

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**THE PRACTICAL COMPONENT OF MUSIC INSTRUCTION AT SENIOR
HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE EASTERN REGION OF GHANA**

KENNETH NYAME

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

2025

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**THE PRACTICAL COMPONENT OF MUSIC INSTRUCTION AT SENIOR
HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE EASTERN REGION OF GHANA**

KENNETH NYAME

(202144815)

**A Thesis in the Department of Music Education,
School of Creative Arts, submitted to the
School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Music Education)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

MAY, 2025

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I, **Kenneth Nyame**, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works, which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by University of Education, Winneba.

Prof Emmanuel Obed Acquah (Principal Supervisor)

Signature:

Date:

Prof John Francis Annan (Co Supervisor)

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

To my family, the Nyame family

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My utmost gratitude goes to God for His protection over me and for gracing me with wisdom, understanding, and good health to complete this programme. My profound gratitude goes to my supervisors, Prof. Emmanuel Obed Acquah and Prof. John Francis Annan, for their patience, dedication and immense support towards the success of this project. Their constant availability and suggestions for my work are deeply appreciated. I would like to express my appreciation to all my lecturers, especially those in the Music Education Department, course mates, and friends, who were very supportive and encouraging. To Miss Matilda Acquah-Nunoo, Mr Justice Mac-Palm, Miss Anima Obeng Pephrah, Rev Fr Isaac Nti, Mr Anthony Dwuma, I say a very big thank you for your support in diverse ways. May God bless you all. My deepest appreciation goes to my family, especially my parents, Mr. & Mrs. Nyame, and my siblings for their support and prayers. God bless you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	xi
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Purpose of the Study	6
1.4 Research Objectives	7
1.5 Research Questions	7
1.6 Significance of the Study	7
1.7 Delimitation	8
1.8 Definition of Terms	9
1.9 Organisation of the Study	9
CHAPTER TWO	11
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	11
2.0 Overview	11
2.1 Theoretical Frameworks	12
2.1.1 Theory of Performance (ToP)	12
2.1.2 Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development	16

2.2 History of Music Education in Ghana	19
2.2.1 Music Education From 1950	22
2.3 Music Practical Test	27
2.4 The SHS Music Syllabus and Music Practical Lessons	29
2.5 Musical Background of Senior High School Music Teachers	33
2.5.1 Music Teacher Education in Ghana	36
2.6 The Pedagogical Approaches to Music Practical Lessons	39
2.6.1 Kodaly Method	40
2.6.2 Suzuki method	42
2.6.3 Dalcroze	45
2.6.4 The Orff Approach	47
2.6.5 The Teaching of African Traditional Musical Instruments	48
2.7 Factors that Affect Students' Performance during Music Practical Examinations	50
2.7.1 Practice and Preparation	51
2.7.1.1 Performance Anxiety	52
2.7.1.2 Technical Proficiency	54
2.7.2 Motivation and Interest	55
2.7.3 Time Management	57
2.7.4 Cultural and Socioeconomic Background	59
2.8 Resources for Teaching Music	61
2.9 The Role of the National Choral and Cultural Festival Celebration in Music Education in the SHS	66
2.9.1 Cultural Awareness and Appreciation	66
2.9.2 Skill Development through Teamwork and Collaboration	68

2.9.3 Confidence Building	69
2.9.4 Motivation and Inspiration	70
2.10 Importance of Playing Musical Instruments	71
2.10.1 Psychological	73
2.10.2 Emotional	74
2.10.3 Social	76
2.10.4 Health (Music Therapy)	77
2.11 Summary	79
CHAPTER THREE	83
METHODOLOGY	83
3.0 Overview	83
3.1 Research Paradigm	83
3.2 Research Design	83
3.3 Setting	84
3.4 Population	85
3.5 Sample	85
3.6 Sampling Techniques	86
3.7 Data Collection Instruments	88
3.7.1 Interview	88
3.7.2 Observation	89
3.8 Tools for the Collection of Data	89
3.9 Data Collection Procedure	90
3.9.1 The Interview Process	91
3.9.2 The Observation Process	92

3.11 Ethical Consideration	93
3.12 Trustworthiness	93
3.13 Data Analysis Procedure	94
CHAPTER FOUR	95
PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	95
4.0 Overview	95
4.1 Presentation of Findings	95
4.1.1 Findings from Interview	95
4.1.1.1 Instrumental Areas Taught	96
4.1.1.2 Teaching and Learning Activities	97
4.1.1.3 Music Facilities Available	98
4.1.1.4 Students' Performance in Formative Assessments	98
4.1.1.5 Teachers' Music Education Background, and Proficiency	98
4.1.1.6 Students' Interest in Music Practical Lessons	99
4.1.1.7 Effect of Lessons on the Cognitive, Emotional and Social Development	100
4.1.2 Findings from Observation	100
4.1.2.1 Available Instruments	101
4.1.2.2 Students' Interest in Practical Lessons	102
4.1.2.3 Music Facilities	102
4.1.2.4 Sight-reading Abilities of Students	103
4.1.2.5 Teachers' Proficiency	103
4.1.2.6 Students' Socio-Emotional Behaviour	103
4.2 Discussion of Findings	105
4.2.1 How Music Practical Lessons are Taught	105

4.2.2 Facilities Available for Music Practical Lessons	112
4.2.3 Effects of the Availability of the Facilities on Learning	118
4.2.4 The Influence of music practical lessons on the cognitive, emotional and social development of students	119
4.2.5 Influence on the Cognitive Development of Students	120
4.4.6 Emotional and Social Development of Students	123
CHAPTER FIVE	126
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	126
Overview	126
5.1 Summary of Key Findings	126
5.2 Conclusions	128
5.3 Recommendations	130
5.4 Suggestions for Further Research	132
REFERENCES	133
APPENDICES	144

TABLE

1 Sample Distribution

866

ABSTRACT

The practical component of the music syllabus plays a vital role in the holistic development of music students in Senior High Schools. As part of their final assessment, graduating students undertake a practical examination, conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC). This assessment not only evaluates their performance skills but also encourages rigorous preparation that supports their lifelong development as musicians. Despite the emphasis placed on preparation for this examination, many students in the Eastern Region of Ghana continue to underperform. This persistent underachievement raises concerns about the effectiveness of practical music instruction, the adequacy of facilities, and the overall learning environment in Senior High Schools. This study investigates the current state of music practical lessons in three selected Senior High Schools—Asamankese Senior High, Atweaman Senior High, and Ghana Senior High School, Koforidua. It examines how practical lessons are conducted, the availability of facilities to support instruction, and the influence of these lessons on students' cognitive and socio-emotional development. Employing observation and interviews as primary methods, the research explores instructional approaches used in teaching Music practical lessons in the three schools, and the sufficiency of facilities. Findings indicate that while music teachers integrate effective teaching strategies, the lack of adequate facilities significantly hampers the teaching and learning process. Nonetheless, participation in practical lessons positively influences students' intellectual and emotional growth. The study recommends that the Ghana Education Service (GES) organise regular workshops for music teachers, collaborate with the government to increase accessibility to practical music education, and provide the necessary infrastructure to support practical music teaching and learning.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Music practical performance test, as Acquah and Kwofie (2021) postulate, is a standardised test in West African Senior High schools, administered by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC). It was officially introduced in Ghana after the Educational reform in 1970, after Ghana gained independence in 1957 from the British, and established the erstwhile National Academy of Music (NAM) at Winneba, which has now become the Department of Music Education at the University of Education, Winneba (Adjepong & Obeng, 2018). It was then that African music was opened for students to offer African instruments as their first study, and they were examined on their musicianship by performing on their respective instruments during their final diploma examination.

The educational reform in 1987 brought a new structure in Ghanaian Education, which introduced a three-year Senior Secondary. In the reform, music as a discipline was, for the first time, introduced at the Senior Secondary level. Unlike the basic level, where it was treated as part of several related subjects, it was during the reform in 1987 that it was considered as an independent subject, with its syllabus (Flolu, 1994). The 2007 reform only brought about a change of name from Senior Secondary to Senior High and an extension of the three-year programme to a four-year programme. The reform brought a new phase, preventing first-year students in Senior High Schools from choosing elective subjects, to which music was allocated. Students took the core subjects in the first year and started their elective subjects in their second year. This first-year core programme was revised in the

year 2012 (Adu-Gyamfi et al., 2016). The name “Senior High”, however, has remained to date. Students now choose their elective subjects right from their first year.

Music is now taught from the first year through to the final year at the Senior High School level. Music in the senior high comprises music theory and composition, music technology, music appreciation, aural literature, and practical performance, which comprises playing musical instruments, both traditional and Western, and indigenous dances. In Senior High Schools, according to Acquah and Kwofie (2021), every student pursuing music as an elective course is supposed to have an instrument area prescribed by WAEC, which they are expected to examine termly and at the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE). Each student selects a principal musical instrument, and the teacher guides them in choosing two recommended pieces for that instrument, which will be used for their examination. The prescribed musical instruments include piano, trumpet, saxophone, voice, *atenteben*, and violin. Usually, two pieces (one Western art music composition and one African art music composition) are to be performed, alongside two technical exercises, and an unseen piece. The ultimate success of the students depends on the teaching-learning process by teachers on one hand, and the students on the other hand. This is to say that both the teacher and the learner have roles to play for a successful outcome.

The pedagogical approach to the practical component is crucial in nurturing students, not only for examinations but also for acquiring skills beneficial to themselves and society. Sloboda (2011) emphasises the importance of the practical aspect of music in developing the mind. He argues that individuals, especially children, who are introduced to music early on, have better memory skills compared to those with no musical experience. A preliminary

observation made during the 2021 Music Practical Performance Test of the WASSCE, 2021, is the main inspiration for this study. The pieces that were supposed to be played as part of the music performance test were not well rendered by students. Technical exercises were performed casually and poorly, while unseen pieces were hardly attempted.

Students who attempted the unseen pieces in music practical exams often played or sang spontaneously, resorting to the tonic-solfa of known songs or improvising to represent what was written. Vocal students spelt the sol-fa notations instead of singing them. This issue has been observed across different Senior High Schools (SHS) in Ghana. Acquah and Kwofie (2021) highlight that such poor performances have been documented in the Chief Examiner's report (2020), which notes a consistent lack of improvement in students' music practical performance over the years. The persistent poor performance of students in music practical exams, as documented in various Senior High Schools (SHS) across Ghana, necessitates a thorough investigation into the underlying causes and contributing factors. This justification outlines the need for a detailed study to address this educational challenge. There is a crucial need to examine how the music practical component is faring and being handled in SHSs. The teaching approaches should be examined to find out the specific teaching methods and approaches employed by music educators to help identify effective practices and areas needing improvement. Again, it is essential to explore the challenges faced by both students and teachers within and outside the school environment. These challenges may include inadequate resources, lack of proper training for teachers, limited practice opportunities for students, and external factors such as socio-economic conditions. This study aims to enhance the quality of music education in Ghanaian SHSs by

investigating the root causes of poor performance in music practical exams, focusing on selected schools in the Eastern region of Ghana, where the problem has been identified.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Music, dance, and education exist in synergy in all the ethnic groups that make up Ghana (Petrie, 2015). One aim of the SHS music syllabus is to prepare the Ghanaian child to fit into society and to make an impact on the development of society. The practical aspect, according to the senior high school music syllabus, has been categorised as solo/ensemble performance, in which learners are expected to practise on their principal instruments and engage with others in an ensemble. Music education, especially the practical aspect, needs attention, as it contributes massively to the development of children. Students in SHS are expected to perform on their principal instruments to be examined on their performance, after their three-year training.

