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Perceptions of Participation in a Youth Community Ensemble

Ryan V. Scherber
PERCEPTIONS OF PARTICIPATION IN A YOUTH COMMUNITY ENSEMBLE

By

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The Graduate School has verified and approved the above-named committee members.
This thesis is dedicated to the two most influential forces on my life.

To my mother, Mary Scherber,
for (among many, many other things)
teaching me about true work ethic
and perseverance

and

To Dr. Ann M. Porter,
for her many years of continued mentorship and guidance.
Who I am as an educator and musician is a result of her knowledge, passion, and unfaltering service to her students.
The influence she has among her students runs far deeper than she may realize.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables................................................................................................................................... vi
Abstract.......................................................................................................................................... vii
1. Introduction................................................................................................................................. 1
2. Review of Literature................................................................................................................... 5
   2.1 Youth Development Programs.............................................................................................. 5
   2.2 Talent Activities.................................................................................................................... 9
   2.3 Performing Arts Programs.................................................................................................. 11
   2.4 Summary............................................................................................................................. 11
3. Method...................................................................................................................................... 13
   3.1 Participants.......................................................................................................................... 13
   3.2 Questionnaire Construction................................................................................................ 14
   3.3 Administration.................................................................................................................... 15
4. Results....................................................................................................................................... 16
5. Discussion................................................................................................................................... 24
Appendices..................................................................................................................................... 28
   A. SITE PARTICIPATION FORM............................................................................................... 28
   B. PARENT CONSENT FORM.................................................................................................. 30
   C. QUESTIONNAIRE COVER LETTER................................................................................... 32
   D. QUESTIONNAIRE................................................................................................................. 34
   E. E-MAIL INTRODUCTION LETTER.................................................................................... 36
   F. PROCTOR INSTRUCTIONS................................................................................................. 38
   G. PARTICIPATING ENSEMBLES............................................................................................ 40
   H. FOLLOW-UP E-MAIL............................................................................................................ 42
   I. IRB APPROVAL LETTER..................................................................................................... 44
   REFERENCES............................................................................................................................ 47
   BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH......................................................................................................... 52
LIST OF TABLES

4.1 Demographic Information ........................................................................................................17
4.2 Ranked Free-Response Categories by Number of Responses ..............................................18
4.3 Ranked Likert Scale Responses ..........................................................................................20
4.4 Ranked Social and Musical Responses .................................................................................21
4.5 Combined Social and Musical Likert Responses .................................................................22
4.6 Social and Musical Analysis ..............................................................................................22
4.7 Ranked Sources of Participation Recommendation ..........................................................23
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing participation in a youth community ensemble. Participants (N=73) were student musicians, ages 7-18, who participated in a youth choir, youth orchestra, or youth band. All participants electing to participate responded using the same questionnaire. The questionnaire asked demographic questions including gender, age, education background, and instrument or voice. Two free response questions asked participants to list why they elected to join their ensemble and to list anyone who may have encouraged them to join the ensemble. Following the free response section, Likert-type rating scales were given to investigate the degree of influence social and musical factors had on youths electing to participate in an ensemble.

Results indicated significant differences between social and musical factors. Participants indicated and rated musical factors to be of greater importance when considering participation in a youth community ensemble over social factors. Data from both the free-response question and Likert-type scales indicated this significant difference. Additionally, teachers and parents were found to have the greatest amount of influence on participants over friends, other relatives or acquaintances. However, the importance of encouragement from interpersonal sources was rated as the lowest of the 11 Likert-type factors. Additional study in the areas of recruitment, programming, administration, funding, and perceived differences between instrumental and vocal participant objectives are suggested.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The term “community music” has been one of ambivalence. Scholars have debated the extent to which community music is different from institutionalized music or music found in public schools. Some believe community music is any music experiences outside of the school context while others purport all music as community music. Veblen (2004) addressed these inconsistencies and hypothesized five factors common to community music programs: (1) active music making, (2) emphasis on lifelong learning, (3) open to any participant, (4) focusing on active music making and applying musical knowledge, and (5) participant elected participation.

Interest in community music appears to be growing. In 2004, the International Journal of Community Music was established to provide insight into this growing field of community music. Community interest levels have also been raised. In the United Kingdom, community music programs benefited from an increase in government funding, but struggled to staff their programs until the regional universities began to offer programs specifically designed to develop community music workers. Similar opportunities have appeared in such countries as Sweden, Norway, Australia, and New Zealand shortly thereafter. In the United States, choral; wind; and folk opportunities were multiplying at an increasingly heightened pace (Veblen, 2004). However, due to the presence of widespread school music programs, dissimilar to other countries, many outside observers continued to view music education as the sole purview of school programs (Dabback, 2005). This viewpoint may also contribute to the relatively small number of community ensembles in the United States, but this low number of ensembles may be changing due to decreasing school budgets. As the concept of music education expands and diversifies, community ensembles may be looked at to fill a void possibly left by school music programs which have been cut due to budget restrictions. Additionally, the viewpoint proposed by Dabback (2005) may contribute to the slim body of scholarly work addressing these ensembles.
Of the available research and trade journal articles, many seemed to be instrumentally, and more specifically, band focused. The few remaining articles and studies focused mainly on community choral ensembles and while the smallest percentage addressed community orchestra ensembles (Bowles, 1991). Non-peer reviewed articles concerning community bands tended to focus on the band’s history, programming details, or operational practices. A majority of the listed ensembles required participant to be adults (Blaufuss, 2006; Lawrence, 1992; McCormick, 2008; Montgomery, 2006; Snowden, 2006; Wilder, 2002; Wilhjelm, 1991), while a few ensembles identified the inclusion of talented, upper level high school musicians by audition only (Blaufuss, 2007; Courtney, 1991; Serber, 2006; “With the Northport,” 2008). Additionally, many articles identified the factors influencing participation in these bands cited by participants. These factors included the intrinsic value of performing music (Blaufuss, 2006; Courtney, 1991; Lawrence, 1992; McCormick, 2008; Montgomery, 2006; Snowden, 2006; Wilder, 2002; Wilhjelm, 1991; “With the Northport,” 2008) and to a lesser extent social aims such as developing friendships (Blaufuss, 2006; Montgomery, 2006; Serber, 2006; Snowden; 2006). In a study by Cavitt (2005) intrinsic musical factors, many previously identified in the articles, were also found to be the greatest determining force influencing participation in an adult community band. Such factors included school related music activities and repertoire selection.

