

Running head: ORCHESTRA TEACHERS' REPERTOIRE SELECTION PRACTICES

ORCHESTRA TEACHERS' REPERTOIRE SELECTION PRACTICES: A SURVEY
STUDY

by

Lauren Gruber

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Thesis Committee

Frank Diaz, Thesis Director

Brenda Brenner

Peter Miksza

Orchestra Teachers' Repertoire Selection Practices: A Survey

Study

The purpose of this survey study was to examine repertoire selection practices among middle and high school string orchestra directors. Through an online survey, orchestra teachers ($N = 96$) provided information about their most recent selection of literature. The survey obtained demographic information as well as identified criteria and procedures used by orchestra teachers in selecting repertoire. Teachers in this survey rated pedagogical and musical criteria as being highly influential to their repertoire selection practices. The three factors most frequently reported as affecting repertoire selection decisions were found to be technical considerations within the music, the ability and limitations of the ensemble, and instrumental performance skills that can be taught through the music. The three most frequently reported sources for finding new repertoire were found to be conversations with other directors and mentor teachers, looking through your school's library, and lists of recommended literature for contest or competition. Several mild yet significant correlations were found between teacher experience and responses to repertoire selection practices items. Teachers can use these findings in mentoring less experienced teachers as well as to guide their own practice for selecting repertoire for their ensembles.

Keywords: Repertoire selection, literature selection, school orchestra teachers, school orchestra ensembles

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Chapter 1: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Selecting quality literature is of the utmost importance for ensemble directors. May (2011) wrote, “the selection of quality repertoire is one of the most important and challenging responsibilities that band directors face, and many believe that well-chosen repertoire is key to a strong curricular framework for band programs” (p. 115). A phrase heard frequently, “the repertoire is the curriculum,” has become a widely accepted practice and belief among orchestra directors, yet little research has been done in the area of repertoire selection practices of school orchestra teachers (Reynolds, 2000, p. 31).

While there is little research concerning literature selection among school orchestra directors, the number of practitioner articles on this topic is abundant (Armes, 2020; Geraldi, 2008; Gillis, 2008; Hopkins, 2013, Kaschub, 2020; Persellin, 2000; Reynolds, 2000; Richardson, 2009; Rotjan, 2018; Russell, 2006). Persellin (2000) stated that selecting high quality music provides students with a foundation for all other learning in the ensemble classroom, while Gillis (2008) discussed repertoire selection as an important responsibility of director rehearsal preparation. Similarly, Reynolds (2000) wrote “repertoire is the curriculum” in advocating for high quality music in the orchestra classroom. This statement by Reynolds has become widely accepted by orchestra directors and governs the way many teachers choose repertoire aligned to curricular goals for their classrooms. More recently, ensemble teachers have been challenged to think critically about curriculum design through use of carefully selected repertoire to enliven and enlighten students beyond the concert cycle (Kaschub, 2020).

Other practitioner articles have dealt with various aspects of selecting repertoire, including emphasizing “core” pieces (Geraldi, 2008), using backward design principles to select literature (Armes, 2020), evaluating the appropriateness of works based on ability (Richardson, 2009), and developing four-year curriculums based on repertoire (Russell, 2006). Additionally, technical, aesthetic, and affective perspectives for selecting repertoire were examined by Rotjan (2018), and Hopkins (2013) discussed the use of Vygotsky’s zones of proximal development for evaluating literature. There are also many textbooks and method books that provide guidance for string teachers in their selection of orchestral repertoire (Cooper, 2004; Hamman & Gillespie, 2019; Littrell et al., 2001; Selby, 2017). Notably, while the insights offered in the resources are indeed valuable, they are not based on research about what orchestra teachers actually *do* when selecting literature. Therefore, more empirical research on this topic may be helpful for both researchers and practitioners alike.

While little is known about the literature selection practices of school orchestra teachers, a great deal of research has been conducted on this topic in the area of band (Crochet, 2006; Howard, 2001; May, 2011; Young, 1998). Both Howard (2001) and Young (1998) surveyed band directors about their process for selecting literature, while Crochet (2006) looked at how these processes may be influenced by a teacher’s level of experience. Other studies have used content analyses to determine the quality of literature performed at state music assessments (May, 2011). These studies all addressed questions surrounding band directors’ processes for selecting literature. Results from these studies are mixed; some studies (Crochet, 2006; Howard, 2001; May, 2011) found that band directors put an emphasis on quality when selecting literature, while others did not

(Young, 1998). The importance of quality as a criterion for selecting literature among school orchestra teachers is currently unknown, making it an important topic for future research.

Similar to band, many studies have also addressed the literature selection practices of choral ensemble directors (Canfield, 2009; Diddle, 2005; Forbes, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007; Hedden & Rauduvaité, 2016; Lerew, 2016; Reames, 2001). The process and criteria of literature selection used by nationally recognized high school choral directors was analyzed by Hunsaker (2007). Forbes (2001) compared the repertoire selection practices of highly qualified and less qualified choir directors while Diddle (2005) described the repertoire selection practices and skills of beginning choral music educators. Choir directors' repertoire selection criteria as well as sources for finding new literature and types of literature performed by high school choirs was analyzed by Reames (2001), and Canfield (2009) surveyed middle and high school teachers about their criteria for selection, quality, and appropriateness of literature. Hedden and Rauduvaité (2016) studied the literature selection practices of teachers of young singers, while Lerew (2016) studied the repertoire selection practices of religiously affiliated collegiate choral ensembles. There is a wealth of research in the area of choral ensemble repertoire selection, and many of these studies (Canfield, 2009; Diddle, 2005; Hunsaker, 2007; Reames, 2001) actually ask teachers to describe their criteria for choosing to perform a piece. This critical information asking orchestra directors to describe their criteria for choosing repertoire is missing from the current body of research.

While school orchestras have not been the subject of many research studies, a few studies have been conducted in the area of repertoire selection among youth, collegiate,

and professional orchestras (Pear, 2007; Pickney, 2000; Smith, 2004; Thoen, 2009). Smith (2004) investigated programming trends among collegiate and professional orchestras while Pickney (2000) and Pear (2007) identified repertoire selection criteria used by youth orchestra directors. Thoen (2009) conducted historical research to examine how outreach programs effected the repertoire performed by the Minneapolis Symphony in the early 20th century. Findings from these studies suggest that literature selection for youth, collegiate, and professional orchestras is often tied to ticket sales and audience engagement. However, as school orchestras are often more focused on musician development and curriculum, it is difficult to make comparisons between these settings.

Only a limited number of research studies have addressed repertoire selection processes of school orchestra directors (Hash, 2016; Rotjan, 2017; Tsugawa, 2010). School orchestra directors' challenges in selecting repertoire that represented students' identities was examined by Rotjan (2017). An important examination of historical events that shaped the way teachers select repertoire over time since the first national school orchestra contests in 1929 was conducted by Hash (2016). Tsugawa (2010) analyzed Merle J. Isaac's contributions to music published for the school orchestra during his lifetime and how he responded to the need for high quality arrangements for string orchestras. Tsugawa argues that Merle J. Isaac's writings and ideas about heterogenous string teaching helped to shape the school orchestras as we know them today. Two of these studies (Hash, 2016; Tsugawa, 2010) offer important insights into how repertoire for the school orchestra has changed over time, while Rotjan (2017) offers an important window into the wide range of considerations a director faces in selecting repertoire for

their ensembles. However, these studies alone fail to depict the full picture of how orchestra teachers today choose repertoire for their ensembles.

Problem Statement

While there is a wealth of research on band and choir ensemble directors' repertoire selection practices and many practitioner articles and method books addressing repertoire selection practices of orchestra teachers, there appears to be a lack of research conducted on the repertoire selection practices of middle and high school string orchestra directors. Smith (2004) wrote, "the lack of study on repertoire selection is an opportunity to further explore the motivations" (p. vii) of ensemble directors. Hedden and Raduvaité (2016) also recognized the need for more research, writing "the literature that teacher-conductors choose in teaching junior school learners...is often seen as one of the most important components of the students' and teachers' success. Yet there are scant studies devoted to the subject" (p. 33).