However, the reports of the Chief Examiner for Music (2019-2021) reveal that candidates' performance of the Music Performance Test at WASSCE was not far from average satisfaction, but suggested that the practical aspect needs critical attention. He stressed the lack of confidence, misinterpretation of rhythms, and poor sight-reading. A preliminary observation made in Senior High School in the Eastern Region of Ghana during the 2021 WASSCE revealed that the music practical lessons had challenges. The students performed poorly during their performance tests. A follow-up inquiry in 2022 and 2023 revealed the same results as the initial one. The pieces were not well rendered by students, technical exercises were performed casually and poorly, and unseen pieces were hardly attempted. Students having 'voice' as their major area of music practical ended up spelling the sol-fa

notations instead of singing them. Others who took the *atenteben* and trumpet as major left them unattempted.

The sight-reading skills could not be left out of the performance. Since students were unable to sight-read, their development as musicians will not be met fully.

Regardless of the efforts exerted towards the WASSCE, alarms have been raised concerning the unsatisfactory student performance. The 2022 chief examiner's report still does not express a satisfactory improvement in performance. According to the report, most students did relatively well in their major pieces but performed poorly at sight-reading and the technical exercises in the minor key. The current report shows relatively no improvement. The chief examiner reports that "the overall performance of the candidates in the performance test showed a gradual retrogression in students' performance as compared to that of last year". However, few candidates did well" (Chief Examiner's report, 2022, pp. 62-64).

This challenge results in poor grades for music students and also indirectly makes the discipline unattractive, especially to parents whose wards may wish to study music at the SHS level. In addition, music as an art is studied to be performed. If students are unable to perform music, the essence of music as a performing art is lost. Performance is a critical aspect of music education, as it brings the theoretical knowledge and other components to life. Without the ability to perform, students might excel in understanding music theory and other academic aspects of music, but they will fall short in the performance component, which is foundational to the discipline. This disconnect undermines the holistic understanding and appreciation of music, which relies heavily on the interplay between

theory and practice. It is evident from the Chief Examiner's report that there has been little to no improvement in students' performance in music practical nationwide. Though issues about music practical performance in Senior High Schools in Ghana have been addressed by a few authors (Acquah & Kwofie (2021), Amuah et al. (2017), Chief Examiner's reports (2020, 2021 & 2022), and found not in good shape, and have addressed in several ways to cause an improvement in the music education system, there is still more to be done as some schools in the Eastern Region of Ghana are lagging behind in the area of performance, without specific research in this context.

To address this ongoing issue, it is prudent to investigate how the music practical component is faring in the schools. This study will focus on understanding the approaches teachers use to handle these lessons, aiming to identify areas for improvement and provide recommendations to enhance students' practical music skills and overall performance.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how the practical component of music is faring at Atweaman Asamankese and Ghana Senior High schools in the Eastern Region of Ghana. This research aimed to find out how the practical lessons were conducted by teachers, examine the availability of facilities to support teaching and learning activities, and highlight the effects of the lessons on students' cognitive and socio-emotional development.

1.4 Research Objectives

The study sought to;

1. investigate how the music practical component is taught in the Senior High Schools in the Eastern Region of Ghana.
2. examine the availability of music facilities for music practical lessons in Senior High Schools in the Eastern Region of Ghana.
3. explore how music practical lessons influence the cognitive and socio-emotional development of students.

1.5 Research Questions

The following question will guide the study.

1. How is the music practical component taught in Atweaman, Asamankese and Ghana Senior High schools?
2. What facilities exist for music practical lessons in Atweaman, Asamankese and Ghana Senior High schools?
3. How does Music practical lessons influence the cognitive and socio-emotional development of students?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study aims to improve music education by examining the current state of the music practical component in selected Senior High Schools. The study will produce improved approaches and better learning results for students by highlighting areas that require

development and effective teaching practices. Also, the study addresses performance gaps by identifying challenges and obstacles that hinder students' practical music performance. This identification of challenges will help establish the lacuna for interventions or suggestions for improvement. The development of targeted interventions can bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, ensuring a more comprehensive music education. Again, the findings of this study can inform policymakers and curriculum developers about the real-world implementation of music education. This can result in more effective and relevant policies and curriculum adjustments that better meet the needs of students and educators. The study also highlights the need for additional teacher training and resources by understanding the difficulties faced by teachers in conducting practical music lessons. This can lead to improved teacher preparedness and effectiveness in delivering music education. The study aims to enhance students' performance and appreciation of music practical works and also explore the effects of the lessons on their cognitive and socio-emotional development. This can provide long-term benefits for students, including increased opportunities in the creative arts sector and personal development. Lastly, the study contributes to academic research on music education in Ghana by providing valuable data and insights that can be used by other researchers and educators in similar contexts. Overall, this study seeks to make a meaningful contribution to the improvement of music education in Ghanaian Senior High Schools, ultimately benefiting students, teachers, and the broader educational community.

1.7 Delimitation

This research focused on finding out the instructional approaches by teachers to teach the practical component of the music course in Senior High Schools in the Eastern Region of

Ghana, the facilities available for both students and teachers to support it, and the cognitive and socio-emotional effects on students' development. The study focuses on three schools: Atweaman Senior High, Asamankese Senior High, and Ghana Senior High, all in the Eastern Region of Ghana. These schools were selected because a preliminary observation was made in two of them (Atweaman and Asamankese SHSs), while Ghana SHS was selected on convenience.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Atenteben: A bamboo-made flute, which is played vertically by blowing air into it, and manipulating seven small holes made on it.

Music Practical Performance (MPP): A standardised test in West African Senior High schools, administered by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC).

Music Technology: The study of devices and mechanisms that could be used to create and perform music (Oxford Dictionary of Music, 2012).

Music Theory and Composition: An aspect of music discipline that deals with the principles of sound manipulation applied to the creation of music (Oxford Dictionary of Music, 2012).

1.9 Organisation of the Study

The study is organised into five chapters. The first chapter presents the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, objectives, and research questions. It also highlights the significance of the study, delimitation, and definition of terms. The second

chapter is the review of related literature, while the methodology of the study is described in chapter three. Presentation, analysis and discussion of results are presented in chapter four. Chapter five is the summary, conclusions, and recommendations. Following chapter five are references and appendices.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Overview

This chapter reviews the related literature that links to the study. Every research relies on information, which is acquired from a variety of sources, and it is very useful to review the literature on the issues researchers intend to investigate (Kuranchie, 2016). The chapter begins with a theoretical framework that aligns with the focus of the study, addressing “The state of the music practical component at senior high schools in the eastern region of Ghana”, and also reviewing relevant topics related to the study. Literature was reviewed under the following themes:

1. History of Music Education in Ghana
2. Music Practical Test
3. The SHS Music Syllabus and Music Practical Lessons
4. Musical background of Senior High School Music Teachers
5. The Pedagogical Approaches to Music Practical Lessons
6. Factors that Affect Students’ Performance during Music Practical Examination
7. Facilities for Teaching Music
8. The Role of the National Choral and Cultural Festival Celebration in Music Education in the SHS
9. Importance of Playing Musical Instruments

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks

The study was guided by The Theory of Performance (ToP) by Elger (2012) and Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, a tenet from his Social Constructivism Theory.

2.1.1 Theory of Performance (ToP)

The Theory of Performance states that “to perform is to produce results.”

Acquah and Kwoffie (2021) re-echoed Don Elger's six foundational concepts to form a framework that could be used to explain performance, as well as performance improvements. According to Elger (2012), to perform is to produce valued results. He continues that a performer can be an individual or a group of people engaging in a collaborative effort.

Elger's explanation of the theory of performance indicated that developing performance is a journey, and the level of performance describes the location in the journey. The current level of performance depends holistically on six components – context, level of knowledge, level of skills, level of identity, personal factors, and fixed factors. He continued that “three axioms are proposed for effective performance improvements. These involve a performer's mindset, immersion in an enriching environment, and engagement in reflective practice” (p.24). Monslave (2016) elaborated on the theory, stating that “ToP further informs organisational learning through the idea of examining the degree of performance of the organisation” (p.25).

This theory has something to do with the topic at hand, as Elger saw a theory of performance (ToP) as effective in a variety of learning situations. ToP informs learning in traditional

contexts such as classrooms, workshops, and other learning venues. Learning in circumstances that are not generally thought of as learning environments is also aided by ToP. Academic advice, self-development, departments, and others were cited as examples of these environments. As a result, it is prudent that organisations, and by extension, schools that provide music as a course, be judged on the students' performance since students are trained by the schools.

The theory outlines specific factors concerning the study that provide background that would support the investigation and offer the reader a justification for the study. In line with that, it talks about reflective practice, which is one of the important aspects of preparing students for practical performance. As teachers guide students to acquire knowledge, both the teacher and the student need to reflect on every knowledge shared, and every performance for improvement. As Elger (2012) postulates, reflective practice involves actions that help people pay attention to and learn from experiences. The level of knowledge and the skills acquired in the music practical lesson, which is our context, become what they are identified with. Elger bases this identity on two main factors: personal and fixed factors.

The context in which this theory is used is music practical performance, in which the students' level of knowledge, with which they are identified, is influenced by personal and fixed factors, as already mentioned. Students' performance will be based on the above factors. Personal factors refer to abilities associated with the personal situation of an individual. According to Elger, such factors may include situations like ailment, bereavement, and the quality of the home environment. The fixed factors include the innate abilities of an individual, which are unique to them and cannot be altered. Such factors are

genetic factors and may include the level of aptitude, learning rate, singing ability, and versatility in playing musical instruments, among others.

The knowledge they have about music, in terms of theory, will help them know how to sight-read well and greatly influence their output in performance. Other intrinsic and extrinsic factors may also contribute to the performance. Intrinsic factors like the musical enculturation the student might have experienced through their lifetime and individual innate abilities will influence an individual's performance, while some extrinsic factors such as learning experiences and availability of resources will also influence the output.

The “three axioms he proposed for effective performance improvements – a performer's mindset, immersion in an enriching environment, and engagement in reflective practice” (Eagler, 2012, p. 11) further justifies the six components, and perfectly inform this study about the involvement of the teacher in the outcome of the performance and examining how effective the process of teaching and learning is.

Performer's Mindset

Elger states that a performer's mindset includes actions that engage positive emotions. Setting difficult objectives, accepting failure as a necessary component of achieving great performance, and creating an environment where the performer feels just the right amount of safety are a few examples. The module on the Accelerator Model offers guidance on preserving a performer's mindset. In the teaching-learning process of practical lessons, the teacher should be able to advise learners to develop a good mindset towards the learning process and the performance itself. This will help build confidence in the students.