The vast majority of research on community bands appeared to have dealt with the New Horizons program. This program was begun by Roy Ernst, a professor of music education at the Eastman School of Music in 1991 and was initially a band dedicated to individuals over 50 years of age and is inclusive of all levels of performer, from beginner to advanced (Ernst & Emmons, 1992). Over the span of 20 years, this program grew from one band into a collection of over 182 bands, orchestras, string ensembles, choruses, and jazz groups spanning North America, Australia, and Europe (Undefined, n.d.). A large amount of research into New Horizons ensembles focused on the factors influencing senior citizens to participate in these ensembles. Similar to Cavitt’s (2005) study and numerous articles concerning this topic with adult community bands, New Horizons investigators also found the primary factor influencing participation to be musical in nature. A focus on musical aspects, such as a desire for active music making, continues to be of primary importance with this level of group, but social aspects
such as need for identity, source for new friendships, desire to play in a group, decreased feelings of loneliness, and an increased sense of well-being play a more importance role to these participants over participants in adult community bands (Coffman & Adamek, 1999; Ernst, 2001; Ernst & Emmons, 1992; Hartley, 2003).

While middle age adults and senior citizen’s perspectives on participating in a community ensemble are moderately well-documented, the youth perspective is minimal. A Google search for ensembles specifically directed at youths yields ensemble findings in every state, yet there is very little research in this area. Two studies addressing youth community ensembles from Australia corroborated Cavitt’s (2005) findings of a primary focus on intrinsic musical goals (Barrett & Smigiel, 2007; Fawcett, Garton, & Dandy, 2009). However, while the Fawcett, Garton, and Dandy (2009) study investigated numerous types of youth activities, arts activities were only a small part of this study. In the United States, two studies found conflicting information. One study indicated a preference for social development over musical development (Patrick, Ryan, Alfeld-Liro, Fredricks, Hruda, & Eccles, 1998) while the other non-peer reviewed study discovered similar findings to the Australian studies (Shaw, 1998). Due to the apparent lack of empirical research available in this area, and the contrasting findings of the minimal amount of available research, this paper hopes to illuminate certain aspects of participation in these ensembles. Effective future development of youth ensembles would be aided by data indicating participant’s preferences and desires as well as effective sources for recruiting new members. Findings from this study may help improve educational benefits of the ensemble, help align the ensemble’s objectives with those of the participants, or help fill a possible growing educational void due to traditional public schools eliminating music programs for youth.

The purpose of this paper is to determine the factors influencing participation in a youth community ensemble. Specific research questions are: (1) what reasons are cited by participants as motivators for participation in a youth community ensemble? (2) are the reasons social in nature or musical in nature? and (3) has any individual influenced participants to join this ensemble? For the purposes of this paper, youth community ensembles are defined as ensembles
with membership restricted to youths and those which rehearse regularly for at least 75% of the calendar year.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Park (2004, pg. 40) proposes the “ultimate goal of all societies and all parent (is) to raise happy, healthy, and moral children.” Recent research indicates this goal may be accomplished through four objectives: a focus on building strengths; encouraging wellness; remedying weakness; and repairing deficits (Seligman, 2002). These objectives may influence youth within three domains: positive subjective experiences (i.e. happiness, life satisfaction), positive individual traits (i.e. character, values), and through positive institutions (i.e. families, schools, communities) that influence the first two (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

2.1 Youth Development Programs

Schools and communities hoping to develop positive individual traits in youths may offer programs to provide positive subjective experiences. Prior to the 1990’s, several national programs focusing on positive youth development (i.e. the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Big Brothers Big Sisters, American Camp Association, etc) were and continue to be in existence as part of the National Collaboration for Youth or NCY (National Collaboration for Youth, n.d.). These programs sought to support the social, ethical, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children through positive youth development. The overarching public policy of the NCY states “programs that support [parent’s] efforts can strengthen the ability of the family to raise health children, productive workers, and responsible citizens” (National Collaboration for Youth, n.d.). In addition to NCY’s guiding policy, each member organization of the NCY retained their individual objectives as well. For example, the Boy Scouts of America, holds similar, yet unique values: providing programs that build character, citizenship, and personal fitness (Boy Scouts of America, n.d.). While each organization’s approach may be slightly altered, they share a common focus on physical; social; emotional development, informal education, skill acquisition, cultivation of platonic relationships, and fun. Similar programs geared toward youth development began to flourish in the United States in the 1990’s due in part to difficulties stemming from the increase of unsupervised children, inadequate day care...

In reaction to the rising amount of programs dedicated to youths, research investigating youth development programs has also seemingly increased. With increased attention comes a shift in thinking about outcomes of youth development programs. Recent research indicates the main objective of youth development programs should be to not deter youths from detrimental behavior (as seen in older research), but rather preparation for, and development of positive behaviors (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). Research by Roth and Brook-Gunn (2003) has delineated specific objectives of both outcomes and structure of a successful (effective and positive) youth development program.