Purpose Statement

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the repertoire selection practices of middle and high school orchestra directors in the United States.

Research Questions

1. What criteria do middle and high school orchestra directors use to choose repertoire for their group?
 - a. What are important pedagogical-related and musical criteria used for selecting repertoire?
 - b. What are important contextual-related and social criteria used for selecting repertoire?

2. What resources are used by middle and high school orchestra directors to find new repertoire?
3. Does teacher experience play a role in how middle and high school orchestra directors select repertoire for their ensemble?

Delimitations

This study will survey middle and high school orchestra directors in schools in the United States and may include directors of orchestras in private or charter schools as well as public schools. Only repertoire for full string ensembles will be considered.

Definitions of Terms

Repertoire refers to a body of musical literature that can be studied and performed by a school orchestra ensemble. *Literature* may be used interchangeably with the word *repertoire* throughout this document.

Repertoire Selection refers to the process through which orchestra directors examine, evaluate, and select specific musical compositions for study or performance by their ensembles (Howard, 2001, p. 9). In this study, the term encompasses music of high quality that is worthy of being studied by orchestra students at the middle school and high school level. (Howard, 2001, p. 9)

School Orchestra refers to primary means of curricular instruction on string instruments within a middle or high school setting. Standard instrumentation includes violins, violas, cellos, basses, and may also include harp (Howard, 2001, p. 8).

Chapter 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of the existing literature surrounding repertoire selection practices of various ensemble directors. It is organized into the following categories: (1) repertoire selection in high school and collegiate choir ensembles, (2) repertoire selection in school band ensembles, (3) repertoire selection in youth and professional orchestras, and (4) repertoire selection in school orchestras.

Repertoire Selection in High School and Collegiate Choirs

An abundance of research exists about repertoire selection practices of high school and collegiate choir directors. Diddle (2005) examined and described the repertoire selection practices and skills of 181 beginning choral music educators with five or fewer years of teaching experience. The teachers surveyed indicated that personal performance experience outweighed their collegiate training when selecting repertoire, and collegiate choral conducting courses and student teaching ranked higher than choral methods courses for repertoire selection training.

Similarly, Forbes (2001) examined the repertoire selection practices of two groups of 297 high school choral directors and found that literature selection practices differed between outstanding and non-outstanding choral directors. Outstanding choral directors were identified as such by university choral directors and choral music education faculty from institutions accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music while non-outstanding directors were those not selected. Outstanding directors were selected by nominations from collegiate faculty, while non-outstanding directors were pulled from a directory of schools listed in the area using linear systematic

sampling. Forbes administered both telephone and written surveys and asked participants to forward copies of their fall and spring concert programs. Directors identified as outstanding were generally found to teach in larger schools with larger choral programs and had more teaching experience than directors not identified as outstanding. Forbes also found that directors identified as outstanding selected more classical, folk, and non-western music for their most advanced ensemble than directors not identified as outstanding, who tended to select more popular and rock music for their most advanced ensemble. Participants indicated that their top sources for finding repertoire were workshops and clinics, live performances, choral reading sessions, and recommendations from other directors.

Relatedly, Reames (2001) surveyed 263 MENC high school choir directors for the purpose of investigating and describing the literature performed with beginning high school choirs. Reames found that directors selected repertoire for advanced and beginning choir ensembles similarly and that directors valued concerts, choral reading sessions, personal choral libraries, and recordings as sources for finding literature. Reames also found that directors programmed 20th century literature most frequently and most successfully.

Focusing on a narrower population of choral directors, Canfield (2009) surveyed 78 middle and junior high school choral directors in Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana for their criteria of quality choral repertoire. Results of the survey indicated that middle school directors programmed and purchased holiday music most frequently, followed by spiritual, gospel, and patriotic music. Canfield found two-part music was purchased and programmed more than any other voicings. Sixty-seven percent of directors indicated that

the changing adolescent voice was considered when selecting repertoire and 44% of directors considered popular music to be appropriate choral literature.

Focusing on a small population of choral directors, Hunsaker (2007) investigated and described the choral literature selection processes and criteria of 11 successful public high school choral directors. Successful choral directors were identified as those that had performed with their public high school ensembles at the national ACDA convention. Data were collected through structured telephone interviews that included questions about philosophy and criteria for selecting performance literature, sources for finding literature, and teaching background and experience. Hunsaker found that all the directors interviewed taught in widely varied communities and their processes and criteria for literature selection reflected both their own backgrounds, as well as consideration for the programs and communities in which they teach. Additionally, all of the teachers interviewed wanted the repertoire they chose to be well written and to be music that their students would enjoy learning and performing.

Outside of the United States, Hedden and Rauduvaitė (2016) conducted a qualitative case study of five well-known teacher-conductors of children's choirs in Lithuania. Participants were selected because they were previously known to the researchers, and semi-structured interviews were conducted in person at a local university. Researchers found similar themes among all participants, who identified major components of the repertoire selection process as identifying technical and musical elements, selecting music for a specific purpose, interdisciplinary teaching, aesthetics, and taste and preferences of the teacher-conductors. Additionally, Hedden and

Rauduvaité found that all teachers interviewed considered children's ages and ranges to be the primary concern when selecting repertoire.

At the collegiate level, Lerew's (2016) multiple case study examined the repertoire selection practices of five choral conductors at nationally recognized and religiously affiliated undergraduate-focused institutions for choral music performance. Lerew gathered data from the five directors in the form of concert programs from ten academic semesters as well as unstructured phone interviews. Lerew analyzed the concert programs for genre, language, composer, historical era, and difficulty of the repertoire and found commonalities among directors in repertoire selection practices to include vocal growth and musicianship, as well as the need to engage students by providing a balanced curriculum and pieces with varied style, genre, modality, language, meter, and tempi.

A number of survey studies have been conducted on the topic of selecting literature for choral ensembles (Canfield, 2009; Diddle, 2005; Forbes, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007; Reames, 2001) Surveys conducted by both Forbes (2001) and Reames (2001) identified workshops and clinics, live performances, choral reading sessions, recordings, personal choral libraries, and recommendations from other directors as important resources for selecting literature. Only two choral studies (Hedden & Rauduvaité, 2016; Lerew, 2016) were qualitative in nature and focused more on in-depth analysis of selection practices among a small sample of teachers.

Repertoire Selection in School Bands

A wealth of research also exists about repertoire selection in school bands. Using a survey, Young (1998) investigated literature performed by wind bands in large

secondary schools (more than 1000 students) in the United States between 1994 and 1997. High school band directors ($N = 150$) with at least six years of experience participated in the survey. Results indicated that over 48% of the compositions performed by these bands did not meet criteria consistent with having high aesthetic and musical value, complexity, craftsmanship, sensitivity, imagination, and authenticity. Young also found that directors who used educational publishing companies to find and select new music were more likely to program lower-quality literature.

In a similar study, May (2011) analyzed high school band repertoire performed at the Indiana State School Music Association state concert high school organization finals between the years of 1985 and 2010. May examined 1,243 performances and identified 428 separate compositions by 181 different composers. Her analysis of the compositions indicated that two-thirds of the pieces performed appeared on one or more of three research-generated lists of high-quality repertoire, suggesting the value of these lists for selecting literature. May also provided resources for helping directors select high-quality repertoire for their ensembles.

While May (2011) examined literature lists for high school ensembles, Howard (2001) investigated music selection practices of middle school concert band directors for the purposes of developing a core list of repertoire. Expert middle school band directors ($N = 184$) responded to a survey aimed at soliciting their criteria and procedures for selecting literature. Howard drew on his research findings to create a young band essential repertoire list of 29 works, as well as a core repertoire list of 17 works. Howard also suggests that more emphasis be placed on literature selection criteria in college methods and repertoire classes.