Immersion

Immersion in a physical, social, and intellectual environment can elevate performance and stimulate personal as well as professional development (Elger, 2012). Social relationships, subject-matter expertise, hands-on learning, emotions (both good and bad), and spiritual alignment, according to him, are among the components. Immersion-fostering techniques are described in the section on creating quality learning environments.

Reflective Practice

Observing and learning from events is a key component of reflective practice. Examples include assessing current performance, highlighting achievements, identifying areas for growth and strengths, developing one's identity, and raising knowledge levels. The section on Assessment offers a variety of strategies for cultivating reflective practice. Both the teacher and the learners have to engage in this practice. This helps to echo what was performed and make improvements where there were lapses.

This study focuses on the practical component of the SHSs in the Eastern Region of Ghana, and how they are taught and learnt. The above axioms suggested by Elger help individuals to improve their performance in that in students' process of acquiring skills on an instrument will develop positive mindsets toward their set objectives, which will help build confidence in the students. Students' social and intellectual connection with the immediate environment also plays a vital role in their acquisition of skills in their various practical areas. As they interact not only with their teachers, but also with colleague learners, students develop a good sense of positive interactions, which may be guided by the teacher, to enhance a good learning environment, and also promote teamwork. Intermittent assessments as the reflective

practice pave the way for the teacher to know how students are faring, and also reflect on teaching methods and techniques, and also, the students' strengths and weaknesses. This helps to improve teaching and learning.

2.1.2 Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development is a major concept in his Social Constructivism Theory. Gredler (2012) explains that according to this theory, learning happens most efficiently when a pupil is in their zone of proximal development, which is the area between what they can accomplish on their own and what they can accomplish with assistance. Developed by the Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky, the ZPD refers to the range of tasks that a learner can perform with the help of more knowledgeable others.

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is a central concept in his socio-cultural theory of cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Vygotsky, the ZPD is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). This concept emphasises the role of social interaction and guidance in a learner's cognitive development. The Zone of Proximal Development is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what the learner can do with help from a teacher, peer, or more capable individual. It represents the potential for cognitive development.

In educational contexts, the ZPD has significant implications for teaching and learning. Teachers can use the ZPD framework to design tasks that challenge students while providing appropriate levels of support (Tharp & Gallimore, 1991). Teachers can encourage students'

cognitive development and help them acquire higher-order thinking skills by assigning them tasks that fall within their zone of proximal development.

Scaffolding, a key component of the ZPD, involves providing temporary support to learners as they engage in tasks just beyond their current abilities (Wood et al., 1976). Through scaffolding, more knowledgeable individuals assist learners in mastering new skills and concepts, gradually reducing support as learners become more proficient. Scaffolding is the support provided by a more knowledgeable other that enables the learner to bridge the gap between their current ability and their potential development in the ZPD.

Music educators can scaffold learning experiences by providing structured support to students as they engage with musical concepts, techniques, or instruments. Teachers assist students in moving towards independent performance by gradually reducing support as they gain proficiency.

Further emphasising the role of language in cognitive development, Vygotsky claims that “language is the main means by which adults transmit information to children” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 52). Children absorb information and cultural customs via language and social interaction, moulding their thought processes and problem-solving skills. The ZPD concept has drawn criticism despite its contributions to educational theory and practice. Concerns have been expressed by academicians on the dangers of an excessive reliance on adult supervision as well as the possible difficulties in precisely defining the ZPD’s borders (Kozulin, 2003).

Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development offers valuable insights into the role of social interaction and language in cognitive development. The implementation of the ZPD in

educational settings, educators can support students' learning, foster collaboration, and facilitate intellectual growth.

Vygotsky also highlighted the importance of cultural and social factors in cognitive development. He argued that learning is intertwined with the social and cultural environment in which it occurs. Encouraging peer collaboration in music education allows students to work together to achieve common musical goals. More skilled peers can provide support and guidance to those in their ZPD, facilitating learning through social interaction. Recognising the cultural and social aspects of music is essential in leveraging the ZPD in music education. Music educators can engage students in exploring diverse musical traditions, styles, and practices, enhancing their understanding and appreciation of music within different contexts.

Also, he viewed language as a crucial tool in cognitive development. Through language, children internalise social interactions and cultural knowledge, which shape their thinking and problem-solving abilities.

Educators can use scaffolding techniques to support students as they work on tasks within their ZPD, gradually increasing the complexity of tasks as students develop their skills (Gredler, 2012). The application of these strategies and principles influenced by Vygotsky's ZPD, give music educators an idea to create engaging and effective learning experiences that support students' musical development and foster good performance of music.

2.2 History of Music Education in Ghana

Flolu (1994) notes that Ghana, formerly known as the Gold Coast, was the first Black African nation to achieve self-rule from European colonial administration. Unlike other British colonies, the Gold Coast had a more favourable relationship with European settlers, largely due to its history of engaging in commercial activities with Arabs and maintaining long-standing trading links with Arab merchants. Despite initial resistance, the interest in wealth led to more acceptance of white settlement. The British policy of indirect rule was more feasible in the Gold Coast than in any other British West African country, resulting in more developed education and a more favourable attitude towards missionary activities. Ghana's educational system was the most developed in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1960s, and its agitations and struggles became a model for other African states.

Dr Kwame Nkrumah's leadership towards African Unity and international peace led to Ghana's international recognition. However, there is a gap between discussions on educational changes and economic and political matters. Music has received the least attention in Ghana's school curriculum but is seen as the most important determinant for Africanisation (Flolu, 1994), and has received the least respect but has been the fastest to adapt to Western European values. A re-examination of the history of formal music education in Ghana is necessary to understand why it is difficult for music educators to accept curriculum changes.

Christian missions and the Colonial Administration were both viewed as agents of the coloniser, with education being seen as a means to achieve their ends (Flolu, 1994). The impact of Western education on British West Africa is often attributed to both, with Ghana

being the most visible example. Western education contributed to the emergence of African scholars, nationalists, and skilled professionals, but also contributed to the breakdown of traditional law and order, moral and social values, erosion of authority patterns, and alienation of African peoples from their culture. The failure of the Europeanisation of Africa may be considered the main cause of the “denationalisation” of educated Africans. Western education paid little attention to the social and cultural environment of African countries, imposing an alien and abstract form of education on them. The earliest formal institutions, the Castle Schools, focused on reading, writing, and arithmetic, intending to keep European merchants’ children informed and assist in commerce transactions.

Flolu (1994) narrates how the music curriculum was introduced to Ghanaian education system:

Missionary education in Ghana began in the 19th century, emphasising reading and serving as interpreters between white missionaries and native pagans. The colonial administration prioritised English language teaching, offering financial incentives to missionaries working in remote areas. Music was introduced into the school curriculum, with teachers teaching songs from Europe and preparing for church worship. This system continued throughout the 19th century and into the first half of the 20th century. The dichotomy between Western and African music in Ghanaian schools today is rooted in ignorance, prejudice, and strategy. The missionaries’ preconceptions of European racial and cultural superiority led to the conversion of other races to the one true faith. (pp. 27)

Given the above statement by Flolu, the Ghana education system has influences from the European culture, as the language used officially and even now is English, and also seems to have made the Ghanaian view Western culture as superior. In most of the senior high schools, students cherish the learning of Western musical instruments over our local and indigenous instruments. This has also made those instruments dominate in the curriculum. The *atenteben* is the most common instrument the Ghanaian education sector could boast of as one of our own, and also patronised by students.

The Gold Coast's isolated residences became centres of civilisation, education, and spiritual unity, with pagan activities and objects prohibited. Newly converted Christians were required to settle at Mission Kpodzi to symbolise their spiritual uplift from Satan and release from "savagery and heathenism." However, the neglect of Ghanaian culture, music, and musical instruments in the school curriculum led to the establishment of teacher training institutions, such as the Basel Mission and the Methodist Grammar School. By the 20th century, missionaries began to import Western instruments to enhance church musical activities, leading to the emergence of school brass bands, orchestras, concert bands, and brass bands. The Highlife grew from these formations, with the Excelsior Orchestra, Accra Orchestra, Cape Coast Sugar Babies, and Winneba Orchestra playing various genres. Music education developed beyond singing, requiring knowledge of Western music theory to perform Western instruments. Music was used in rituals, ceremonies, communication, and entertainment, serving as a means of passing down cultural values and traditions from one generation to the next (Collins, 2009). With the arrival of colonial powers in the 19th century, Western music education began to influence Ghanaian musical practices. Formal music education in Ghana expanded with the establishment of mission schools, where

European musical concepts were introduced alongside traditional Ghanaian music (Kwasi, 2015).

Church choirs in Ghana were gaining popularity as they embraced technical complexity. This led to the introduction of lessons in harmony and counterpoint, resulting in the creation of native composers like Rev. J. B. Anaman, Rev. G. Stern, and Ephraim Amu. The Singing Band Movement in the 1930s and 40s further popularised these works. However, until the mid-20th century, music teaching was largely individual and varied based on missionary activities. The Royal Schools of Music in Great Britain provided guidelines for teachers, while Grammar schools adopted Cambridge and London G.C.E. syllabuses.

Music education in Ghana has historically been part of the church, with many famous Ghanaian composers being Christians. However, pioneering activities in music education in the Gold Coast faced challenges due to the subjugation of African culture and musical practices. Ephraim Amu, a catechist, teacher, and choirmaster, experienced this in 1940, teaching without knowledge of social and religious institutions. Amu later became the founding Director of the Gold Coast's First School of Music nine years later.

2.2.1 Music Education From 1950

Achimota College, opened in 1927, was a two-level institution in the Gold Coast, Africa, dedicated to combining general secondary education, teacher education, and technical trades education. The college had a two-level structure, with the Prince of Wales School and the Prince of Wales College. The first principal was Rev. A. G. Fraser, and J. E. Kwegyir Aggrey, a Fanti teacher, was appointed as Assistant Vice-Principal. Aggrey's philosophy of unity between white and black people was supported by Governor Guggisberg and other

pro-Africanists. W. E. F. Ward, a colonial music teacher, also showed interest in African music but found it difficult to situate it in the Western classical tradition. Ephraim Amu, dismissed from the Akropong Teacher Training College, was invited to teach African songs at Achimota College. Ward emphasised the importance of a combination of Western and African music in the school's curriculum.

Flolu (1994) narrates how Ghanaian teachers were introduced to formal training:

In 1949, colonial educators recognised African music and opened three-year teacher education programmes in home science, art, physical education, and music. Ephraim Amu, appointed head and tutor of the music department, introduced indigenous music into the school music programme. This was the first successful attempt to introduce indigenous music into the school music programme. Amu's expertise in Western music theory enriched his understanding of African music's artistic resources, and he began experimenting with his discoveries, transcribing traditional tunes and composing songs in the African idiom. (p. 69)

Though Western music has influenced Ghanaian music education, some striking factors have helped in adding to the vocabulary in composition. We could merge our musical characteristics with the Western ones to create more interesting compositions. Also, the fusion of Western musical instruments in our musical performances is engineered by the Western influence on our music and, therefore, music education.

Flolu (1994) continues that Amoako, a talented musician, sacrificed his indigenous musical talents for formal education, leading to a significant contribution to Ghanaian music education. His pioneering efforts at Achimota led to the "Bimusical Approach of Dr.