For youth development programs to be considered effective, they should provide opportunities for individuals to develop within multiple areas. Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) offer five objectives of successful youth development programs, known as the Five C’s: competence, confidence, connections, character, and caring. Competence involves both social and cognitive attributes: social, referring to interpersonal relationship and cognitive, referring to physical or mental skill acquisition. Confidence deals with the development of a positive self-concept and increasing self-esteem. Connections includes development in both interpersonal relationships as well as with institutions such as school or the youth development program itself. Character focuses on respect for cultural and societal norms, ability to discern right from wrong, making appropriate choices, and avoidance of health-compromising behaviors. Finally, caring emphasizes empathy and identification with others (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). The investigators looked at 48 youth development programs and evaluated each for evidence of the five C’s. Data showed the two most common goals were social and cognitive skill development followed in decreasing order by character development, connections, confidence, and caring. The investigators hypothesized successful programs should strive to achieve three of the five C’s (60%). Only 21% of the 48 programs achieved all five and only 6% focused on one of the C’s.
Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, and Hawkins (2004) further divided the five C’s into 15 possible areas of improvement: bonding, resilience, social competence, emotional competence, cognitive competence, behavioral competence, moral competence, self-determination, spirituality, self-efficacy, clear/positive identity, belief in the future, recognition for positive behavior, prosocial involvement, and prosocial norms. In this study, successful programs addressed at least five of the 15 areas (33% compared with the earlier 60%), although most programs addressed at least eight of the 15 areas (53% compared with the earlier 60%). Consistent in each successful program were three areas: competence (both social and cognitive), self-efficacy (goals are achieved through one’s own actions), and prosocial norms (mental and physical healthy beliefs).

According to Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003), goals are merely one third of a successful youth development program. Program settings constitutes another third. A comprehensive list of developmental assets of a healthy lifestyle was developed by the Search Institute (2004). Twenty assets are extrinsic, controllable by the specific youth development program and 20 are intrinsic to the individual participant. These building blocks are essential to helping youths develop into healthy (mentally and physically), caring, and responsible adults. The four categories of extrinsic assets: support, empowerment, boundaries & expectations, and constructive use of time represent ideals of an effective youth development program structure. The four categories of intrinsic assets: commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity represent the areas youth development programs strive to enhance. Eccles and Gootman (2002) have also identified features of positive developmental settings. These include: physical/psychological safety, structure, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for efficacy, opportunities for skill building, and integration of family; school; and community efforts. Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) echoed many of these features of a successful program by promoting challenging opportunities, at least nine months in duration, active participation by participants, supportive staff, physical/psychological safety, high expectations, and a strong sense of commitment by both staff and participants as indicators of a successful development environment. In general, the more features held by a program, the
greater the success level. Therefore, programs striving to be successful were ones in which numerous features were included and successfully implemented.

The final third of a successful youth development program as put forth by Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) is that of program activities, the means by which programs develop youth. The goals of these activities are to build skills, participate in physically and mentally challenging tasks, and expand horizons. The investigators hypothesize the act of participation is of greater importance than the actual content or focus of the activity. These activities are likely the focus of the participants when choosing a program in which to participate.

A strong indicator of a positive experience in a youth development program lies within the perception of the participant. Participant’s perceptions may be judged by evaluating subjective well-being (SWB), or happiness. According to Diener (1994), SWB is comprised of three components: high positive affect, low negative affect, and positive life satisfaction. SWB is critical during all stages of life, but particularly with youths who consider self-concept and interpersonal relationships to have a stronger effect on their SWB than age, gender, intelligence, or parental occupation (Park, 2004). While SWB is desirable in and of itself, it has also been found positively related to optimal mental health (Frisch, 2000; Veenhoven, 1989; & Gilman & Huebner 2000). The SWB of youths may be positively influenced, in part, by the attributes of the youth development program in which they participate. Programs which have high levels of structure (Wong & Csikszentmihalyi, 1991) and those which are meaningful and challenging (Maton, 1990; Wong & Csikszentmihalyi, 1991) had the highest level of SWB reported by participants.

In the United States, a multitude of youth development programs exist. As of 1998, there were approximately 500 national organizations and 17,000 state and local organizations (Erickson, 1998). Of those programs, arts organizations may offer opportunities to millions of students who may not have access to similar content in their schools or homes or those who wish to gain more experience in the arts. With the ever-decreasing amount of arts programs in the public schools, community-based arts programs appear to be forming quickly. Participants have identified youth development programs focused on the arts as the most meaningful experiences of their non-school activity participation. Participants cited tension relief and creative expression
as the greatest benefits of youth arts programs. Due to heavy emphasis on academic achievement and budgetary issues in the public schools, music programs are being reduced or eliminated from many schools. After school and summer programs may be able to fill the void left by school programs (Nicholson, Collins, & Holmer, 2004).

2.2 Talent Activities

Participation in, and commitment to, any type of talent activity or one requiring athletic, creative, or artistic aptitude (Talent, n.d.) has been related more strongly with social issues than an individual’s level of competence in that activity (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1993). For example, Patrick, Ryan, Alfeld-Liro, Fredricks, Hruda, & Eccles (1998) interviewed participants in sports and arts activities and found a significant number of participants initially chose to join a group to make friends. One third of the participant’s main objectives were to “enhance their social skills and confidence in relating to peers” (Patrick et al., 1998, pg. 751)

Peer influence was found strongest during the period of adolescence. This may be attributed to the greater amount of student involvement in talent activities or other youth development programs and the greater amount of time students in Western countries spend with peers than with family members. However, a limiting effect was found between peer relationships and participation. When participants perceived the activity to have adverse effects on social interaction with peers, they usually reduced their involvement in that activity (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984). To discourage this behavior, Patrick et al. (1998) hypothesize it should be of primary importance for adolescents to find a peer social group with a value system congruent with their own. As an example, one of the study’s participants found in her youth group that individuals in the group shared her beliefs while she disliked her school-based group due to the high amount of negativity. Membership in a program with peers having similar interests also affords participants a sense of belonging and safety (Patrick et al., 1998). Peer acceptance has been found to be the dominant predictor of perceived competence, enjoyment, stress, and motivation (Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006).

Related to peer acceptance may also be a participant’s level of self-esteem. A direct link between self-esteem and participation in a physical activity has been found. Guinn, Vincent, Semper, and Jorgensen (2000) found self-esteem directly influences the rate of participation in a
physical activity. Those participants displaying higher levels of self-esteem were more likely to participate in a physical activity. However, Pedersen and Seidman (2005) also found the inverse to be true, participation in a sports team may lead to higher levels of self-esteem.