Relatedly, Crochet (2006) compared the repertoire selection practices of successful and less successful band directors and examined how these practices changed based on band directors' level of experience, training, instructional level, and degree of success. The directors' status as successful or less successful was determined by their answers to 17 success-related items on an online questionnaire. Crochet surveyed 212 middle and high school band directors from 29 states and found that musical quality, appeal, cost effectiveness, and educational content were the factors most selected by participants. Crochet also found that 34% of successful band directors depended on the use of national repertoire lists to select repertoire, compared to less than 12% of less successful colleagues.

A common theme among the studies presently reviewed is the importance of musical quality (Crochet, 2006; May, 2011; Young, 1998). Young (1998) defined musical quality as reflecting high aesthetic and musical value, complexity, craftsmanship, sensitivity, imagination, and authenticity. Furthermore, Crochet (2006) found that band directors valued musical quality, appeal, cost effectiveness, and educational content when selecting literature. Currently, the degree to which school orchestra directors value musical quality in their literature selection process is unknown. Therefore, future studies should address this issue.

Repertoire Selection in Youth and Professional Orchestras

Several studies have been conducted on the topic of repertoire selection practices among youth orchestra directors. Recently, Pope (2019) conducted an online survey of 39 youth orchestra administrators from 23 states in order to gather information about repertoire programmed during the 2015-2016 concert season. Survey questions had a mix

of multiple choice and short answer questions and were administered using Google Forms. Pope found these youth orchestras performed 302 different pieces by 158 different composers, with several pieces (*The Firebird* by Stravinsky, *Carmen Suite No. 1* by Bizet, and *Ruslan and Lumilla Overture* by Glinka) performed more frequently than others. The study revealed that about three-quarters of the compositions performed were written after 1850, but only 7.14% were composed after 2000. Compositions by Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, and Brahms were the most frequently programmed. Additionally, female composers represented less than one percent of the repertoire performed by these youth orchestras during the 2015-2016 season.

In a study by Pickney (2000), youth orchestra directors ($N = 174$) reported that qualities such as musical integrity, artistic merit, and educational value were important to their literature selection process. The directors also stated that music should be technically appropriate for their ensembles. It was also found that directors strove to provide their students with challenging as well as enjoyable youth orchestra experiences.

Research on literature selection has also been conducted among collegiate and professional orchestras in the United States. Smith (2004) used structured interview questions to ask directors ($N = 32$) about their criteria for selecting repertoire, philosophy surrounding programming, programming with goals in mind, and nonmusical factors that impacted programming choices. As a result of these interviews, Smith found that though some repertoire was selected for artistic purposes, decisions about most repertoire choices were affected by non-artistic factors including audience education, length of concerts, student and/or ensemble member experience, and ticket sales.

A historical study conducted by Thoen (2009) examined 358 pieces of repertoire programmed during educational outreach programs of the Minneapolis Symphony between 1911 and 1922. Thoen found that the purpose of the outreach programs was to secure the future of symphonic music in Minnesota by teaching young children to appreciate classical music through concerts purposefully coordinated with the public school curriculum. Results revealed that 81% of the music performed at these concerts was written in the nineteenth century and 82% was written by European composers, with 44% of the total repertoire coming from German composers.

Repertoire Selection in School Orchestras

While there is a wealth of research in choir, band, and youth orchestra ensembles, very little research exists on the topic of repertoire selection in school orchestras. A historical study by Hash (2016) examined the National School Orchestra Contests sponsored by the Music Supervisors National Conference from 1929 to 1937. Hash examined contest organization and operations, rules and procedures, participants, and repertoire, as well as the influence of early school orchestra competitions on subsequent large-group assessment. Hash found that the existence of large group contests encouraged directors to spend excessive amounts of time preparing repertoire for contest, and that contests raised standards of performance and repertoire during this time. Hash also found the repertoire of competing school orchestras varied widely depending on the group's instrumentation, playing ability, and tastes of the ensemble and their director or community, which led to an eventual required list of pieces for orchestras in each classification group. These required lists contained exclusively western art music and

purposefully excluded folk and popular styles, which subsequently greatly influenced the repertoire selection processes of future school orchestras.

In another historical study, Tsugawa (2010) examined Merle J. Isaac's contributions to the canon of school orchestra music by investigating his articles and books on arranging, teaching, string pedagogy, and managing programs. Tsugawa found that Merle J. Isaac was one of the first orchestra directors to teach heterogeneous string classes and published many method books appropriate for teaching beginners in mixed instrument classes. He also provided pedagogical leadership at a time when heterogeneous string class pedagogy was just beginning. Tsugawa stated that Isaac's method books, arrangements, and compositions taught musicianship through orchestral performance and helped younger students to begin playing in school earlier. Tsugawa found that Merle J. Isaac believed selecting the right music for an ensemble was director's most important responsibility, and his compositions forever changed the musical landscape for school orchestra programs.

Rotjan (2017) investigated challenges public school orchestra teachers face when selecting repertoire for their ensembles. Using a multiple case study design, Rotjan interviewed six secondary school orchestra directors as well as 27 students to reveal nuanced and thoughtful ways in which teachers negotiated spaces of mutuality with their students. Teachers with two or more years of experience working in public middle, junior, or high schools were selected to participate. All teachers had at least one orchestra class that met regularly during the school day. Data from in-depth and semi-structured teacher and student interviews, classroom observations, and student focus groups were analyzed through open-coding. Rotjan found that selecting repertoire was an ambiguous

process for all teachers but that they were all able to describe some criteria that impacted their choices, including musical quality, aesthetic elements, and authenticity. Rotjan also found that repertoire selection is often tied to pedagogy, in that teachers tend to consider broader teaching goals when selecting literature.

Summary

The studies featured in his review all point to literature selection as an important aspect of teaching music. While one study (May, 2011) centered on examining and evaluating preexisting repertoire lists, another (Howard, 2011) focused on creating lists for future reference. Still other studies evaluated how teachers used lists to select music for their ensembles (Crochet, 2006; Hash, 2016). Across musical disciplines, researchers found that teachers at all levels of experience agreed upon the importance of repertoire selection to their work, as well as on the importance of selecting high quality literature (Canfield, 2009; Crochet, 2006; Forbes, 2001; Hash, 2016; Hedden & Rauduvaité, 2016; Howard, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007; Lerew, 2016; May, 2011; Pickney, 2000; Rotjan, 2017; Tsugawa, 2010; Young, 1998). While the studies mentioned provide a great deal of information on the literature selection practices of band and choir directors, as well as those of youth, collegiate, and professional orchestras, only one study focused on repertoire selection among school orchestra directors (Rotjan, 2017). Furthermore, Rotjan's study focused on a small group of participants, suggesting the need for studies focusing on a wider population of school orchestra directors.

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this survey study was to examine repertoire selection practices among middle and high school string orchestra directors.

Piloting Procedures

Validity of the survey measure was established through use of piloting procedures. A pilot study of the survey was conducted in late August 2020. The survey was distributed through Qualtrics to three colleagues who fit the description of the intended participants for this study – middle or high school string orchestra directors. Participants were asked to identify any questions that needed clarification or were difficult to navigate on the Qualtrics platform. Based on initial pilot study responses, the survey measure was adapted to increase ease of navigation and establish face validity. The section of the survey with Likert type response questions was broken down into smaller sections for ease of viewing on a computer screen or mobile device. Formatting recommendations suggested by the pilot survey respondents were included in the final version of the survey measure. After the pilot survey was administered, I received approval from the Indiana University Institutional Review Board to proceed with administering the full survey. Reliability of the survey measure was not investigated.