Ephraim Amu,” which emphasised rhythm as the main difference between African folk music and Western classical music. Amu’s drumming lessons created a unique compositional technique, combining Western harmony and African rhythms, earning him the title “Father of African Art Music.” His teachings have been transferred to Kumasi and Winneba.

After gaining independence in 1957, the Ghanaian government made efforts to promote and develop music education across the country. The University of Ghana’s Department of Music and the National Symphony Orchestra were established to further music education and performance at a higher level (Nketia, 2012). Music education began to gain prominence by then.

At Winneba, the music programme was expanded, and graduates were now required to pass the British LRSM diploma examinations. Manford (1983, p.46) reports that most of the students “were able to pass the diploma examinations in voice teaching, and piano teaching, while few passed in violin teaching, and theory”.

Manford (1983) highlights how music education gained root at the tertiary level:

The 1961 Seven-year Development Plan of the Convention People’s Party (CPP) focused on education, aiming for a fully literate working population, expanding teacher training, expanding secondary education, extending technical education for industrialisation, and adapting the university system to provide relevant courses. In 1967, the National Liberation Council appointed a committee to assess the status of education in Ghana. The Committee recommended restructuring the educational system, including incorporating African music into the curriculum. The University of Ghana

took over the Music Diploma Course at the Specialist Training College, Winneba, and made ten recommendations. However, entry requirements remained unchanged. By 1970, the nation became more interested in music education. The National Academy of Music was established at Winneba, with a Department of African Music. Despite the introduction of African instruments, the Academy's facilities struggled to meet the needs of student teachers and institutions. P.S. Offei noted a scarcity of basic equipment and materials for effective music education in teacher training colleges and the National Academy of Music. (p.46)

This initiative has been a strong foundation for raising teachers in our education system. Teacher training schools are established to train teachers who will train students to fit the society, and also solve societal problems. The curriculum of these training colleges covers music education, but not in detail. Universities like the University of Education, Winneba, train students to become music teachers, who will teach in the Senior High Schools and training colleges. Students are trained in the subject matter and also equipped with methods and techniques of teaching music in the classroom.

The Ghana Music Teachers' Association and Syllabus Panels have been working on creating textbooks and workbooks for music education in Ghana. However, no such textbooks appeared until the Cultural Studies Textbook in 1987. The Ministry of Education has faced issues with music educational matters, with no trained musicians working at the Curriculum Research and Development Division. The only music textbook in the system was I.D. Riverson's *Atlantis Music Reader* is based on Western music theory. A. A. Mensah's *Folk Songs for Schools* was published in 1971 but remains unknown among primary school teachers. Offei, a cellist, hoped that a professionally trained Ghanaian musician would be

among the best in the world due to his bi-musicality. Currently, African musical instruments are kept in a carpenter's workshop, and candidates offering First Study on African instruments perform two or three drum ensembles.

The Ghana Music Teachers' Association and Syllabus panels have been working on creating textbooks and workbooks for music education in Ghana. However, no such textbooks appeared until the Cultural Studies Textbook in 1987. Currently, there are numerous books available for music education, written by Ghanaians who have attained extensive knowledge in the discipline.

Orff-Schulwerk and Kodály's pedagogical approaches did not reach elementary school classrooms or discipleship at the Academy in Ghana due to economic difficulties. Today, in Ghanaian educational institutions, they are studied only for examination purposes and are not institutionalised like in the US and other European countries. Robert Manford advocated the Comprehensive Musicianship Approach (CMA) in 1985, emphasising an integrated approach to teaching various branches of music, history, theory, form, and analysis.

In many aspects, current Ghanaian music education symbolises a fusion of African and Western musical traditions. According to Blankson (2022), policymakers recognise the important place of music education in promoting Ghanaian cultural values and practices. Another rationale for the inclusion of music in the Ghanaian educational system is to lay a strong foundation for national creativity by unlocking the creative potential of individuals (Ministry of Education-Ghana, 2007).

Music education in Ghana has significantly evolved, enabling students to study traditional and foreign music, fostering individual creativity, and establishing the foundation for the

establishment of formal education. Considering the history and current practices, though there have been evolutions, there are still shadows of the origin in it. The curriculum designed has similarities to that of the colonial masters. It is indisputable that the Western system of music notation is being used, and musical instruments that have their origins in the Western world are studied in our educational institutions.

The history of music education in Ghana reveals why the SHS Curriculum, music syllabus to be precise, has had influences from the Western world. Western musical history is studied, and its music is well appreciated and studied. Though music education in Ghana has embraced indigenous music of Ghana, it has still maintained the Western standard. The musical instruments that are studied in the Ghanaian SHS are dominated by Western musical instruments. The selected pieces for the WASSCE examination have the indigenous criteria (African pieces) and the Western criteria. This truly reflects the origin of music education in Ghana.

2.3 Music Practical Test

Music education is a practical area of study, and Amuah et al. (2017) emphasise that whoever learns music without practical skills becomes ‘half-baked’. This is true because music is a performing art, and without performing it, it does not fulfil its purpose of arousing emotions. It is therefore prudent to train learners to perform the music they study. As part of the educational process, learners are examined at the end of every academic term or semester to test them on the skills they have acquired. In Ghanaian Senior High Schools, practical performance tests are organised termly, and also at the WASSCE. Music practical performance test, as postulated by Acquah and Kwofie (2021), is a standardised test in West

African Senior High schools, administered by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC). It was officially introduced in Ghana after the Educational reform in 1970. It was then that African music studies were made available for students to offer. Students learnt the indigenous musical instruments and were examined by performing on their respective instruments during their final diploma examination.

According to Flolu (1994), the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) launched a new syllabus for GCE and School Certificate examinations to replace the London external ones in 1987. Subsequently, local examiners were appointed. Two important innovations were made; the introduction of African music and musicians, and Performance. It is a practice in educational institutions to evaluate learners on what they have been taught, to ensure that learning has taken place. This is done either through a written test or a practical test. There are other areas of tests, such as oral and aural, among others. Before each test is taken, learners go through a process of acquiring the skills and knowledge for which they will be evaluated.

Acquah and Kwofie (2021) continue that every student pursuing music as an elective course is supposed to have an instrument area prescribed by WAEC, which they are examinable termly and, consequently, at the final examination, the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE). Each student selects a musical instrument, and recommended pieces for the respective instruments to be examined are assigned to them. The prescribed musical instruments by the SHS music syllabus include piano, trumpet, saxophone, voice, *atenteben*, and violin (Acquah & Kwofie, 2021). Usually, two pieces (one Western art music composition and one African art music composition) are to be performed, alongside two technical exercises, and an unseen piece. Students are taken through a series

of tutorials to guide them to learn and perform the pieces well, especially in their final examination, in which students' performance at the examination will depend on the students themselves, and the learning experiences. This requires various pedagogical skills to help learners learn, and excel in their examinations.

2.4 The SHS Music Syllabus and Music Practical Lessons

As Zelenkovska (2014, p.437) puts it, “the practical work in Music Education contributes to the overall development of a young person, which is reflected through inducing self-discipline, work habits, sense of responsibility, multi skills and successful integration in the society”. The Ghanaian Senior High School (SHS) music syllabus directly agrees with this assertion, as it emphasises the importance of practical lessons in music education. Practical lessons are a fundamental component of music education that allows students to apply theoretical knowledge in a hands-on manner, fostering skill development and musical understanding. In the context of the SHS music syllabus, practical lessons encompass activities such as instrumental practice, ensemble playing, vocal training, and performance rehearsals. The objectives according to the Teaching Syllabus for Music - SHS 1-3 (2010) state that;

The student will:

1. experience the joy of performing music.
2. develop skills and artistic confidence in the presentation of music.
3. display artistic skills and aesthetic awareness through solo and ensemble performances.
4. appreciate the benefits of healthy living

As outlined above, the specific objectives and learning outcomes related to practical lessons, aim to enhance students' musical abilities and performance skills. These objectives may include:

Skill Development

Students' vocal technique, performance abilities, and instrumental ability are all developed through practical lessons. It is a gain saying that music is practically oriented and whoever learns music without practical skills becomes "half-baked" Amuah et al. (2017). Since the music syllabus places a strong emphasis on the development of practical abilities and attitudes, one must play an instrument to demonstrate his or her level of study. To demonstrate their improvement, teachers provide personalised feedback to students, and they are urged to practice frequently.

Musical Interpretation

Practical lessons focus on developing students' ability to interpret and express musical pieces with creativity and sensitivity. Practical works that incorporate sight reading are regarded to be effective, simply because students can transfer their theoretical knowledge to actuality (Amuah et al. 2017). This in effect helps them to internalise concepts of rudiments and theory. Through guided practice and teacher instruction, students learn to analyse musical scores, understand stylistic nuances, and convey emotions through their performances.

Ensemble Performance

Collaborative music-making is often a key component of practical lessons in the SHS music syllabus. Students may participate in ensemble rehearsals, where they learn to listen attentively, coordinate with other musicians, and contribute to a unified musical interpretation.

Ensemble performance in music is a vital aspect of musical practice, allowing musicians to come together and create a cohesive and unified musical experience. Ensemble playing involves multiple musicians performing together as a group, whether it be a small chamber ensemble or a large symphony orchestra. This collaborative effort is crucial for several reasons, which have been highlighted in various research studies and musical analyses.

Research by Davidson and Scripp (2011) emphasises the importance of ensemble performance in fostering social skills and cooperation among musicians. Through ensemble playing, individuals learn how to listen attentively, communicate effectively, and coordinate their actions with others in real time. This collaborative process not only enhances musical performance but also builds interpersonal relationships and a sense of community among the musicians.

In addition, ensemble performance offers musicians the opportunity to engage in musical dialogue and interpretation. According to studies by Williamon (2004) and Durrant et al. (2017), the shared musical experience in ensemble playing allows musicians to exchange ideas, interpret musical scores collectively, and respond creatively to each other's musical expressions. This process of musical dialogue and

interpretation contributes to the richness and depth of the musical performance, leading to a more nuanced and expressive rendition of the music.

Moreover, ensemble performance plays a crucial role in developing musicians' listening skills and musical sensitivity. As discussed in research by Lehmann and Davidson (2018), musicians involved in ensemble playing must actively listen to each other, adjust their playing based on the dynamics and nuances of the group, and blend their sounds to create a harmonious musical texture. This attentive listening not only enhances the quality of the performance but also deepens musicians' understanding of the music and their musical sensitivity.

In summary, ensemble performance in music is essential for promoting social skills and cooperation among musicians, facilitating musical dialogue and interpretation, and developing musicians' listening skills and musical sensitivity. Through collaborative music-making, ensemble performance fosters a sense of musical camaraderie and unity, leading to impactful and engaging musical experiences for both performers and audiences.

Technical Proficiency

Practical lessons help students build technical proficiency on their chosen instruments or vocals. Teachers may provide instruction on technique, posture, breathing, articulation, and other aspects essential for producing a quality sound.