Gender and age were also found to affect participation in talent activities. Early in adolescence, females were found more interested in social aspects of sports (peer development) than males who favored the cognitive or competitive aspect (Coakley & White, 1992; Weiss, Smith, & Theeboom, 1996). As the youths aged, the child was less interested in cognitive/competitive development and more interested in social/peer development. Across all participants, competitiveness also fluctuated due to the encouragement of parents. Younger athletes who received more direct encouragement from parents had a higher level of competitiveness. Combining data from males and females, however, showed peer development was the most important factor influencing participation cited by the participants (Recours, Souville, & Griffet, 2004).

In a contradictory study to the information previously presented, Fawcett, Garton, and Dandy (2009) discovered significant results related to student participation in structured leisure activities, an activity which is adult-organized, and directed, stimulating, promotes skill-focused pursuits requiring commitment and regular participation (Larson & Verma, 1999; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Eighty-one different activities were found and divided into three categories: physical (such as football or swimming); creative (such as band, musical ensembles, or debate); and social (such as church groups or scouts). Results indicated adolescents who chose to participate in these activities were intrinsically motivated to do well and improve their skill. These participants seemed to value cognitive development over social development. Interviews with the participants also found evidence of highly supportive parents corroborating Recours, Souville, and Griffet (2004). Students choosing to participate in a talent activity generally participated longer if activities were encouraged early by their parents and if students perceived themselves to be competent in their chosen activity.
2.3 Performing Arts Programs

As found with other arts programs, participants in performing arts organizations also appear to cite intrinsic and extrinsic factors when discussing their motivation to join a program. While numerous reasons have been cited, the two most common factors influencing participation were social benefits such as peer development and intrinsic musical benefits such as increasing music knowledge and/or improving performance (Aspin, 2000; Belz, 1994; Bridges, 1996; Cavitt, 2005; Chiodo, 1997; Coffman & Adamek, 2001; Darrough, 1990; Hosler, 1992; Hylton, 1980; Seago, 1993; Spencer, 1996; and Zdzinski, 2004). Similar results were also found with summer camps dedicated to music. A study by Kelly and Juchniewicz (2009) surveyed participants in a large summer music camp and found their primary objective to be musical development. Participants indicated a desire to improve their skills while participating in a high quality environment similar to a youth community ensemble. A sizable amount of literature exists studying factors influencing participation in community ensembles at the adult level, however, little is known about community groups targeting youths. Although the term “Youth Community Ensemble” was not present in the literature, it may include orchestras, bands, and choirs specifically targeting youths.

Comparisons of Fawcett, Garton, and Dandy (2009) and Patrick et al. (1998), demonstrated several inconsistencies. While Fawcett, Garton, and Dandy (2009) found participants in leisure time activities were intrinsically motivated to improve their talent levels, Patrick et al. (1998) found the opposite to be true: participants were more interested in social aspects of their activity. Regarding these inconsistencies and the lack of American research on this topic, the present study hopes to (1) determine what reasons are cited by participants as motivators for participation in a youth community ensemble (2) determine if the reasons are socially or musically based and (3) determine if parental influence was a deciding factor for the participants.

2.4 Summary

Youth development appears to be a rising priority since 1990. Numerous after-school programs have been created to help youths develop into healthy, moral, and happy adults who positively contribute to society. These programs strive to provide a safe atmosphere in which
children can learn a variety of skills in positive settings. Talent activities, such as music or art, have been found by participants to be the most meaningful experiences among non-school activities. Research in the area of youth ensembles has been limited. Several studies have identified factors influencing youths to participate in a youth community ensemble outside of the United States, but the data is contradicting. This paper hopes to provide insight into the factors influencing youths to participate in a youth community ensemble in the United States.
3.1 Participants

Youth community ensembles (orchestra, band, and choir) were found using the Google and Yahoo internet search engines. Criteria for searching was developed with assistance from music education professionals who have performed in or taught youth community ensembles. Search terms included: youth orchestra, youth symphony, youth band, youth wind ensemble, youth choir, teen choir, and children’s choir. A data collection sheet was used to collect the following information on each ensemble: name, location, website (if one exists), and contact information in order to request participation from the ensembles. Ensembles eligible for inclusion included those which had regular rehearsal schedules, were available exclusively to youths 18 years of age or younger, and operated for at least seven months of the calendar year. Each ensemble required an audition for placement within the group. Ensembles affiliated with religious organizations were not included as this was not the focus of this study. Also, any costs associated with participation were not investigated.

Each ensemble received an introduction letter via email (Appendix E) from the investigator. Two weeks after the initial mailing, a follow up email (Appendix H) was sent to non-responding ensembles and copied to the ensemble director. Ensembles electing to participate indicated available dates for survey administration upon reply. Following date selection, ensembles received and completed a Site Consent Form (Appendix A), as well as a packet of Student Consent Forms (Appendix C) and Parent Consent Forms (Appendix B) which were distributed to ensemble participants by a proctor one week prior to the survey date. Proctors were music education professors who were trained in music education research methods by the investigator and given detailed written instructions by the investigator prior to consent form distribution (Appendix F). A standard set of instructions were read prior to the distribution of the consent forms.

Participants \(N=73\), ages 7-18, were members of participating youth community ensembles (Appendix G) in the United States. All performers in these ensembles were given
the option to voluntarily and anonymously participate in a brief survey following consent from their parent and/or guardian. The total number of student musicians was 274 and the total number of participants in the survey was 73, indicating a 26.64% response rate.