Sampling Procedures

The link to the Qualtrics survey was distributed via email to American String Teachers Association (ASTA) presidents in the Midwestern United States, including Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, and Pennsylvania, for distribution to their state's ASTA chapter membership. The survey invitation email and online posting can be seen in Appendix B. Additionally, I posted a

survey invitation to the ASTA Connect message board that is open only to ASTA members as well as posted the survey invitation in the School Orchestra and String Teachers' Facebook group, where any string teacher could choose to participate in the study regardless of their affiliation with ASTA. At the close of the survey on February 22, 2021, 96 string teachers had completed the survey. Due to the method of distribution, the total number of respondents that may have received the survey invitation is unknown. Therefore, it was not possible to calculate a response rate.

Survey Construction

The survey measure (see Appendix A) included six sections: Section 1 – Teacher Information, Section 2 – School Information, Section 3 – Ethnicity Information, Section 4 – Sources for Finding New Literature, Section 5 – Selecting Repertoire, and Section 6 – Other Thoughts. The survey measure used in this study was adapted from three previous studies. Section 1 – Teacher Information, Section 2 – School Information, and Section 4 – Sources for Finding New Literature were adapted from Hunsaker (2007). Section 5 – Selecting Repertoire was adapted from Howard (2001). Questions adapted from previous studies were changed to reflect string teaching instead of band or choir. Section 6 – Other Thoughts was included to give teachers a place to voice any other relevant information not discussed in the previous sections. Section 3 – Ethnicity Information was adapted from Bond and Russell (2019) to gather relevant information regarding teacher and student ethnicities.

These sections of the survey measure were chosen based on previous literature that has addressed similar research questions on the topic of literature selection practices in the areas of band and choir. When building survey measure items, I looked for

previous examples in the literature that answered similar research questions, and of those that I found, I considered how related each section was to my own research questions. Related survey sections were then adapted to reflect string teaching instead of choir and band. Content validity was established through the use of varied response formats, including multiple choice, free response, Likert type, and rankings.

In Section 4 – Sources for Finding New Literature, teachers were asked to rank sources for finding new literature. Teachers were asked to rank the sources they were most likely to use at the top of the list and sources they were less likely to use at the bottom of the list. Instructions given to participants were, “Please rank the sources that are most useful to your literature selection with 1 being most useful and 8 being least useful.” The items consisted of eight common sources teachers might reference when looking to find a new piece for their ensemble, including: Professional Journals, Lists of recommended literature (for contest or competition), Looking thorough your school’s library, Listening to performances of other orchestras, Reading sessions at conferences for professional development where finding literature is just one of many professional functions (such as ASTA conferences), Reading sessions at other functions where finding literature is the primary purpose of the event (such as events sponsored by a publisher), Looking through and listening to promotional materials sent to you by publishers, and Conversations with other directors or mentor teachers.

In Section 5 – Selecting Repertoire, teachers were asked to complete Likert type questions to indicate the degree to which items in categories regarding pedagogical and musical criteria as well as contextual-related and social criteria influenced their repertoire selection process. Instructions for this section read, “For each of the following elements

affecting your most recent repertoire or literature selection, select the degree to which each element was influential in your decision. Use the following scale for your responses: 1 – Not an Influence; 2 – Slight Influence; 3 – Moderate Influence; 4 – Strong Influence.”

The Likert type questions in Section 5 – Selecting Repertoire included 11 questions surrounding musical or pedagogical criteria that may influence teachers when choosing repertoire, including: The size of the ensemble that performs this music, The ability and limitations of the ensemble that performs this music, The musical maturity of the ensemble that performs this music, Instrumental performance skills that can be taught through this music (phrasing, balance, tone quality, staccato, legato, etc.), Technical considerations within the music (range, fingerings, bow usage, etc.), Rhythmic considerations within the music (rhythms, patterns, ostinato, etc.), Historical elements of the music (musical period, historical period, style), Aesthetic appeal or value of the music (“This music provides an aesthetic experience.”), The audience appeal of the music (“The audience will enjoy hearing this.”), Appeal of the music to yourself (“I will enjoy spending class time to prepare this music.”), and “The student appeal of the music (“The students will enjoy performing this music.”).

The Likert type questions in Section 5 – Selecting Repertoire included an additional 11 questions regarding contextual and social considerations that may influence teachers when choosing repertoire, including: Music to fit the program (“These selections create a cohesive and contrasting festival program.”), Gender, ethnicity, or other status of the composer, Social elements of the music (multicultural, social influences of the time, relation of history to society), Student choice (“I let the students choose this repertoire.”), You recently heard another orchestra perform this music, This music appears on a state or

national “approved” list of some type, The music appeared on the program of an honor, district, or all-state type orchestra program, The music is older or has an established place in the repertoire of this level, Previous performances of music of the same composer, The music is new (published or only available within the past year), and Cost of the published score and parts.

Participant Demographics

Participants in this survey ($N = 96$) were orchestra directors responsible for selecting repertoire for middle or high school orchestra ensembles. Respondents' number of years teaching strings overall, as well as in their current position, can be seen in Table 1 below. Most respondents ($n = 28, 29\%$) indicated 30 years or more of teaching, while only 12 (13%) selected 5 or fewer years of teaching, representing the least selected category. The types of degrees participants held can be seen in Figure 1 below. Most respondents indicated holding either a master's degree ($n = 65, 67\%$) or bachelor's degree ($n = 25, 26\%$).

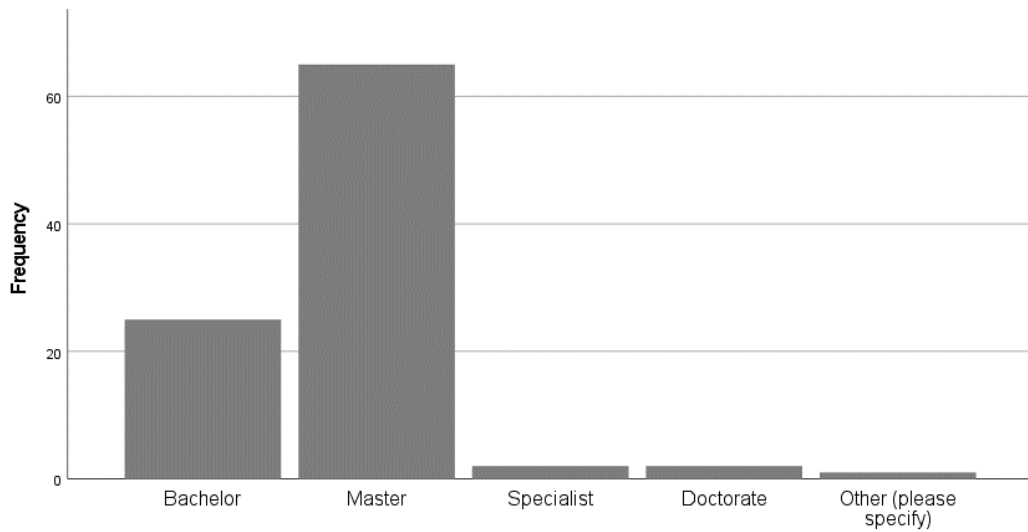
Table 1

Number of Years Teaching Strings

Number of years teaching strings	Total years	In current position
5 or fewer	12	36
6 - 10	19	15
11- 20	21	19
21 - 30	14	11
30 or more	28	12
Total	96	96

Figure 1

Degree Held



As seen in Table 2 below, a majority of respondents reported their primary instrument was either violin or viola ($n = 51, 54\%$) or cello or bass ($n = 26, 28\%$). String instruments were also most frequently reported as secondary instruments, with violin or viola ($n = 42, 58\%$) or cello or bass ($n = 15, 21\%$) indicated most often.

Approximately 79% of respondents ($n = 75$) indicated they were a member of ASTA. Responses were gathered from 21 states and one international school as indicated in Table 3. Of the participants who reported the type of institution in which they teach ($N = 79$), 89% of respondents indicated they taught at a public school ($n = 70$).

