |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |                      |
| Peers/Colleagues:  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| Administration:  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| Parents:   | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| Students:  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| 4. To what extent is rehearsing for large group contest or competition more important than rehearsing for a school performance?                      | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| 5. How important or valuable is participating in competitive marching band?  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| 6. How important or valuable is participating in concert band contest/festival?  | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |
| 7. How much importance do you place on non-ranked/non-rated performance opportunities?   | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |                      |

## APPENDIX C

### CONSENT FORM

Dear Music Education Majors,

I am a graduate student in the College of Music at Florida State University and am conducting a research study regarding band contests/festivals.

I am requesting your participation, which will include completing a short three to four minute questionnaire that will address the following:

- Information about your previous band experience
- How you feel about specific aspects of music contests

There are no known risks associated with participating in this study. The benefits include gaining an increased understanding about competition in band.

There is no compensation for participating, and your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time.

This study is completely anonymous; you will not be asked to provide your name as part of this survey. The results of this research will be printed, but your name will not be known. Records of this study will be kept private; the completed surveys will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records.

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please e-mail me at \*\*\*\*\* or call at \*\*\*\*\*. You may also contact Dr. Steve Kelly at \*\*\*\*\*.

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 FSU IRB at 2010 Levy Street, Research Building B, Suite 276, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742.

Sincerely,

Aimee Collins

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I hereby consent to participating in this study, and understand that my participation is strictly voluntary.

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Signature

---

Date



## **APPENDIX D**

### **PROCTOR INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **PROCTOR INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Read aloud prior to distribution of the questionnaires: “You are being asked to complete a questionnaire pertaining to band contests/festivals. The questionnaire is one page, front and back, and should take less than five minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and anonymous. Please do not write your name anywhere on the questionnaire. I will hand out the questionnaires now to those who have signed consent forms. Are there any questions?”
2. Upon completion, collect all questionnaires and thank students for participating.

## APPENDIX E

### IRB APPROVAL LETTER

Office of the Vice President For Research  
Human Subjects Committee  
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742  
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392

#### APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 2/22/2012

To: Aimee Collins

Address: \*\*\*\*\*

Dept.: MUSIC SCHOOL

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research

The Effect of Competition on Teaching Goals in The Band Classroom as Perceived by  
Pre-service Music Education Majors

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and one member of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be **Expedited** per 45 CFR § 46.110(7) and has been approved by an expedited review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting research subjects.

If the project has not been completed by 2/18/2013 you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal

Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.

You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the Chair of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is FWA00000168/IRB number IRB00000446.

Cc: **Steven Kelly, Advisor**  
HSC No. **2012.7717**

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## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Aimee Nicole Collins was born in 1983 in Fairfield, Ohio, where she attended Fairfield City Schools through grade school. Aimee received her Bachelor's degree in music education from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio in 2006. Prior to returning to graduate school, Aimee taught in Ohio for four years. She taught fifth and sixth grade band and orchestra at Spinning Hills Middle School for one year before she was hired as a band director in the Milford Exempted Village School District, where her primary responsibilities included teaching beginning woodwinds, eighth grade percussion, high school concert band, and pep band. She also assisted with the junior high band and the high school marching band. In 2010, Aimee began her graduate studies at Florida State University, and received a master's degree in music education in April 2012.