3.2 Questionnaire Construction

The survey instrument used in this study was an anonymous and voluntary questionnaire (Appendix D) based on Coffman and Adamek (1999) and Kelly and Juchniewicz (2009). Coffman and Adamek (1999) investigated factors influencing senior citizen participation in a New Horizons ensemble while Kelly and Juchniewicz (2009) investigated factors influencing instrumental student’s participation in a summer music camp. Demographic questions included: gender, age, instrument, and educational background. A free-response question from Coffman and Adamek (1999) asked participants to list factors influencing their participation in the ensemble. A second free response question, added by the investigator, asked participants if anyone influenced them to join the ensemble. Finally, ten five-point Likert-style questions from Kelly and Juchniewicz (2009) were included to evaluate if influencing factors were intrinsically musical as found in Barrett & Smigiel (2007); Fawcett, Garton, & Dandy (2009); and Shaw (1998) or extrinsically socially based as found in Patrick et al. (1998). Questions referring to post-secondary planning were removed as this was not the focus of this study. Finally, one additional Likert-style question asked participants to rank the importance of someone else’s influence on their participation in the ensemble.

Experts in the field of music education who have teaching experience, experience with youth community ensembles, and music research reviewed the questionnaire. Suggestions pertaining to semantics and question placement were provided to improve clarity of the instrument. Following questionnaire construction, an application for study approval was submitted to The Florida State University’s Institutional Review Board Human Subjects Committee which approved the study and all related materials (Appendix I).

A pilot study was conducted with a youth orchestra not participating in the study to evaluate the clarity of the questionnaire. Results indicated the questionnaire would take approximately two to three minutes to complete and the questions were made clear to the reader.
3.3 Administration

Prior to formal data collection, a pilot study was administered to test the comprehension of the survey instrument. The pilot study indicated almost full comprehension of the survey instrument with the exception of one question. The question was moved to be in-line with other left-justified items to make the form easier to read. The pilot study also indicated the survey instrument was able to be completed in two to three minutes.

The survey was administered on the date selected by each individual ensemble director. Those ensembles within five driving hours of the investigator were administered by the investigator himself while the ensembles in Ohio and Texas were administered by the same proctors who distributed the consent forms. Immediately prior to the survey, verbal instructions (Appendix F) were read by either the investigator or the proctor to the entire ensemble. Student musicians who returned the student and parent consent forms were asked to voluntarily participate in the survey by the investigator or investigator-assigned proctor at the end of the ensemble’s rehearsal period. Participation in this study had no effect on the student’s membership in their ensemble. Extra copies of the parent and student consent forms were available if any participant needed another copy. Copies of the consent forms were provided to parents or students on request. Questionnaires were distributed to the consenting participants and collected by either the investigator or proctor upon completion. The survey took approximately two to three minutes to complete. Proctors then placed completed questionnaires and consent forms in a sealed, postage paid envelope addressed to the investigator and were mailed the following day. All consent forms were kept by the investigator in a locked filing cabinet for one year. After one year, all consent forms were destroyed.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS

Fourteen ensembles were contacted by the investigator to request participation. Of those ensembles, five elected to participate (35.7% response rate). Participating ensembles included youth bands/wind ensembles \((n=1)\), youth choirs \((n=2)\), and youth orchestras \((n=2)\). Ensembles were located in Florida, Texas, and Ohio.

Individual participants \((N=73)\) were members of the selected ensembles who elected to participate and received written consent from their parents and/or legal guardian. Eighth participants were members of a youth band. Twenty-seven participants were members of a youth orchestra. Thirty-eight participants were members of a youth choir. Of the participants, 24 were male and 39 were female with 10 electing to not give gender information. Ages ranged from 7 to 18. The majority (69.4%) of the participants attend public schools, while the remaining attended private school (22.2%) or were home-schooled (5.6%). Responses from both vocal and instrumental performing mediums were fairly evenly split: 52.05% vocal and 47.95% instrumental. Demographic information may be found in Table 4.1.
Table 4.1: *Demographic Information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Participants</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth Band</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Orchestra</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Choir</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>52.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>53.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlisted</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>47.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>52.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public School</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>69.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private School</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home School</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first research objective was to establish what factors influencing participation in the ensemble were cited by participants utilizing a free-response question. Seventy participants elected to answer this question. Some participants listed one factor and others chose to list up to four factors. Due to the individuality of the participants, each response was unique to a particular participant. Despite these unique responses, several trends were evident and responses were categorized based on their content. For example, those participants who wrote “I love music” or “I love to sing” were counted together under the heading “Love of Music.” Another category, “College Preparation,” included such responses as “It looks good on a resume” and “It looks good to colleges.” A reliability assistant, a PhD student in music education with a background in research methods, was utilized to verify category placement for each response. The most popular response category was “love for music” (37.5%) and the least popular
categories at 1.4% were “value of participation” and “spiritual desires.” The rankings of all response categories may be found in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Ranked Free-Response Categories by Number of Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Love of Music/Love to Play/Sing</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Musical Skills</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience New/High Quality Literature</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Similar Ensemble at Participant’s School</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Quality of Ensemble</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Belonging</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Preparation/Resume Building</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work With Others Having Similar Interests</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain More Experience Outside the School Day</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make New Friends</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing Music With an Audience</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Recommendation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brings Joy/Happiness</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Participation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second research objective sought to determine if the factors influencing participation were of a social nature or musical nature. Upon further analysis, each response category from the free-response question indicated a trend toward either social objectives or musical objectives. Of the 16 categories, eight were labeled as social (Sense of Belonging, College Preparation, More Experience, Make Friends, Recommendation, Fun, Joy, and Spiritual) and eight were labeled as musical (Love of Music, Improvement of Skills, Quality Literature, No Similar Ensemble Available at School, High Quality of Youth Ensemble, Sharing Similar Interests with Others in the Ensemble, Sharing Music with Audiences, and Intrinsic Value of Participation) by the investigator. The same reliability assistant was used to verify the category placement of responses as either musical or social. A Chi-Square analysis ($\chi^2 = 32.64, p<.05$) indicated a significant difference in favor of musical factors.