Table 2

Primary and Secondary Instruments

Instrument Category	Primary Instrument	Secondary Instrument
Violin/Viola	51	42
Cello/Bass	26	15
Wind or Brass	11	9
Piano	4	7
Voice	1	0
Other	1	0
Total	94	73

Table 3*Location*

Location	Frequency	Location	Frequency
AK	1	NE	1
AZ	1	NV	1
CA	3	NY	1
GA	2	OH	5
IL	4	PA	9
IN	27	SC	1
Int.	1	TN	1
MD	1	TX	9
MI	2	VT	1
MN	2	WA	1
NC	2	WI	4
Total			80

Participants ($N = 79$) were asked to indicate the grades they teach. Answers were recoded to fit within the categories listed in Table 4 below. The majority of participants indicated they taught high school ($n = 21, 27\%$), middle school ($n = 24, 30\%$), or both middle and high school ($n = 21, 27\%$). Respondents ($N = 72$) were asked to indicate whether or not any of their ensembles were auditioned and 67% ($n = 48$) indicated at least one of their ensembles were auditioned.

Table 4*Grades Taught*

Grade Levels	N
Elementary	1
Elementary and Middle	2
Elementary, Middle, and High	10
High School	21
Middle School	24
Middle and High School	21
Total	79

Survey respondents were asked to specify their ethnicity, which can be seen in Figure 2 below. Of those that responded ($N = 79$), 90% ($n = 71$) indicated their ethnicity was white. Participants were asked to estimate the percentage of students belonging to each of the ethnicities listed in Table 5 below.

Figure 2

Teacher Ethnicity

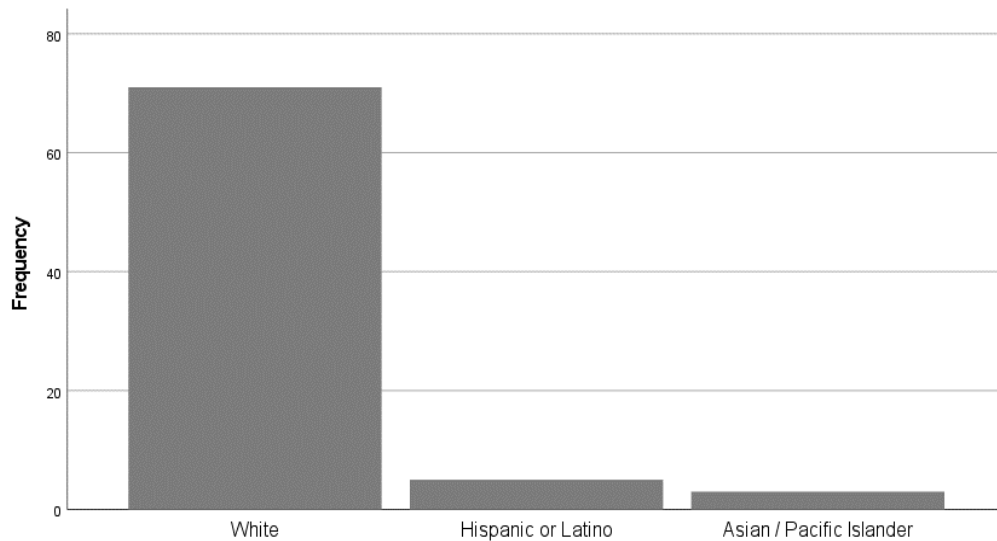


Table 5

Student Ethnicity

Ethnicity	<i>Median</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
White	75	0	100
Hispanic or Latino	5	0	56
Black or African American	5	0	40
Native American or American Indian	0	0	15
Asian or Pacific Islander	5	0	85
Other	0	0	12

Analysis

Online survey data was collected and compiled and entered into SPSS.

Descriptive statistics were computed to analyze the data. Frequencies, percentages, and modes were calculated for nominal-level data and means and standard deviations have been provided for ordinal and interval level data. Questions that required the participant to type in their answer were coded in order to report the data in categories.

Chapter 4: RESULTS

The purpose of this survey study was to examine repertoire selection practices among middle and high school string orchestra directors.

Results

The survey measure included 11 Likert type questions that addressed research question 1a – “What pedagogical related and musical criteria do middle and high school orchestra directors use to choose repertoire for their group?” Survey respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which each element listed in Table 6 was influential in their most recent repertoire or literature selection. A response of one indicated “Not an Influence,” two indicated “Slight Influence,” three indicated “Moderate Influence,” and four indicated “Strong Influence.” The highest rated pedagogical and musical criteria were “Technical considerations within the music (range, fingerings, bow usage, etc.)” with a mean rating of 3.82 ($SD = .42$) and “The ability and limitations of the ensemble that performs this music” with a mean rating of 3.79 ($SD = .53$). Lower rated considerations in this category include “The audience appeal of this music (“The audience will enjoy hearing this.”)” ($M = 2.81$; $SD = .82$) and “Historical elements of the music (musical period, historical period, style)” ($M = 2.85$; $SD = .87$).

Table 6*Pedagogical and Musical Criteria*

Criteria	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>N</i>
Technical considerations within the music (range, fingerings, bow usage, etc.)	3.82	4	.42	2	4	72
The ability and limitations of the ensemble that performs this music	3.79	4	.53	1	4	71
Instrumental performance skills that can be taught through the music (phrasing, balance, tone quality, staccato, legato, etc.)	3.65	4	.56	2	4	74
The musical maturity of the ensemble that performs this music	3.56	4	.89	1	4	71
The student appeal of the music ("The students will enjoy performing this music.")	3.55	4	.57	2	4	74
Rhythmic considerations within the music (rhythms, patterns, ostinatos, etc.)	3.50	4	.71	1	4	72
Aesthetic appeal or value of the music ("This music provides an aesthetic experience.")	3.33	4	.80	1	4	72
The size of the ensemble that performs this music	3.14	3	.76	1	4	71
Appeal of the music to yourself ("I will enjoy spending class time to prepare this music.")	3.10	3	.84	1	4	72
Historical elements of the music (musical period, historical period, style)	2.85	3	.87	1	4	74
The audience appeal of the music ("the audience will enjoy hearing this.")	2.81	3	.82	1	4	74

The survey measure also included 11 Likert type questions that addressed research question 1b – “What contextual-related and social criteria do middle and high school orchestra directors use to choose repertoire for their group?” Survey respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which each element listed in Table 7 was influential in their most recent repertoire or literature selection. A response of one indicated “Not an Influence,” two indicated “Slight Influence,” three indicated “Moderate Influence,” and four indicated “Strong Influence.” The highest rated contextual-related and social criteria was “Music to fit the program (“These selections create a cohesive and contrasting festival program.”)” ($M = 3.05$; $SD = .88$). Notably, the considerations in this section for contextual-related and social criteria had much lower means than did the considerations for the previous question designed to examine pedagogical and musical considerations. The lowest rated considerations for contextual-related and social criteria included “The music appeared on the program of an honor, district, or all-state type orchestra program” ($M = 1.70$; $SD = .78$), “The music is new (published or only available within the past year)” ($M = 1.77$; $SD = .92$), and “Cost of the published score and parts” ($M = 1.88$; $SD = .96$).