Performance Opportunities

The SHS music syllabus may also emphasise the importance of performance opportunities for students to showcase their skills and receive constructive feedback. As part of extra-curricular activities, recitals, concerts, competitions, and other events provide valuable platforms for students to gain confidence and experience as performers.

2.5 Musical Background of Senior High School Music Teachers

Mawang et al. (2019) describe the enhancement of students' creativity to be one of the main purposes of music education. Creativity refers to a process or a product that is original to the creator and appropriate to the purpose or goal of the creator (Amabile, et al., 2005). This means that the Music syllabus must be assisted by rightly qualified persons with the right training of persons who have availed themselves to teach music in secondary schools. According to Eddison (2020), music education is a field of study associated with the teaching and learning of music. It touches on all domains of learning, including the psychomotor domain (the development of skills), the cognitive domain (the acquisition of knowledge), and, in particular and significant ways, the affective domain, including music appreciation and sensitivity. The teaching and learning process always has two major participants; the teacher and the learner. The teacher serves as a more resourceful person, who guides the less knowledgeable or less resourceful person (learner) with the aid of the learning environment, to construct knowledge in the learner. This activity calls for the teacher to be very well equipped to guide the learner appropriately to imbibe knowledge.

Additionally, music education in any culture must provide all students with the knowledge and information for them to appreciate music. All students, regardless of socio-economic status or physical or intellectual ability, should be offered the opportunity to discover and explore their innate potential as musicians and to increase these natural capacities through formal music instruction. The goal of music education should not only be to form an appreciation of the music of others but also to encourage children to shape their own unique musical identity through academic study and performance opportunities.

The Ghanaian government has prioritised improving the quality of teacher education, particularly music teacher education, since 1957. This is due to dissatisfaction with the teaching methods and content in schools and colleges, as well as the quality of music taught by teachers, students, and administrators, including head teachers, principals, and music organisers. For that matter, several changes have been made in the music teacher education programmes with the view of improving matters. The following changes have been made in the programme since 1957: The Royal Schools of Music developed a four-year music diploma course, which was later used by the University of Ghana for prospective music teachers. The National Academy of Music and the University of Cape Coast jointly prepared a joint syllabus (Manford, 1983).

Flolu (1994) established that music has always been an integral and vibrant part of Ghanaian culture and social life. Accordingly, providing learning experiences that would enable children to engage, participate, and appreciate music has been a major goal for music education in Ghana (Otchere, 2015). According to Blankson (2022), music teacher education in Ghana has been an integral part of the formal educational system,

since its inception in the 1950s. It is a common idea that the quality of music education in schools, to a large extent, depends on the effectiveness of music teacher education programmes and how music teachers are trained. Music teachers are often appointed for their ability to teach other subjects or maintain a school choir. However, low enrolment in the Secondary School Syllabus (SSS) is attributed to the lack of competent teachers. Participants suggest the Ministry of Education should post qualified music teachers to prepare for SSS music study (Flolu, 1994).

The musical background of music teachers plays a crucial role in shaping the quality of music education. It serves as a factor that helps the teaching and learning process to be very smooth.

For instance, Music teachers with a strong musical background typically possess high levels of musical proficiency. Their advanced skills in areas such as playing instruments, music theory, composition, and performance can greatly benefit their students (Hallam, 2017). Teachers who are proficient musicians can serve as role models and mentors for their students, inspiring them to strive for excellence in their musical pursuits. Teachers with a solid musical background are better equipped to provide effective instruction to their students (Hickey, 2012). Their in-depth knowledge of music theory, history, and performance techniques enables them to deliver comprehensive and engaging lessons.

Moreover, music teachers with a strong musical background are more likely to employ varied and innovative teaching methods that cater to the diverse needs of students. Music teachers who have immersed themselves in music through formal education,

professional experience, and continuous learning tend to have a deeper understanding of musical concepts and genres (Hickey, 2012). This understanding allows them to convey complex musical ideas in a clear and relatable manner, fostering a greater appreciation and comprehension of music among their students. The musical accomplishments and experiences of music teachers serve as a source of inspiration and motivation for their students (Miksza, 2011). Students are more likely to be inspired to pursue musical excellence when they see their teachers excelling in the field. Additionally, music teachers with a strong musical background can share their insights and experiences, encouraging students to explore new musical horizons and develop their creative potential. Continual engagement with music, whether through performances, collaborations, or further education, is essential for music teachers to stay current and vibrant in their profession. Teachers with a strong musical background are more inclined to pursue ongoing professional development opportunities, which in turn enriches their teaching practice and benefits their students (Ritchie, 2020).

In conclusion, the musical background of music teachers significantly influences the quality and effectiveness of music education. A solid musical foundation equips teachers with the skills, knowledge, and passion needed to inspire students, foster musical growth, and contribute to a vibrant and enriching learning environment.

2.5.1 Music Teacher Education in Ghana

Flolu (1994) shares his view on music teacher education in Ghana. According to him, Western education in Ghana, introduced by missionaries, traders, and the colonial government, led to the organisation of musical instruction through institutional

methods. The primary concern was to use education as a tool for social change and proselytising, with music education being one aspect of this process. In 1949, the first formal music teacher education programme began in Ghana. Music teacher education continues to play a crucial role in the Ghanaian educational system, with generalist and specialist programmes available. Initial teacher education preparation takes place in 48 teacher training colleges and traditional teaching universities. Flolu (1994) continued to reveal that teachers in Ghana are grouped into professional and non-professional categories, with minimum qualifications for both the public and private sectors. Ghana offers various pathways for becoming a teacher, including incorporating African music content, adjusting to modern pedagogical practices, hybridising teaching methods, and providing practical experiences.

However, research suggests that music education in many schools is unrelated to students' interests and unsuccessful. The Colleges of Education in Ghana offer a four-year programme for generalist classroom teachers, while traditional universities offer a four-year specialist music teacher training programme, leading to a Bachelor of Music Education Degree. The four-year training in the Colleges of Education has music as one of the disciplines studied, but not as detailed as the ones offered by the Universities. University of Education, Winneba, for instance, offers a four-year Music Educational course, which trains prospective music teachers. These students undergo the subject matter, and other Education related courses to train them professionally.

To implement music education programmes, courses should be taught by faculty with experience, institutions should encourage observation and teaching experiences, and provide advanced undergraduate study in conducting, composition, and analysis. (Manford,1983).

This is exactly what is done at the University of Education, Winneba. Students are taught the theory of music, principles of harmony, composition, analysis, teaching music at the various levels of education, psychology of music, aesthetics in music, principles, and practice of teaching, special education, guidance and counselling, and other relevant programmes to bring the students up holistically as a professional music teacher.

Music education in schools, colleges, and universities requires a nurturing environment, standardised curricula, and qualified teachers. A professional philosophy-practice guidance system is crucial, with a focus on literary, pedagogical, and technological skills. Music educators should be well-trained and certified professionals, adapting to cultural evolution and promoting creative thinking (Eddison, 2020).

Additionally, Blankson (2022) revealed that music teacher education fulfils such an important role in the Ghanaian educational system. Teachers are trained to teach music in the pre-tertiary institutions (primary and secondary schools) in Ghana. Music teacher education assumes several multifaceted dimensions because it must strive to prepare individuals with widely disparate abilities, goals, and motivations to meet the increasingly complex and rapidly changing demands for improved education. Music teachers teach various tasks, including general elective music, concerts, choir, band, and instruments. Recent developments require versatility in music education. Programmes aim to prepare teachers for music concepts and instrument proficiency. Improving programmes is crucial for quality instruction. The need for highly qualified teachers is increasing, and cultural and educational standards are changing. Music educators explore various topics related to music teacher education programmes and coursework (Blankson, 2022).

According to Mensah and Acquah (2021), the Ghanaian music teacher is supposed to, among other things, have some level of knowledge about traditional music and their performances that can help them teach it with confidence. The teacher must be able to teach drumming, dancing, dance-drama, and African literature (Mereku & Ohene-Okantah, 2010). Music teachers must possess important skills, and have a strong grip on the subject matter and general teaching skills: ability to play well, good sight-reading skills, skills in composition and singing, improvisation skills, and information and technology (I.T) knowledge.

2.6 The Pedagogical Approaches to Music Practical Lessons

The principal objective of music education is to foster the understanding and enjoyment of music. The examination is intended to test the ability and talent of the candidate in the practice and understanding of basic music skills, and his/her potential for the pursuit of a career in music at a higher level (Flolu, 1994).

There are numerous effective methods for teaching music, and contemporary education aims to create creative people who can form new connections and come up with ideas. Educational institutions have to advance students and guarantee that they possess the ability to think creatively. Since creativity is a manifestation of acquired skills, education can foster the growth of creativity. Studies can overcome the constraints imposed by DNA on these skills. This demonstrates the value of instructional strategies that, in the end, guarantee that students are prepared for their practical music education and, more significantly, develop into creatively skilled adults upon graduation from secondary school.

Mensah and Acquah (2021) shared their thoughts on how teachers must be clear at every stage of their work about what they want to do, where they want to go, and what they need to bring to the classroom to achieve their goals, otherwise, they may find themselves floundering or devoting the time allotted to music for sing or singing and dancing and nothing else. This suggests that teachers should go to the classroom prepared and with the appropriate method to teach.

There are many different ways to teach music. Each of them has unique characteristics and results. For this study, there would be much focus on the practical aspect. Various approaches have been made to help facilitate the teaching and learning of musical instruments and other practical areas.

Many instructional practices help a music teacher to have a smooth lesson delivery. Any kind chosen by the teacher has its uniqueness and trusted results. Numerous approaches have been established to help simplify and assist accurately the teaching and learning of practical areas in music. The following are some approaches which are beneficial in the teaching and learning of the various musical instruments prescribed by the SHS music syllabus.

2.6.1 Kodaly Method

The Kodály Method is a music education approach developed by Hungarian composer and music educator Zoltán Kodály in the mid-20th century. It is based on the premise that music education should begin at a very early age and that everyone has the potential for musical literacy. Inspired by children's singing, Kodaly aimed to improve Hungary's music education system. Kodaly and Bela Bartok collected folk tunes in Hungary in the early

1900s, developing a music philosophy based on universal music literacy, and recognising traditional music as the best teaching material.

The method emphasises the use of folk songs, singing, movement, and aural training to develop musical skills (Neumann, 2006). In his book “The Kodály Method,” Kodály (1974) emphasises the importance of singing as the primary tool for music education, stating that “singing is a natural means of expression in the child’s environment, a means that spontaneously emerges” (p. 37). Choksy (1981) adds that the Kodály Method focuses on sequential skill development, starting with simple songs and building up to more complex musical concepts over time. This gradual progression allows students to develop musical skills in a structured and holistic manner.

The voice component in the SHS Music practical would benefit when this method is maximised. One of the core features of the Kodály Method is its use of solfège syllables (Do, Re, Mi, etc.) to teach pitch relationships. As noted by Houlahan and Tacka (2011), these syllables provide a tangible way for students to understand and internalise the musical elements they are learning, facilitating a deeper connection to the music. The Kodály Method is a music education approach that emphasises singing, folk music, aural training, and sequential skill development to foster musical literacy in students.