Additionally, 11 five-point Likert type scales were used to corroborate the free response data (Table 4.3). Participants rated “Develop/Improve Music Skills” the highest with a mean of 4.82 and standard deviation of .51. The lowest ranked response was “Encouraged by Someone Else” with a mean of 3.1 and standard deviation of 1.36.
Table 4.3: Ranked Likert Scale Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop/improve musical skills</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience a higher quality level of musical experience</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To have a fun/enjoyable experience</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn new music</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience a diversity of musical opportunities</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance opportunities (solo and/or ensemble)</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to meet others with similar interests</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with friends</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to meet new friends</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn independence</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged by someone else</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 11 Likert scales, 10 were able to be divided into either social objectives or musical objectives by the investigator (the 11th scale was reserved for use in conjunction with the second free response question). The same reliability assistant also verified this categorization. Five scales were social in nature (To have a fun/enjoyable experience, opportunity to meet others with similar interest, spend times with friends, learn independence). The highest rated social response was “to have a fun/enjoyable experience” while the lowest was “learn independence.” Five scales were musical in nature (Improve Skills, Quality of Ensemble, New Music, Diversity, and Performance Opportunities). The highest rated musical response was “develop/improve musical skills” and the lowest was “performance opportunities.” Table 4.4 shows the rankings of responses in both social and musical categories.
Table 4.4: *Ranked Social and Musical Responses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To have a fun/enjoyable experience</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to meet others with similar interests</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with friends</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to meet new friends</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn independence</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musical</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop/improve musical skills</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience a higher quality level of musical experience</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn new music</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience a diversity of musical opportunities</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance opportunities (solo and/or ensemble)</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To compare musical objectives with social objectives, all musical responses were grouped together and all social responses were grouped together. The combined scores (Table 4.5) for all Likert social responses is ($M=3.81$, $SD=.77$) and for all musical responses is ($M=4.58$, $SD=.52$).
Table 4.5: Combined Social and Musical Likert Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Social Responses</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Musical Responses</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A paired-sample T-Test (t=7.8, p<.05) on the combined Likert scale data indicates a significant difference in favor of music factors. This corroborates the data found in the first free response question as shown in table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Social and Musical Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Response</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social vs Musical Free Response Questions</td>
<td>$x^2 = 32.64$</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social vs. Musical Likert Responses</td>
<td>$t = 7.8$</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final research objective investigated whether or not specific individuals encouraged participants to join a youth community ensemble. A second free response question asked participants if someone had encouraged them to join a youth community ensemble. Fifty six participants said yes, someone had encouraged them to participate, while 16 participants said no. A Chi-Square analysis ($x^2 = 21.12$, p<.05) showed a significant difference in favor of those participants who stated “yes.” Participants who responded affirmatively, were asked to clarify their relationship with the individual who recommended participation. Five types of relationships were established by the investigator: teacher, parent, friend, relative, and other acquaintance. The same reliability assistant was used to verify these categories and the enclosed
The most commonly cited source of encouragement appeared to come from participant’s teachers (34.7%) with parents a close second at 29.2%. Ranked responses may be found on Table 6.

Table 4.7: Ranked Sources of Participation Recommendation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Acquaintance</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, one final Likert-style scale asked participants to rank the importance of an outside influence on their participation in a youth community ensemble. Results indicated a mean of 3.1 with a standard deviation of 1.36, the lowest rated response of all Likert data.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION

The primary findings of this study demonstrated participants identified and rated musical objectives affecting their participation higher than social objectives. Youths chose to participate in these type of ensembles because they have an apparent love for music. Additional findings indicated teachers and parents had the most outside influence on participants outside of their own personal desires. However, when asked to rate how important interpersonal encouragement was in the decision process to join an ensemble, participants rated this factor as the lowest of all available responses.

Participation in any type of music ensemble involves many variables including desire, costs, and benefits. Each individual elects to begin, continue, or end their participation in a music ensemble based on their own personal attitudes and opinion. This same breadth of opinions are applicable to both adult community ensembles and youth community ensembles.

While participants in youth community ensembles have listed numerous factors influencing their participation, this study suggests several trends. The most popular factor has been that of a love for music. Many of these participants appear to enjoy participating for intrinsic reasons, such as improving their skills and experience high quality repertoire instead of extrinsic reasons including college preparation or developing friendships. This finding is concurrent with research on adult community ensembles and New Horizons Ensembles for seniors who also harbor a deep love for music (Cavitt, 2005; Chiodo, 1997; Coffman & Adamek, 1999; Darrough, 1990; Hosler, 1992). These results would be best validated with a repeat of this study utilizing a greater number of participating ensembles and their musicians. The implications of these data may serve to guide many aspects of a youth community ensemble. For example, repertoire selection may focus on high-quality music that is advanced in its difficulty level while rehearsal designs may focus more on small details than one might in a school ensemble.

Further investigations into the listed and rated factors displayed a tendency to align with either social or musical factors. Social factors included such elements as fostering friendships,
having a fun/enjoyable experience, or a sense of belonging. Musical factors included such topics as love for music, improvement of skills, or experiencing high quality literature. Musical factors appeared to play a primary role when youths decide to participate in an ensemble while social aims were secondary in nature. The implications of these findings may guide many aspects of youth community ensemble administration. The data may be used to select repertoire desired by the ensemble participants and develop rehearsal strategies that align with the participant’s objectives and expectations. Also, recruiting and retention rates may increase when the program aligns with the desires of the student. Further study is needed to determine the extent to which musical factors are more important to participants than social factors. Additional research comparing the degree of difference between music and social factors for youth, adult, and senior ensembles may yield interesting data on potential shifting personal values during life’s progression.

Of interesting note, nine respondents indicated a lack of a similar ensemble in their school. None of these participants where home-schooled as one might assume. Budget cuts and program elimination in schools creates a need for those students who wish to participate in an ensemble. Youth community ensembles are positioned to potentially act as a substitute organization for those students who wish to play or sing in a group, but are unable to in their school environment. These data may also be correlated with the rising amount of ensembles dedicated to youths across the nation. Further study is needed to determine if there is a correlation and if these ensemble are filling a need for many participants. Additionally, investigating participant’s preferences for either a school-based ensemble for a community ensemble may provide interesting results.