Table 7*Contextual-Related and Social Criteria*

Criteria	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>N</i>
Music to fit the program (“These selections create a cohesive and contrasting festival program.”)	3.05	4	.88	1	4	73
Social elements of the music (multicultural, social influences of the time, relation of history to society)	2.78	3	.86	1	4	74
Previous performances of music of the same composer	2.66	3	.94	1	4	71
Gender, ethnicity, or other status of the composer	2.42	3	1.05	1	4	71
The music is older or has an established place in the repertoire of this level	2.31	2	.87	1	4	71
This music appears on a state or national “approved” list of some type	2.15	1	1.08	1	4	72
You recently heard another orchestra perform this music	2.11	3	.87	1	4	70
Student choice (“I let the students choose this repertoire.”)	2.01	2	.81	1	4	71
Cost of the published score and parts	1.88	1	.96	1	4	72
The music is new (published or only available within the past year)	1.77	1	.92	1	4	71
The music appeared on the program of an honor, district, or all-state type orchestra program	1.70	1	.78	1	4	70

The survey measure included one question that involved participants ranking eight sources for how useful they were for finding new repertoire. This section was included to answer research question two – “What resources are used by middle and high school directors to find new repertoire?” Participants were asked to rank the sources for finding new literature in Table 8 with a rank of one being most useful and eight being least useful source. “Conversations with other directors and mentor teachers” was ranked highest ($M = 3.34$; $SD = 1.77$), followed closely by “Looking through your school’s library” ($M = 3.45$; $SD = 2.05$) and “Lists of recommended literature (for contest or competition)” ($M = 3.54$; $SD = 2.11$). The lowest ranked source for finding new repertoire was “Professional journals” with a mean of 6.52 ($SD = 1.98$).

Table 8*Sources for Finding New Literature*

Source	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>N</i>
Conversations with other directors and mentor teachers	3.34	3	1.77	1	8	71
Looking through your school's library	3.45	1	2.06	1	8	71
Lists of recommended literature (for contest or competition)	3.54	2	2.11	1	8	71
Listening to performances of other Orchestras	4.30	4	1.84	1	8	71
Reading sessions at conferences for professional development where finding literature is just one of many professional functions (such as ASTA conferences)	4.61	7	2.16	1	8	71
Looking through and listening to promotional materials sent to you by publishers	4.86	8	2.56	1	8	71
Reading sessions at functions where finding literature is the primary purpose of the event (such as events sponsored by a publisher)	5.39	6	1.87	1	8	71
Professional Journals	6.52	8	1.98	1	8	71

In order to address research question 3 – “Does teacher experience play a role in how middle and high school orchestra directors select music for their ensemble?” – SPSS was used to run Spearman correlations of teacher experience and responses to the question involving ranking sources for finding new literature. Table 9 shows the correlations of ranking items and teaching experience. In this case, a lower number means the item was ranked as more important to the teacher’s literature selection process. Teacher experience was also categorized into ordinal categories of 1 = five or fewer years, 2 = 6-10 years, 3 = 11-20 years, 4 = 21-31 years, and 5 = 30 or more years of teaching experience. A moderate significant correlation was found between teaching experience and rankings for the item “looking through and listening to promotional materials sent to you by publishers” ($r = -.53, p < .01$). Teachers with more experience were more likely to rank promotional materials as more important to their literature selection process. A mild yet significant correlation was also found between teaching experience and rankings for the item “conversations with other directors and mentor teachers” ($r = .38, p < .01$). Teachers with less experience were more likely to rank conversations with other directors or mentor teachers as more important to their literature selection process.

Table 9*Correlation Coefficients of Teacher Experience and Sources for New Literature*

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Total number of years teaching strings	-							
2. Professional Journals	-.10	-						
3. Lists of recommended literature (for contest or competition)	.18	-.16	-					
4. Looking through your school's library	.10	-.28*	-.15	-				
5. Listening to performances of other Orchestras	.17	-.03	.19	-.02	-			
6. Reading sessions at functions where finding literature is the primary purpose of the event (such as events sponsored by a publisher)	.01	-.07	-.31**	-.16	.25*	-		
7. Reading sessions at conferences for professional development where finding literature is just one of many professional functions (such as ASTA conferences)	-.03	-.07	-.37**	-.25*	-.24*	.25*	-	
8. Looking through and listening to promotional materials sent to you by publishers	-.54**	-.17	-.21	.00	-.41**	-.23	-.07	-
9. Conversations with other directors and mentor teachers	-.38**	-.02	.03	-.18	.02	-.07	-.19	-.29*

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level

Spearman correlations were also run to examine the associations between the participants' years of teaching experience and their responses to the Likert type items regarding pedagogical and musical criteria for choosing music. A full list can be found in Table 10. A significant mild correlation was found between teacher experience and "the musical maturity of the ensemble that performs this music" ($r = .36, p < .01$). Teachers with more experience were more likely to rate ensemble maturity as important their repertoire selection decision. A significant moderate correlation was also observed between teacher experience and "aesthetic appeal or value of the music ("this music provides an aesthetic experience.")" ($r = .51, p < .01$). Teachers with more experience were more likely to rate aesthetic appeal as important when choosing repertoire. Another mild yet significant correlation was found between teacher experience and "appeal of the music to yourself ("I will enjoy spending class time to prepare this music.")" ($r = .32, p < .01$). Teachers with more experience were more likely to rate the music's appeal to themselves as influential to their repertoire selection decision.

Table 10

Correlation Coefficients of Teacher Experience and Pedagogical and Musical Considerations

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Total number of years teaching strings	-										
2. Size of the ensemble that performs this music	-.04	-									
3. The ability and limitations of the ensemble that performs this music	.14	.19	-								
4. The musical maturity of the ensemble that performs this music	.37**	.37**	.35**	-							
5. Instrumental performance skills that can be taught through the music	.20	.05	.16	.16	-						
6. Technical considerations within the music	.22	.08	.27	.12	.36**	-					
7. Rhythmic considerations within the music	.09	-.01	.30**	.09	.198	.46**	-				
8. Historical elements of the music	.19	-.17	-.01	.08	.39**	-.04	.04	-			
9. Aesthetic appeal or value of the music	.51**	-.67	.01	.19	-.01	.13	-.08	.194	-		
10. Audience appeal of the music	.13	.17	.01	.29*	-.02	-.21	-.04	.12	.29*	-	
11. Appeal of the music to yourself	.32**	.08	.05	.36**	.06	.04	.12	.21	.16	.217	-
12. Student Appeal of the music	.80	.07	-.06	.23	-.01	-.11	.04	-.02	.24*	.53**	.144

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level

The associations between teacher experience and contextual-related and social criteria were also examined using Spearman correlations. Mild but significant correlations were found between teacher experience and “the music is older or has an established place in the repertoire of this level” ($r = .36, p < .01$), and “previous performances of music of the same composer” ($r = .33, p < .01$). Teachers with more experience were more likely to consider the music having an established place as well as previous performances of the same composer as important to their repertoire selection process. A full report can be seen in Table 11 below.

Table 11*Correlation Coefficients of Teacher Experience and Contextual-Related and Social Considerations*

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Total number of years teaching strings	-										
2. Music to fit the program	.02	-									
3. Gender, ethnicity, or other status of the composer	-.16	.03	-								
4. Social elements of the music	.04	-.06	.37**	-							
5. Student choice	-.17	.98	.31**	.21	-						
6. You recently heard another orchestra perform this music	-.04	.11	.20	-.08	.219	-					
7. The music appears on a state or national "approved" list	-.12	.43**	.02	-.29*	-.05	.18	-				
8. The music appeared on the program of an honor, district, or all-state type orchestra program	.14	.18	.09	-.06	.20	.29*	.46**	-			
9. The music is older or has an established place in the repertoire	.36**	.06	.07	.06	.07	.33**	.10	.42**	-		
10. Previous performances of music of the same composer	.33**	.10	.27*	-.02	.112	.27*	.04	.23	.41**	-	
11. The music is new	.02	.20	.25*	-.10	.19	.40**	.19	.39**	.44**	.48**	-
12. Cost of the published score and parts	-.09	-.07	.04	-.10	.17	.19	-.01	.22	.09	.096	.324**

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level

Free Response Questions

The final survey question was a free response question to provide participants an opportunity to discuss any aspect of their repertoire selection practices that were not addressed by the rest of the survey. Responses ($N = 40$) represented a wide variety of topics. In reviewing the responses, I noticed several recurring topics and coded responses by grouping comments that fit within several larger categories of ensemble or program fit, concept or skill taught by the piece, budget concerns, challenges/engages lower strings or other groups of students, balance or voice leading concerns, concerns related to the value of the piece or the experience, access to a score or recording before purchase, pandemic-related or virtual teaching concerns, and social justice related considerations. Comments regarding having the ability to preview the score online or listen to a high-quality recording before purchasing was mentioned most frequently ($n = 8$, 20%). Pandemic and virtual teaching concerns ($n = 4$, 10%), and budget ($n = 4$, 10%) were also discussed. One teacher wrote, "There is such a fine balance between what my educational goals are and what my budget is." Another teacher addressed both budget and pandemic-related concerns in one statement, writing, "With the pandemic, I have not purchased any music at all. I am not sure if I will have a budget at all."