Pedagogies

- a) **Child-Development Approach:** the Kodaly method employs a child-developmental approach to provide a systematic technique of imparting skills based on the child’s ability. New concepts are introduced gradually, beginning with the easiest and

progressing to the more challenging. Musical concepts are first given to children through activities such as listening, singing, or dancing.

- b) **Rhythm Syllables:** specific syllables are allocated to note values to express their duration. Quarter notes, for example, are represented by the syllable ta, but eighth note pairings are represented by the word ti-ti. The value of a larger note is conveyed by expanding the 'ta' to create 'ta-a' (half note), 'ta-a-a' (dotted half note), or 'ta-a-a-a' (whole note).
- c) **Rhythm and Movement:** Kodaly was familiar with Dalcroze's techniques and agreed that they should be used.

2.6.2 Suzuki method

The Suzuki method is a music curriculum and teaching philosophy developed by Japanese violinist and pedagogue Shinichi Suzuki. It aims to create an environment similar to a native language learning environment, fostering good moral character and promoting learning in children (Suzuki & Sugimoto, 1978). Suzuki believed that all children can be well educated in music and that learning music at a high level also involves developing character traits or virtues. The method includes love, high-quality examples, praise, rote training, repetition, and a timetable set by the student's developmental readiness for learning a particular technique. Although popular internationally, its influence within Japan is less significant. Suzuki's philosophy aimed to provide a well-rounded education for children, promoting their potential to excel in music education.

The Suzuki method of music instruction, rooted in Japanese culture, has been adapted to suit American culture. It emphasises early exposure to arts, motivation, and a supportive group

environment. In Japan, it involves playing music recordings, teaching by the mother, group teaching, and ear-to-ear teaching. In the United States, motivation is individualised, mothers are less involved, and children are less willing to practice.

Contributions to pedagogy

Suzuki employed the following ideas of Talent Education in his music pedagogy schools:

1. The human being is a product of his environment.
2. The earlier, the better – with not only music but all learning.
3. Repetition of experiences is important for learning.
4. Teachers and parents (adult human environment) must be at a high level and continue to grow to provide a better learning situation for the child.
5. The system or method must involve illustrations for the child based on the teacher's understanding of when, what, and how (Kendall, 1995).

Suzuki's "mother tongue" philosophy emphasises children learning through observation of their environment, particularly in first language acquisition (Kataoka, 1989). This theory, developed in the mid-1940s, continues to be widely used in the worldwide Suzuki movement. Suzuki Talent Education, or the Suzuki Method, is a music teaching approach that prioritises a child's character development over their ability, promoting learning for all.

Techniques

Suzuki's term "tonalisation" refers to the student's ability to produce and recognise a beautiful tone quality on their instrument, initially developed for violin education but now applied to piano (Reitman & Kimura, 2019). It is essential for proper music reproduction and performance and is part of Western music education.

The Suzuki method, a teaching technique, uses sound recordings to teach musical instruments. Suzuki, a technological innovator, introduced this method to help students learn notes, phrasing, dynamics, rhythm, and tone quality by ear (Kreitman, 2015). Traditional music educators have used this technique since the earliest days of recording technology, but Suzuki's approach emphasises daily home listening and using both beginner and advanced repertoire.

Adult-sized instruments are adapted to fit small children's bodies, lowering the developmentally ready age for instrument study (Kreitman, 2015). Scaled-down instruments are used for stringed instruments, while curved head joint flutes are available for children as young as three years. Height-adjustable chairs and benches are used for piano, guitar, cello, and string bass.

Suzuki Institutes in the US promote a musical community, train teachers, and share master teachers' ideas. These short-term music festivals, originating in Matsumoto, Japan, include masterclasses, repertoire classes, teacher training courses, concerts, discussion sessions, seminars, and enrichment classes. Participants pay registration and tuition fees to the institute. A common repertoire for instrument students was established, promoting group classes, community, and motivation to learn new music while keeping old pieces in top

form, unlike music education outside the method where teachers tailor the repertoire to individual needs.

2.6.3 Dalcroze

Dalcroze pedagogy, initiated by Swiss composer Émile Jaques-Dalcroze in the late 19th century, focuses on developing musicianship by promoting abilities like rhythm, the finesse of hearing, and spontaneous expression (Kovács, 2015). The approach aims to make music education more embodied and rooted in perceptions and bodily experiences, rather than abstract music theory. Dalcroze teaching typically takes place in groups, with students moving in spaces with or without music.

Firstly, Dalcroze states that music could be taught through movement. Dalcroze believed that the body is the primary instrument through which one experiences and understands music. Movement and physical gestures are used to explore rhythmic patterns, musical forms, and expressive qualities. He believed that the body is the essential instrument of musical instruction (Jorquera, 2008). He also talks about eurhythmics, which refers to the study of rhythmic movement, and it is a central component of Dalcroze teaching. “Eurhythmics focuses on training the body to respond to music through various movement exercises.” (Barry, 2019). Eurhythmics classes involve various rhythmic exercises, such as walking, clapping, and gestures, to develop a sense of rhythm and embodiment of music. This method will enhance rhythm drills and help students excel in aural and sight-reading skills.

Improvisation is another method. Dalcroze encourages improvisation as a means of fostering creativity, self-expression, and musical spontaneity. Improvisatory activities involve

responding to music through movements, gestures, and improvising rhythmic patterns. “Improvisation is highly valued within the Dalcroze approach as a means of developing personal expression and musical creativity.” (Swain, 2009). Dalcroze exercises involve students improvising through movement, singing, or playing an instrument, promoting spontaneous expression and motivation (Kovács, 2015). Examples of movement improvisation include following music, transforming rhythmic phrases, and employing creative movements inspired by images, emotions, stories, or pictures

Dalcroze emphasises solfege and ear training, the development of aural skills, and music literacy through solfège (singing syllables) and ear training exercises. This helps students perceive and internalise musical structures, intervals, and melodies. It offers a system of musical education that helps students develop a sense of musicality through singing, ear training, and solfège.” (Woodyard, 2017).

Dalcroze also presents Group collaboration, where teaching often involves group activities and collaborative learning experiences to develop social skills, ensemble playing, and communication within a musical context. “The Dalcroze approach fosters social interaction as students engage in collaborative activities, group improvisation, and ensemble playing.” (Frega, 2012). It is important to note that these principles are a general overview of the Dalcroze teaching method, and there may be variations and additional elements in different instructional contexts.

2.6.4 The Orff Approach

Orff's music teaching strategy involves group activities for young children, focusing on developmental stages. It incorporates games, scavenger hunts, and memorisation-based learning, fostering improvisation, creativity, imitation, and exploration (Choksy et al., 2001).

According to Flolu (1994), creativity is the tool with which we seek to improve our environment. Our success lies in the totality of human creative efforts, from which no one is excluded. Both the arts and the sciences contribute substantially to human achievements: they represent different dimensions of creative work. They provide an avenue for the development of critical thinking and imagination and constitute vital areas for exploring the latent talent of school students. This implies that teachers ought to be creative when teaching music to indulge and help nurture their musicality, as their interest gets heightened to become more involved in the rehearsals and other practical activities in music to reach greater heights in their musicianship. Heightened interest in continuous learning cultivates confidence, and performance improves.

The Orff Schulwerk approach focuses on integrating music, movement, and speech in the learning process. According to Murray (2018), this integration helps students develop a comprehensive understanding of music while engaging them in creative and physical activities. One of the key principles of the Orff Schulwerk method is the use of elemental materials such as speech patterns, movement, and simple instruments like xylophones and hand drums. These materials are used to help students build a foundation in rhythm, melody, harmony, and form (Sabo, 2005). Orff Schulwerk

emphasises improvisation and composition as essential aspects of music learning. Students are encouraged to create their music and explore different musical ideas in a supportive environment (Payne, 2012). The Orff approach often involves group work and collaborative activities where students work together to create music and movement pieces. This fosters social interaction, communication skills, and a sense of community among learners (Torbert, 2008). The use of Orff instruments, such as xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels, is a distinctive feature of the Orff Schulwerk approach. These instruments are used to demonstrate musical concepts in a hands-on and engaging way (Kietzman, 2007).

Incorporating Orff Schulwerk's principles into music education, students are provided with a creative and holistic learning experience that nurtures their musical abilities and supports their overall development.

2.6.5 The Teaching of African Traditional Musical Instruments

When teaching African traditional instruments, several pedagogical approaches can be effective in providing students with a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of these instruments' cultural and musical significance. These approaches incorporate hands-on learning, cultural immersion, and collaborative exploration.

One pedagogical approach is the use of master-apprentice relationships. This approach involves pairing students with experienced musicians who have a deep understanding of the African traditional instruments. Through one-on-one instruction and apprenticeships, students can learn directly from these experts, acquiring not only technical skills but also cultural knowledge and traditional playing techniques (Barrett,

2015). It is more about demonstration by the master, while the learner observes diligently to imitate what is being observed. For instance, the Adowa ensemble in the SHS may learn the drumming by imitating what the expert does. Through imitation and repetition, the learner eventually becomes abreast with the patterns.

Another approach is the incorporation of cultural immersion experiences. This can involve inviting guest artists or community members to demonstrate traditional playing techniques, share stories and historical context, and lead students in participatory activities such as drum circles or dance workshops (Campbell & Diamond, 2008). Immersion experiences provide students with a firsthand connection to the cultural and social contexts in which these instruments are traditionally used. Some students may find themselves in homes where the playing of a specific musical instrument is just the usual, and find themselves already performing. These students enter the SHS with prior knowledge about such instruments and do not struggle to learn new skills. As they learn together with colleagues, their colleagues learn from them too. A collaborative and exploratory approach can be used, encouraging students to experiment and innovate with the instruments while maintaining respect for their traditional roots. This approach allows students to engage in group improvisation, composition, and arrangement activities, promoting creativity and self-expression (Trudeau et al., 2018).

Furthermore, a contextualised approach can be employed, incorporating discussions about the historical, social, and political contexts in which these instruments are used. This approach helps students understand the broader cultural significance of the instruments, fostering a deeper appreciation for their role in community life (Barrett, 2015).

Overall, these pedagogical approaches to teaching African traditional instruments involve a combination of hands-on learning, cultural immersion, collaborative exploration, and contextualised understanding. Teachers can give students a well-rounded and culturally rich musical education by combining these strategies. The SHS Music Teaching syllabus prescribes traditional music instruments such as membranophones, idiophones, aerophones, and chordophones as instruments to be learnt by music students in the SHS. The majority of these instruments make use of the above-mentioned pedagogical approaches, especially with the membranophones. An expert demonstrates for the learner to imitate, or sometimes the learners have already learnt through immersion and enculturation, and the expert only makes a few additions to the learners.

2.7 Factors that Affect Students' Performance during Music Practical Examinations

The performance of students in music practical examinations could be affected by many factors. These factors encompass individual, instructional, institutional, and environmental dimensions. Understanding these influences is crucial for enhancing students' musical proficiency and examination outcomes. Many students struggle to perform at their best during music performance examinations due to psychological, instructional, and environmental challenges.