In addition to participants personal reasons for participating in an ensemble, extrinsic recommendation from friends and relatives played a significant role. The majority of respondents affirmatively indicated the influence of another individual on their decision to join a youth community ensemble. The individual with the greatest influence on participants was their teacher. Data on whether or not teachers were school teachers or private teachers were not collected. Closely following teachers was the influence of parents on participants. Many parents seemed to encourage their children to participate. Other, less common responses included
friends, relatives, and acquaintances. Implications of these data may affect marketing to potential participants and recruiting strategies to increase membership. Due to the apparent prevalence of teacher recommendations to potential participants, it would seem imperative to keep area music teachers informed and supplied with recruiting materials and also may be worthwhile to include them in ensemble activities. Avenues for direct marketing and information dissemination to parents would also appear to be beneficial due to the high rate of ensemble recommendation by parents. To further assist with recruiting, participants in the ensembles may be encouraged to discuss participation with their friends. Numerous opportunities for further research include marketing and recruiting strategies as well as an investigation into why teachers and parents chose to recommend participation in a youth community ensemble.

Opportunities to experience music in some form or another are present in virtually every community. During the course of the past few decades, many communities have established ensembles for adult community members, senior citizens, and youths. The number of youth ensembles appears to be on the rise, while research in this area is very limited when compared to studies involving adult and senior citizens groups. This study found many similar results to previous adult ensemble research with youths electing to participate in these ensembles for primarily musical reasons. Unlike previous research, this study also identified likely sources of extrinsic encouragement from friends and relatives. Both teachers and parents have a strong influence on participants which is unlikely the case for adults and senior citizens. Additionally, these ensembles may act as a viable alternative for music participation for those students without a similar program in their school. Further research in the area of youth community ensembles is recommended to establish a knowledge base for this increasingly popular area.

Although this study demonstrated several trends consistent with previous research, these results may not be able to be generalized across the population of youths in community ensembles. The low number of participants in this study \( (N=73) \), despite responses from three states, represent a low response rate of 27%. Of the fourteen ensembles contacted by the investigator to request participation, five elected to participate (35.7% response rate). The low response rate of both ensembles and participants may have been due to time constraints, the additional step of parental consent, and the use of proctors with several ensemble. Future
research would benefit from a larger amount of participating ensembles and a fully investigator-led survey process.
APPENDIX A
SITE PARTICIPATION FORM
By signing this form _____________________________________________________ voluntarily agrees to: (Name of Ensemble)

participate in the thesis study entitled **Perceptions of Participation in a Youth Community Ensemble**, conducted by Ryan V. Scherber from Florida State University. The study is examining the factors influencing participation in an ensemble of this nature. Although the name of this ensemble may be listed in the appendices, it will not be published.

Participation will involve filling out a voluntary and anonymous questionnaire. The risks involved are minimal and pose no more physical or mental harm than filling out a sheet of paper. No personal information will be asked. The total time commitment is approximately two to three minutes and will take place in one session. Ensemble participation, as well as that of your participants, in this study is voluntary. Should you choose not to participate, there will be no negative outcomes. The results of the research study may be published, but the individual participant’s names will not be used. Names and locations of the ensemble will also not be published. Information obtained during the course of the study will remain confidential, to the extent allowed by law.

Although there may be no direct benefit to your ensemble, the possible benefit of your participation might involve improvements and/or changes to similar youth community ensembles.

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please e-mail me at *************
You may also contact Dr. Steven N. Kelly at (850) 644-4069 or skelly@admin.fsu.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, through the Vice President for the Office of Research at (850) 644-8633 or you may access their website at http://www.fsu.research.edu.

________________________________________________________________________
(Signature of Ensemble Director or other Authority Figure)

________________________________________________________________________
(Title)

________________________________________________________________________
(Date)
Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Steven N. Kelly in the College of Music at Florida State University. I am conducting a research study to examine the factors influencing youths to participate in a youth community ensemble.

Your child’s participation will involve filling out a voluntary and anonymous questionnaire. The risks involved are minimal and pose no more physical or mental harm than filling out a sheet of paper. No personal information will be asked. The total time commitment is approximately two to three minutes and will take place in one session. Your participation, as well as that of your child, in this study is voluntary. Should you choose not to participate, your child’s membership in their ensemble will not be affected. The results of the research study may be published, but your child’s name will not be used. Names and locations of the ensemble will also not be published.

As mentioned above, no personal information will be collected, but demographic questions such as age, instrument, and school type (public, private, home-school) will be asked.

Although there may be no direct benefit to your child, the possible benefit of your child’s participation might involve improvements and/or changes to this and other youth community ensembles.

If you have any questions concerning this research study or your child’s participation in the study, please e-mail me at ************* You may also contact Dr. Steven N. Kelly at (850) 644-4069 or skelly@admin.fsu.edu

Sincerely,
Ryan V. Scherber

I give my consent for my child,_____________________________, to participate in the above study. I understand that by giving consent for my child to participate, I also understand that my child will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. I understand that only the researcher will have access to these forms and they will be kept for an undetermined amount of time.

Parent’s Name: _________________________________
Parent’s Signature _________________________________ (Date) ________________

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, through the Vice President for the Office of Research at (850) 644-8633 or you may access their website at http://www.fsu.research.edu.
Dear Student,

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Steven N. Kelly, in the College of Music at Florida State University. I am conducting a research study to examine the factors influencing you and your peers to participate in a youth community ensemble and would like to request your participation.

Participation will involve filling out a voluntary and anonymous questionnaire. The risks involved are minimal and pose no more physical or mental harm than filling out a sheet of paper. No personal information will be asked. The total time commitment is approximately two to three minutes and will take place in one session. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Should you choose not to participate, your membership in the ensemble will not be affected. The results of the research study may be published, but your name will not be used. Names and locations of the ensemble will also not be published. Information obtained during the course of the study will remain confidential, to the extent allowed by law.