Also frequently discussed was a piece's ability to challenge or engage the lower strings during rehearsal ($n = 6$, 15%). One teacher wrote, "I almost always look at the cello and bass parts first to see what range and technical difficulties are present, and also to see if those instruments are given the melody." Another teacher discussed that "many bass parts do not contribute to bass players' growth as musicians."

While a composer's gender, ethnicity, or other status was addressed as part of the survey, one interesting response was recorded elaborating on this point. One teacher wrote, "as my commitment and understanding of social justice evolves, considering the gender and ethnicity of the composer is now more important to me than it was a few years ago." Another interesting response was, "There is so much great music out there for all levels and abilities! It just takes time to find the right pieces for each group." This comment fit within the larger consideration category of ensemble fit ($n = 3, 7.5\%$). Along this same line, another teacher wrote, "the repertoire has to feel right for the ensemble."

Chapter 5 : DISCUSSION

Summary

The purpose of this survey study was to examine repertoire selection practices among middle and high school string orchestra directors. Participants in this survey ($N = 96$) were orchestra directors responsible for selecting repertoire for middle or high school orchestra ensembles. The survey measure (see Appendix A) used in this study was adapted from three previous studies. After initial piloting procedures and IRB approval, the survey was administered using Qualtrics and sent via email to several state ASTA chapters as well as posted in several online professional development forums. Teachers were asked to rank sources for finding new literature as well as complete Likert type questions to indicate the degree to which items in categories regarding pedagogical and musical criteria as well as contextual-related and social criteria influenced their repertoire selection process.

In response to the first research question, 1a “What pedagogical related and musical criteria do middle and high school orchestra directors use to choose repertoire for their group?”, Likert type responses revealed teachers rated “Technical considerations within the music (range, fingerings, bow usage, etc.)” and “The ability and limitations of the ensemble that performs this music” as the two most important pedagogical or musical related considerations of their repertoire selection process. In response to research question 1b “What contextual-related and social criteria do middle and high school orchestra directors use to choose repertoire for their group?”, Likert type responses revealed teachers rated “Music to fit the program (“These selections create a cohesive and contrasting festival program.”)” as the most important contextual-related or social

consideration. Notably, the considerations in the section for contextual-related and social criteria had much lower means than did the considerations for pedagogical and musical considerations. The lowest rated considerations for contextual-related and social criteria included "The music appeared on the program of an honor, district, or all-state type orchestra program," "The music is new (published or only available within the past year)," and "Cost of the published score and parts."

In response to the second research question, "What resources are used by middle and high school directors to find new repertoire?", ranking responses indicated "Conversations with other directors and mentor teachers" was ranked as the most popular source for finding new literature, followed closely by "Looking through your school's library" and "Lists of recommended literature (for contest or competition)." The lowest rated source for finding new repertoire was "Professional journals."

The third research question, "Does teacher experience play a role in how middle and high school orchestra directors select music for their ensemble?" was addressed by examining Spearman correlations of teacher experience and responses to the question involving ranking sources for finding new literature as well as Likert type responses addressing pedagogical, musical, and contextual-related and social criteria for selecting repertoire. A few significant correlations worth noting indicated that teachers with more experience were more likely to rank promotional materials as more important to their literature selection process. Teachers with less experience were more likely to rank conversations with other directors or mentor teachers as more important to their literature selection process. Teachers with more experience were more likely to rate aesthetic appeal as important when choosing repertoire as well as were more likely to rate the

music's appeal to themselves as influential to their repertoire selection decision. Teachers with more experience were more likely to consider the music having an established place as well as previous performances of the same composer as important to their repertoire selection process.

Conclusions and Implications

Researchers who have previously explored the area of repertoire selection practices of music ensemble directors found selecting quality repertoire is one of the most important and challenging responsibilities that befall the ensemble director. Directors' choices in selecting repertoire may be largely tied to curriculum and other musical and classroom goals. The results of this study support the claim that repertoire selection can be strongly tied to curricular frameworks for orchestra programs (Rotjan, 2017).

Orchestra teachers in this survey rated pedagogical and musical criteria as being highly influential to their repertoire selection practices. Contextual-related and social criteria, while still influential, were consistently rated lower than pedagogical and musical criteria.

The results of this study support previous findings that teachers take into consideration musicianship and student growth and engagement (Lerew, 2016), student enjoyment (Hunsaker, 2007), students' technical abilities (Hash, 2016; Hedden & Rauduvaité, 2016), ensemble experience (Smith, 2004), and educational content and value (Crochet, 2006; Pickney, 2000) when making repertoire selection decisions. Results of this study also support previous findings (Forbes, 2001) that recommendations from other directors and mentor teachers about repertoire ranked as one of the highest sources for finding new literature.

While it is evident from the data that there are a multitude of considerations that go into selecting repertoire, the most highly rated item overall was “technical considerations within the music, (range, fingerings, bow usage, etc.)” The lowest rated consideration overall was “The music appeared on the program of an honor, district, or all-state type orchestra program.” With this in mind it seems plausible to assume that directors are more interested in the routine, day-to-day learning happening in their classrooms rather than having a focus of loftier, and possibly unattainable, goals.

Despite the multitude of textbooks, method books, and practitioner articles on the subject of repertoire selection, this study found the highest rated source for finding new literature was “conversations with other directors and mentor teachers.” With this information, it can be concluded that orchestra teachers value the experiences of other directors, and may look to peers and mentors first when looking for new pieces to perform with their own ensembles. Relatedly, teachers with less experience were more likely to rank conversations with other directors or mentor teachers as most important to their literature selection process. This finding has implications for those that are further along in their career, and may influence whether or not they feel compelled to share their expertise with less experienced teachers. Most teachers, but especially those with less experience, value the conversations they have with other directors regarding repertoire selection. This finding also has implications to the profession in that spaces for communication and discussion among orchestra teachers with differing levels of experience are important and can have direct ties and influences on repertoire selection decisions.

A finding that was interesting to me was the mild significant correlation between teacher experience and ratings of the item “the music is appealing to yourself (“I will enjoy spending class time to prepare this music.”).” Teachers with more experience were more likely to choose music that they themselves found appealing and would enjoy spending class time preparing, possibly implying that teachers with more experience are considering their own personal happiness and preferences when choosing repertoire. This has possible implications for teacher happiness and could also be related to retention in the profession. It could be possible that teachers with less experience are unaware that they are allowed to or able to consider their own enjoyment of rehearsing a piece when they are selecting music to play with their ensembles.

Information regarding these repertoire selection factors and preferences could be impactful for teacher preparation programs. Findings from this study might be included in training for preservice teachers, as new graduates from music education programs may have little to no experience selecting repertoire for an ensemble upon entering the profession.

Recommendations

This study aimed to offer only a snapshot of how orchestra directors go about selecting music for their ensembles. While there is a wealth of research in choir, band, and youth orchestra ensembles, very little research exists on the topic of repertoire selection in school orchestras, and this study aimed to begin to fill in some of the gaps in the scholarship.

Weaknesses of this study include the limited sample size ($N = 96$).