2.7.1 Practice and Preparation

Regular and effective practice is fundamental to mastering musical pieces. Studies indicate that students who engage in consistent and focused practice sessions demonstrate improved performance skills (Acquah & Kwofie, 2021). However, in many Senior High Schools (SHS) in Ghana's often lack sufficient structured practice routines, leading to inadequate preparation for practical examinations. Bagci and Can (2016) on this issue also examined the study habits of music students at Kocaeli University in Turkey and found that students who practised regularly and employed effective study habits achieved higher grades in their main instrument courses. The study identified several factors influencing practice effectiveness, which include the duration of practice sessions, the use of technical exercises or etudes, attention to sitting and instrument positions, and persistence in studying challenging pieces by breaking them down into sections. Students who engaged in these practices demonstrated significantly better performance outcomes than students who did not. Many students enter SHS without prior formal music training, which hinders their ability to execute complex musical tasks during examinations (Acquah & Kwofie, 2021).

The lack of structured practice routines and adequate preparation contributes to suboptimal performance in practical examinations. Amuah et al. (2017) noted that weak practical music performance at the WASSCE level often stems from poor preparation habits and irregular practice routines. Many SHS students begin music without prior training, and without a structured approach to practice, they struggle to develop the necessary technique and confidence. Furthermore, Acquah and Kwofie (2021) again observed that a lack of dedicated practice time, limited access to instruments, and inadequate teacher supervision often result in students being ill-prepared for performance assessments. Insufficient facilities in schools

may also be a factor, as students habitually lack quiet or equipped spaces for effective practice.

Unpreparedness is a critical factor that adversely affects students' performance in music practical examinations. Students who approach performance assessments with inadequate practice, technical mastery, or mental readiness often experience high levels of stress and anxiety, leading to errors and diminished expressiveness in their playing or singing (Williamon, 2004). Unpreparedness also affects students psychologically. The fear of failure, coupled with a lack of rehearsal, can induce performance anxiety, which manifests as shaky hands, breath control issues, or mental blocks during examinations (Papageorgi, Creech, & Welch, 2013). This anxiety is further intensified when students are unfamiliar with examination procedures, such as sight-reading, improvisation, or responding to examiner feedback. When students are unprepared, they are unable to demonstrate their full potential, and their scores in music performance assessments suffer accordingly.

The role of structured and supervised practice cannot be overstated. Research has shown that students who develop a consistent routine and who are guided through specific practice goals, such as focusing on scales, phrasing, and performance dynamics, are more likely to demonstrate musical fluency and expressiveness in examination settings (Bagci & Can, 2016; Acquah & Kwofie, 2021).

2.7.1.1 Performance Anxiety

Another significant factor that affects students' performance in music practical examinations is performance anxiety, which often impairs concentration, muscle coordination, and memory recall during examinations (Williamon, 2004). This anxiety is typically exacerbated

by a lack of prior performance experience and inadequate preparation. As asserted by Acquah and Kwofie (2021), students in Ghanaian Senior High Schools often enter music programmes with minimal formal performance background, contributing to insecurity and nervousness during examinations. Students tend to shake, sweat, feel uneasy, and begin to fumble on their musical instruments whenever they are examined. It may not necessarily be based on only unpreparedness.

Performance anxiety, particularly prevalent among students, arises from a confluence of psychological, physiological, and environmental factors. Psychological factors such as fear of failure, when students fear for not meeting expectations, can lead to heightened anxiety. Students often worry about disappointing teachers, parents, or themselves, which can impair performance (Agbenyo, 2022). Negative self-talk, which is characterised by self-doubt and criticism, can exacerbate anxiety. Thoughts like “I am not good enough” or “I will make a mistake” can undermine confidence and focus (Agbenyo, 2022). He continues by highlighting physiological factors such as the lack of adequate rest, which can impair cognitive function and emotional regulation, making students more susceptible to anxiety. He adds that environmental factors, such as negative past experiences or critical feedback, can create a fear of repeating mistakes, leading to anticipatory anxiety before performances. These factors could also directly and indirectly affect the performance of the student during examinations. Students sometimes look at the panel they are going to face, and also with the examination mindset of being graded affect their cognitive function and may cripple their abilities and proficiencies. Teachers would also have to conduct sessions to enlighten students about examination anxiety, to help mitigate it.

2.7.1.2 Technical Proficiency

Proficiency in instrumental or vocal techniques is essential for successful performance. Research highlights that students with a strong foundation in technical skills perform better in practical assessments (Amuah et al., 2017). However, many students enter SHS without prior formal music training, which hinders their ability to execute complex musical tasks during examinations. The complex things are always built by putting the simple things together. Jeffrey Kluger (2008) coined the word “simplicity” to emphasise that simple components interact to create complex systems (Kluger, 2008). He highlights that complex systems can emerge from simple interactions, and therefore, complex systems could be broken down into simpler forms for constructive learning activities. Students may aspire to perform advanced works without fully internalising foundational techniques. This would be a hindrance to advancing in their skills. The transformation of simple exercises into complex musical artistry illustrates the core principle of Kluger’s “simplicity.” Therefore, in preparing for performance examinations, students must embrace repetitive, seemingly mundane practice routines as essential steps toward executing complex pieces with confidence and musicality.

Bagci and Can (2016) found that students who practised scales, arpeggios, and etudes, and paid attention to their sitting and instrument positions, achieved higher grades in their main instrument courses. These technical exercises are crucial for developing the skills necessary for complex musical tasks and improving overall performance. This clarifies that fundamental skills are essential for mastery and should be practised frequently. Many students tend to begin practising their pieces without any form of engaging in technical exercises. Scaly passages, arpeggios, broken chords, sequential passages, among others,

become “burdensome” to them because they do not have time to go through technical exercises to enable them to build “muscles” for such when they appear in their pieces. Sloboda (2011) stresses how the cerebellum processes these exercises into chunks and makes it easier to execute when they appear in pieces. It is prudent to always practice technical exercises to build up proficiency.

2.7.2 Motivation and Interest

Intrinsic motivation and genuine interest in music contribute to better performance outcomes. Students who are passionate about music are more likely to dedicate time and effort to practice and excel in examinations (Amuah et al., 2017). However, some students opt for music as an elective subject due to subject grouping requirements rather than personal interest, affecting their commitment and performance. Students are less likely to devote the time, energy, and emotional commitment necessary for musical development and mastery when they do not genuinely care about the subject. Unlike other academic disciplines, music requires sustained and consistent practice, internal motivation, and personal engagement to achieve competence. As Bagci and Can (2016) noted, students who demonstrate a strong interest in their chosen instrument and music education generally engage more deeply in practice routines, exhibit better study habits, and perform at higher levels. Conversely, when students are apathetic or disengaged—often due to external pressure, such as being forced into music as a subject or assigned an instrument they do not resonate with—their lack of enthusiasm reflects in poor attendance, minimal practice, and underwhelming performance outcomes.

In the context of Ghanaian Senior High Schools, Amuah et al. (2017) highlighted that many students who performed poorly in the West African Examinations Council (WASSCE) music practical tests lacked intrinsic motivation and often studied music due to subject placement policies rather than personal passion. This lack of alignment between student interest and subject choice leads to a mechanical approach to learning, where students engage with the content at a surface level and fail to internalise key performance techniques or musical expression. Furthermore, disinterest diminishes the students' resilience to overcome challenges, reducing their willingness to persist through difficult pieces or technical limitations (Papageorgi, Creech, & Welch, 2013). Students are unlikely to develop the commitment and artistry necessary for good music performance if they lack a fundamental interest in music, which will result in continuously subpar performance.

With regards to the selection of musical instruments as principal instruments, Bagci and Can (2016) found that students who selected their main instrument achieved higher grades in their main instrument courses. This suggests that personal interest and choice play a significant role in students' motivation and performance. The forced selection of a major instrument in music education can have a detrimental effect on a student's motivation, engagement, and overall performance. In many cases, parental influence plays a significant role in determining the course of a student's musical journey. A student's inherent desire and emotional connection to music may be weakened, for example, if parents force them to choose the piano as their principal instrument even though they would prefer the guitar. Musical learning largely thrives on personal interest, and the freedom to choose an instrument aligned with one's passion often leads to greater commitment, longer practice hours, and deeper artistic expression (Bagci & Can, 2016). On the other hand, when students

are denied this autonomy, they may view music education as an obligation rather than a fulfilling endeavour.

This lack of agency can result in disengagement, lower performance levels, and even resentment toward the subject. Research in music pedagogy emphasises that student-centred learning, where learners have a voice in their artistic choices, enhances both technical growth and emotional investment (Amuah et al., 2017). In the case of the student forced to study piano, the disconnect between the imposed instrument and personal interest may hinder the student's willingness to practice, attend lessons with enthusiasm, or participate actively in recitals and exams. Over time, this disconnect can evolve into a broader disinterest in music altogether, potentially extinguishing what could have been a lifelong passion if nurtured appropriately.

2.7.3 Time Management

Balancing academics and music can be challenging for students. Effective time management is crucial for ensuring adequate preparation for practical examinations. Bagei and Can (2016) observed that students who planned their study sessions and managed their time effectively achieved better results in their instrument courses. Acquah and Kwofie (2021) noted that many SHS students in Ghana face challenges in balancing their academic workload with music practice, leading to inadequate preparation for practical examinations. This highlights the need for students to develop effective time management skills to enhance their performance.

Academic achievement is significantly influenced by efficient time management, particularly in performance-based fields like music. Effective time management, planning,

and prioritisation increase the likelihood that students will finish assignments, practise regularly, and do well on theoretical and practical tests. Students that use time management techniques, such as establishing study plans, avoiding procrastination, and defining academic goals, do noticeably better academically than their peers, claim Britton and Tesser (1991). In music education, time management is even more critical, as mastery of an instrument or musical piece requires repeated, focused practice over an extended period. Students who organise their time well are more likely to develop the technical skills and confidence necessary for successful performances.

Moreover, proper time management reduces academic stress and enhances productivity, allowing students to maintain a balance between school responsibilities and other life commitments (Macan et al., 1990). In the context of Ghanaian Senior High Schools, where students often juggle multiple subjects and extracurricular activities, poor time allocation can result in inadequate preparation for music practical examinations, leading to anxiety and subpar performance (Acquah & Kwofie, 2021). On the other hand, students who make time for daily instrumental practice and distribute their learning workload evenly throughout the term are more prepared, less anxious, and perform better in high-pressure situations. Thus, cultivating effective time management habits not only improves academic performance but also fosters discipline and self-regulation, which are essential traits for long-term success in music and other academic fields.

2.7.4 Cultural and Socioeconomic Background

Access to resources and societal attitudes towards music education significantly impact student performance. Students from wealthier backgrounds may have more access to private lessons, instruments, and performance opportunities, which can enhance their skills and confidence. On the other hand, students from less privileged backgrounds may face challenges such as limited access to resources and support, which can affect their performance in practical examinations.