Although there may be no direct benefit to you, the possible benefit of your participation might involve improvements and/or changes to this and other youth community ensembles.

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please e-mail me at *************
You may also contact Dr. Steven N. Kelly at (850) 644-4069 or skelly@admin.fsu.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, through the Vice President for the Office of Research at (850) 644-8633 or you may access their website at http://www.fsu.research.edu.

Return of the questionnaire will be considered your consent to participate. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Ryan V. Scherber
APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE
Perceptions of Participation in a Youth Community Ensemble

Participation in this survey is anonymous and voluntary.

I am: Male/Female                      My age is ______                   I play ______________

Home-schooled: Yes/No

Private School: Yes/No

Why are you participating in this ensemble?

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Were you encouraged by someone else to join this ensemble? Yes/No
If so, what is their relation to you? (Please do not use names)

______________________________________________________________________

Please rate the importance of each item below by circling the appropriate number from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important) in reasons you chose to be in this ensemble.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Not Important at all</th>
<th>Not as Important</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to meet new friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn independence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to meet others with similar musical interests/backgrounds</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To have fun/an enjoyable experience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop/improve musical skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance opportunities (solo and/or ensemble)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn new music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience a diversity of musical opportunities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience a higher quality level of musical experience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged by someone else</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your participation!
Dear Dr./Mr./Mrs. _____________,

I am a graduate student working on my thesis at Florida State University, under the direction of Dr. Steven N. Kelly, and would like to ask for your assistance in the selection of subjects for my study. The study will focus on the factors influencing youths to participate in an ensemble such as yours.

If you elect to have your ensemble participate in this study please select a rehearsal in April that I would be able to visit to administer the survey. Prior to my visit you will receive a packet containing parent permission forms. If you would be willing, please send the parent consent forms home with your ensemble members one rehearsal prior to the date of the study.

Criteria for subjects participating in the study have been established and are listed below: 1. Subjects are youths, 18 years of age or younger. 2. Subjects participate in either a youth orchestra, youth choir, or youth band. 3. Subjects are not paid members of the ensemble.

While this study could examine subjects in college who have previously participated in this type of ensemble, subjects who are currently participating will provide the most valid responses.

If you agree to participate in this study, please email the following information to me at *************

1. Your name 2. Ensemble Name 3. Work Phone Number 4. Number of ensemble participants and 5. Desired date of survey.

If you are unable to participate, please email me to prevent any further emails at *************.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,
Ryan V. Scherber
College of Music
Florida State University
To the Proctor:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Your assistance is greatly appreciated. In this packet you will find site consent forms, student consent forms, parent consent forms, and questionnaires. Below you will find instructions for the administration of this survey.

ONE REHEARSAL PRIOR TO SURVEY ADMINISTRATION:

“Good (afternoon/evening). My name is __________ and I am here on behalf of Ryan Scherber, a graduate student at The Florida State University, to ask for your assistance with a study. Mr. Scherber is currently studying ensembles similar to this one and he would like to ask each of you to participate. Participation will involve filling out a brief questionnaire that should take no longer than two to three minutes at our next rehearsal. In order to participate, we ask that each of you and your parents/guardians read over these consent forms I am about to hand out, have one of your parents or guardians sign it, and bring it back with you next week. Participation is voluntary and no personal information will be collected on the questionnaire. Any questions?”

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION:

Before administration: “Good (afternoon/evening). I hope all of you had a chance to read over the consent forms we sent home last week. Please remember participation in this survey is voluntary and will remain anonymous. I will now pass out the questionnaires to those who have completed consent forms. If you choose to not participate, please leave your questionnaire blank. Your membership in this ensemble will not be affected in any way.”

After administration: “Thank you all for your participation. Your assistance with this study is greatly appreciated.”
APPENDIX G
PARTICIPATING ENSEMBLES
Youth Bands:

Waco Area Youth Wind Ensemble (Waco, TX)

Youth Orchestras:

Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra (Cincinnati, OH)
Tallahassee Youth Orchestra (Tallahassee, FL)
Waco Youth Symphony Orchestra (Waco, TX)

Youth Choirs:

Gainesville Youth Choir (Gainesville, FL)
Gulf Coast Youth Choir (Tampa, FL)
Good Afternoon,

I am a graduate student working on my thesis at The Florida State University, under the direction of Dr. Steven N. Kelly, and would like to ask for your assistance in the selection of subjects for my study. I am interested in studying the factors influencing youths to participate in an ensemble such as yours. Research in this area is currently very limited and results of this study may provide important information pertaining to youth community ensembles.

The time commitment for this study would be very minimum and would involve the administration of a brief questionnaire (approximately 5 minutes) by myself at the conclusion of one of your rehearsals in February. Additionally, one rehearsal prior to the survey, parent permission forms would need to be distributed to be signed and brought back the next week.

If you would be willing to assist with this study, please let me know the best available dates in February which you would be willing to let me administer the survey. I would greatly appreciate your assistance with my study.

Thank you so much for your consideration,

Ryan V. Scherber
***************
APPENDIX I

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: 4/11/2011

To: Ryan Scherber [*************]

Address: *******************
Dept.: MUSIC SCHOOL

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
Perceptions of Participation in a Youth Community Ensemble

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 4/9/2012 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.
REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ryan Vincent Scherber was born and raised in Cheektowaga, NY, a suburb of Buffalo where he attended the Cheektowaga Central School District. Following graduation, he attended the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music and earned a Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education in 2006. During the summer of 2006, Ryan Scherber was appointed Music Director for the Southeastern Local School District in South Charleston, Ohio. At Southeastern, Mr. Scherber was responsible for teaching courses in general music, instrumental music, vocal music, and music theater. In the fall of 2009, he began graduate studies in music education at The Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida and finished with a Masters of Music Education degree in the spring of 2011. Mr. Scherber will be commencing doctoral studies in music education in the fall of 2011 at the Florida State University.