Recommendation for future research would be to include a larger sample of respondents

that are more representative of the population as a whole. The respondents of this survey were largely centered in the Midwestern US. A larger sample of teachers from all 50 states would be needed before this research could be generalizable to the orchestra teacher population as a whole.

It would also be beneficial to investigate these research questions from a qualitative approach. While this survey study was intended to produce an overview of repertoire selection practices, a more in depth, qualitative study could produce important insight that was missed with the limited nature of a survey style study. A recommendation in this area would include a suggestion to perform an in depth look at several teachers with extensive teaching experience and compare their practices to those that are newer to the profession.

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Appendix A: Repertoire Selection Survey

Thank you for participating in the study "Orchestra Teachers' Repertoire Selection Practices." This online survey takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

The purpose of this descriptive study is to gain a better understanding of the repertoire selection practices of middle and high school orchestra directors in the United States. By participating in this survey, you will advance our understanding of how orchestra teachers choose music to play with their ensembles. This information will be used to provide useful professional development and other resources to other music educators.

Lauren Gruber
Indiana University
lagruber@iu.edu

Section 1 – Teacher Information (Hunsaker, 2007)

1. Total number of years teaching strings:
 - 5 or fewer
 - 6-10
 - 11-20
 - 21-30
 - 30 or more
2. Number of years teaching strings at your current position:
 - 5 or fewer
 - 6-10
 - 11-20
 - 21-30
 - 30 or more
3. Please indicate the most advanced degree level you currently hold
 - Bachelor
 - Master
 - Specialist
 - Doctorate
 - Other (please specify)
4. What is your primary instrument? _____
5. What is your secondary instrument? (if applicable) _____

6. Are you a member of ASTA?

- Yes
- No

Section 2 – School Information (Hunsaker, 2007)

1. City and state of your school(s) _____

2. Please indicate the type of institution

Public school Private school/other

3. Grades you teach (e.g., 5-9, 9-12) _____

4. For each orchestra you teach at this school, list the following:

Name and Type of Orchestra	Grades in this Orchestra (9 th , 10 th , etc.)	Auditioned or Non-Auditioned Orchestra

Section 3 – Ethnicity Information (Bond & Russell, 2019)

1. Please specify your ethnicity:

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Other

2. Please estimate the percentage of the following ethnicities of students who participate in in your ensembles.

- White _____
- Hispanic or Latino _____
- Black or African American _____
- Native American or American Indian _____
- Asian / Pacific Islander _____
- Other _____

Section 4 – Sources for Finding New Literature (Hunsaker, 2007)

1. Please rank the sources that are most useful for your literature selection with 1 being most useful and 8 being least useful.

Source	Rank
Professional journals	
Lists of recommended literature (for contest or competition)	
Looking through your school's library	
Listening to performances of other orchestras	
Reading sessions at other functions where finding literature is the primary purpose of the event (such as events sponsored by a publisher)	
Reading sessions at conferences for professional development where finding literature is just one of many professional functions (such as ASTA conferences)	
Looking through and listening to promotional materials sent to you by publishers	
Conversations with other directors or mentor teachers	

Section 5 – Selecting Repertoire (Howard, 2001)

For each of the following elements affecting your most recent repertoire or literature selection, select the degree to which each element was influential in your decision. Use the following scale for your responses:

1 – Not an Influence; 2 – Slight Influence; 3 – Moderate Influence; 4 – Strong Influence

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Instrumental performance skills that can be taught through the music (phrasing, balance, tone quality, intonation, staccato, legato, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Historical elements of the music (musical period, historical period, style) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Social elements of the music (multicultural, social influences of the time, relation of history to society) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Music to fit the program (“These two or three selections create a cohesive and contrasting festival program.”) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. The audience appeal of the music (“the audience will enjoy hearing this.”) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. The student appeal of the music (“The students will enjoy performing this music.”) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Appeal of the music to yourself (“I will enjoy spending class time to prepare this music.”) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. The music appears on a state or national “approved” list of some type | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. Technical considerations within the music (range, fingerings, bow usage, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10. Rhythmic considerations within the music
(rhythms, patterns, ostinatos, etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. Aesthetic appeal or value of the music ("This
music provides an aesthetic experience.") | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. You recently heard another orchestra perform this
music | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. The ability and limitations of the ensemble that
performs this music | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. The size of the ensemble that performs this music | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. The musical maturity of the ensemble that
performs this music | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. The music appeared on the program of an honor,
district, or all-state type orchestra program | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. The music is new (published or only available
within the past year) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 18. The music is older or has an established place in
the repertoire of this level | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. Gender, ethnicity, or other status of the composer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20. Previous performances of music of the same
composer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 21. Cost of the published score and parts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 22. Student choice ("I let the students choose this
repertoire.") | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Section 6 – Other Thoughts

Please discuss any other considerations you have when selecting repertoire for your ensemble(s) that have not been addressed in the previous sections.

Appendix B: Survey Invitation

Survey Invitation: Orchestra Teachers' Repertoire Selection Practices

Dear Orchestra Teacher,

I would like to invite you to participate in the study "Orchestra Teachers' Repertoire Selection Practices." This online survey takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

https://iu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8Cb5eFLPo1GhRrv

The purpose of this descriptive survey study is to gain a better understanding of the repertoire selection practices of middle and high school orchestra directors in the United States.

By participating in this survey, you will advance our understanding of how orchestra teachers choose music to play with their ensembles. This information will be used to provide useful professional development and other resources to other music educators.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Lauren Gruber
Indiana University
lagruber@iu.edu

Appendix C: Indiana University Informed Consent Statement for Research

INDIANA UNIVERSITY INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR RESEARCH Orchestra Teachers' Repertoire Selection Practices Dr. Frank Diaz, 2010394176

ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Researchers do research to answer important questions which might help change or improve the way we do things in the future. This consent form will give you information about the study to help you decide whether you want to participate. Please read this form, and ask any questions you have, before agreeing to be in the study.

TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY IS VOLUNTARY

You may choose not to take part in the study or may choose to leave the study at any time. Deciding not to participate, or deciding to leave the study later, will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled and will not affect your relationship with Indiana University.

WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE?

The purpose of this study is to examine the repertoire selection practices of middle and high school orchestra directors in the United States. You were selected as a possible participant because you teach middle and/or high school orchestra in a public school in the United States. The study is being conducted by Lauren Gruber and the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL TAKE PART?

If you agree to participate, you will be one of approximately 100 participants taking part in this study.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE STUDY?

If you agree to be in the study, you will complete an online survey answering questions about how you choose repertoire for your orchestra ensemble(s). The survey takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY?

While completing the survey, you may feel uncomfortable or unsure about how to answer some questions. However, you are welcome to skip any questions you are unsure about or uncomfortable answering.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY?

We don't expect you to receive any benefit from taking part in this study, but we hope to learn things that will help music educators in the future.

HOW WILL MY INFORMATION BE PROTECTED?

Efforts will be made to keep your personal information confidential. We cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. No information which could identify you will be shared in publications about this study.

WILL MY INFORMATION BE USED FOR RESEARCH IN THE FUTURE?

Information for this study may be used for future research studies or shared with other researchers for future research. If this happens, information which could identify you will be removed before any information or specimens are shared. Since identifying information will be removed, we will not ask for your additional consent.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATION?

You will not be paid for participating in this study.

WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO PARTICIPATE?

There is no cost to you for taking part in this study.

WHO SHOULD I CALL WITH QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS?

For questions about the study, contact the researcher, Lauren Gruber, by email: lagruber@iu.edu.

For questions about your rights as a research participant, to discuss problems, complaints, or concerns about a research study, or to obtain information or to offer input, please contact the IU Human Subjects Office at 800-696-2949 or at irb@iu.edu.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

If you decide to participate in this study, you can change your mind and decide to leave the study at any time. If you decide to withdraw, you may choose not to complete the survey.