Enculturation, the process through which individuals learn and internalise the values, beliefs, customs, and behaviours of their culture, typically beginning in early childhood and continuing through social interaction and education. It shapes how individuals perceive the world, communicate, and participate in social practices, including music and the arts (Schugurensky, 2020). This can have a profound influence on music students' practical performance, both positively and negatively. It may shape the way music students engage with and perform music, particularly in societies where traditional values, communal practices, and musical styles are deeply embedded in everyday life. In Ghana and other African contexts, students are often exposed to music through informal, culturally immersive experiences such as drumming at festivals, singing at church services, or dancing at community events long before they receive formal music education. This early exposure equips students with intuitive rhythmic sensibilities, improvisational skills, and an embodied understanding of performance that may not be explicitly taught in the classroom (Kwami, 1998). Such informal learning environments nurture musical fluency and stage confidence, which can enhance students' performance in formal settings like practical examinations.

However, enculturation can also present challenges when there is a disconnect between the music students grow up with and the curriculum they are assessed by. Many formal music programmes in Ghanaian Senior High Schools, for example, are based on Western classical traditions, including sight-reading, harmonic analysis, and standardised instrumental techniques. Students who are more familiar with oral traditions and improvisational performance may struggle to adapt to these formal expectations, especially if their prior learning has been largely intuitive rather than notation-based (Campbell, 2004). This cultural mismatch can result in lower performance scores, not necessarily due to a lack of musical ability, but due to unfamiliarity with the assessment standards.

Moreover, enculturation influences students' instrument preferences, learning styles, and comfort on stage. For instance, students who have grown up participating in communal drumming may feel constrained by the solitary nature of piano recitals. In such cases, performance anxiety may stem more from cultural unfamiliarity than from technical unpreparedness (Oehrle, 1990). Thus, while enculturation can provide a rich foundation for musical expression, it can also become a barrier if the formal educational environment fails to acknowledge or incorporate students' cultural backgrounds. Recent studies have highlighted the importance of integrating students' cultural backgrounds into music education to enhance engagement and performance. For instance, a study by Addaquay (2024) suggests that incorporating indigenous Ghanaian languages into music theory and composition curricula can improve cultural relevance and student involvement. However, the study also cautions that such integration should be approached carefully to avoid potential challenges in standardised musical terminology and international communication.

Therefore, understanding and addressing the effects of enculturation in music education is crucial for fostering an environment where all students can thrive. Teachers may develop a more effective and inclusive music education system that improves real-world performance outcomes by acknowledging and appreciating the cultural backgrounds of the students.

The performance of SHS students in music practical examinations is shaped by a complex interplay of factors. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, including enhancing practice routines, improving technical training, providing psychological support, upgrading instructional quality, ensuring adequate resources and facilities, and fostering genuine interest in music. Such comprehensive strategies are essential for improving students' musical proficiency and examination outcomes.

2.8 Resources for Teaching Music

The students' textbooks provide the resources necessary to accomplish the broad goals listed in the syllabus, and the teacher's manual offers instructions on how to design teaching and learning activities that can be used in the classroom (Baiden & Amofa, 2008). The teacher should therefore give careful consideration to thoroughly studying the various curriculum materials because doing so will give the teaching and learning process a clear path to follow (Brewu & Adjepong, 2020). Primary school students (6 to 12 years old) are in a mental stage called the Concrete-Operational stage, which Jean Piaget identified (Sematwa, 2010). These authors place a strong emphasis on how youngsters build their knowledge and understanding through actual experiences through interaction with the environment. Tawiah et al. (2016) also state that "appropriate equipment/resources could be used to further develop skills and knowledge" (p. 19). They point out how important it is to give students the right instruments

so they can experiment and learn about music on their own (Brewu & Adjepong, 2020). Brewu and Adjepong (2020) emphasise that the use of concrete materials, which are essential in the teaching of music, helps students learn and comprehend concepts more effectively (Brewu & Adjepong, 2020).

Materials that a teacher utilises to enhance and supplement their instruction are known as teaching and learning aids (Tamakloe et al., 2005). Đurđanović (2015) defines them as “didactically shaped objects, products of human work, which are used in the teaching process as sources of cognition/learning” (p. 33).

Psychologists, according to Reece and Walker (1994), believe that children learn 12% by hearing and 75% through seeing. This is supported by the claim that 75% of students’ learning is maintained through experimentation (Irish National Teachers’ Organisation, 2007). “In other words, pupils can retain what they learn better by using concrete objects during the teaching and learning process. This implies the use of teaching and learning aids in teaching music to pupils” (Brewu & Adjepong, 2020, p. 76).

Through the use of tangible teaching and learning tools, practical activities support the study of music in elementary schools (Isbell & Raines, 2003). In addition to using their hands to make rhythmic noises, students also utilise other parts of their bodies to do so when clapping, tapping their thighs, rubbing their hands together, and snapping their fingers (Isbell & Raines, 2003). To teach music, a variety of audio-visual tools can be used in the classroom, including TVs, radios, computers, projectors, video compact discs (VCDs), digital versatile discs (DVDs), and other devices (Adjei-Mensah et al., 2001). Brown et al. (1982) found that pupils remember 50% of what they hear and see, compared to 10% of what they read and

20% of what they hear. They imply that effective teaching and learning are the consequence of a combination of instructional resources that accommodate both auditory and visual perception (Tamakloe et al., 2005).

Brewu and Adjepong, (2020) state “There are other varieties of teaching aids in the form of musical instruments in various shapes, sizes, classes, and types that can be used to teach music effectively in the primary school” (p. 76). Hickok (1993) divided these instruments into vocal (soprano, mezzosoprano, tenor, and bass), string (violin, viola, cello, and double bass), woodwind (flute, clarinet, piccolo, oboe, and bassoon), brass (trumpet, trombone, horn, and tuba), and keyboard (such as organ, piano and harpsichord).

According to how they produce sound, African musical instruments are typically divided into four categories: Membranophones, Idiophones, Aerophones, and Chordophones (Adum-Attah & Arthur, 2011; Agordoh, 1994; Amuah & Adum-Attah, 2016; Nketia, 1988). The sound of a Membranophone is created by beating a drum with parchment heads with a stick or your hand. *Donno*, *atumpan*, *petia*, *kwadum*, and *etwie* are some instances of these instruments’ names in the Akan language of Ghana (Nkeiah 1988). According to Nketia (1988), an idiophone may be “defined as any instrument upon which a sound may be produced without the addition of a stretched membrane or a vibrating string or reed” (p. 69). Idiophones are made of naturally sonorous materials, therefore sound production does not require additional stress (Amuah et al., 2011). *Frikyiwa*, *dawuro*, *trowa*, *adenkum*, and *dansuom* are a few examples in the Akan language (Adjepong & Brewu, 2020). String instruments called chordophones use the vibration of the strings to make sound (Amuah et al., 2011). *Benta* and *seprewa* are examples of Akan (Adjepong & Brewu, 2020). Aerophones are wind instruments that produce sound when air is blown through them

(Amuah et al., 2011). Some examples in Akan include: *atenteben*, *atentebenba*, *odurogya*, *odurogyaba*, and *nthehera* (Brewu & Adjepong, 2020).

Flolu and Amuah (2003) have identified how students develop and make their musical instruments using materials like empty tins and cans, polythene sheets, sticks, and hollow objects that are readily available in the environment. Teachers are encouraged to support such initiatives to develop students' creative skills and also obtain improvised materials for teaching (Flolu & Amuah, 2003). Due to difficulties with real musical instruments being accessible for educational reasons in Ghana, this is important (Brewu & Adjepong, 2020). Boafo-Agyemang (2010) and Ampeh (2011) found in their research that a shortage of teaching resources is hindering the instruction of the creative arts in Ghanaian primary schools, and they advised the Ghana Education Service to work with parents and educators to resolve this issue.

Talking about the importance of teaching aids, Ekpo and Igiri (2015) outline the following:

Thus, teaching aids:

- a. promote meaningful communication and effective learning
- b. ensure better retention, thus making learning more permanent
- c. help to overcome the limited classroom by making the inaccessible accessible
- d. provide a common experience upon which late learning can be developed
- e. stimulate and motivate pupils to learn
- f. encourage participation especially if pupils are allowed to manipulate materials used.

(pp. 27-28)

Teachers must choose appropriate and suitable teaching aids because of the role they play in students' musical learning experiences and their impact (Brewu & Adjepong, 2020).

The voice as a musical instrument, is not something to worry about in terms of purchasing. However, its maintenance could be very expensive in that it needs great attention in terms of nutrition, exercise, good and healthy living, and many more. Aside from human resources, the above factors would be needed to keep the voice, as a musical instrument.

The *atenteben*, as a principal musical instrument prescribed by the SHS syllabus. The instrument is a wind instrument, and it demands that the player directly positions their mouth on the mouth-piece and blow air into it, for it to produce sound. Because of this direct contact to the mouth piece, it will demand that every student owns one instrument. The teacher is expected to take the students through sight-reading of the instrument. As Suzuki suggests, rich musical enculturation will give students insight into how the instrument is used, while the teacher builds on how to sight-read, using the instrument. The teacher will have to engage in a demonstration, with the instrument, for the students to observe how it is held, finger positions, blowing techniques, and how to locate the pitches, relating it to the musical staff.

The trumpet, saxophone, guitar, piano, and Western classical string instruments will need a similar approach so far as pedagogy and available resources are concerned. They all need to be introduced to the students, with each student having one for tutorials and practice. Demonstration and guidance from the teacher will enrich the knowledge and output of the students. The availability of the instruments is very important in their knowledge pursuit, especially in the practical arena.

2.9 The Role of the National Choral and Cultural Festival Celebration in Music Education in the SHS

The National Choral and Cultural Festival Celebration in Music Education in Senior High Schools (SHS), is an annual event that is organised by Ghana Educational Service (GES) as a way of imbibing culture in young Ghanaians. These festivals serve as platforms for students to showcase their musical talents, enhance their performance skills, and engage with diverse cultural expressions. It is done on regional and zone basis, where SHS in the various regions in Ghana gather to engage in a competition, which is highly educational. Students learn patriotic songs and cultural dances, and compete about them through performances (Smith & Johnson, 2017). This event plays a big role in the enhancement of performance in music. The following are various ways in which the National Choral and Cultural Celebration contribute to Music Education in Ghana.

2.9.1 Cultural Awareness and Appreciation

The festivals expose students to a wide array of musical genres, styles, and cultural traditions, through participation in performances, and observing others. This enables students develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for diverse cultural heritages. Music festivals often feature performances spanning a wide range of musical genres and styles from different cultures. Students tend to develop a broader musical palette and a deeper appreciation for the richness of global music traditions, when they experience these diverse musical expressions firsthand (Reimer, 2015). The Ghanaian student in this context learn to appreciate music from other cultures in Ghana. Through performances, workshops, and interactions with musicians from various cultural backgrounds, students gain insight

into the cultural contexts in which different musical traditions have evolved. This contextualisation helps students understand the significance of music within different societies and how it reflects their values, beliefs, and histories (Hall, 2018). This hands-on approach allows students to engage with diverse musical practices, instruments, and performance techniques, leading to a more profound understanding of the cultural nuances embedded in music (Higgins, 2019).

Music and cultural festivals serve as platforms for intercultural dialogue where students from different backgrounds come together to share their musical traditions, collaborate on performances, and exchange ideas. This dialogue not only breaks down barriers but also fosters mutual respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity present in the musical landscape (Kalliny & Gentry, 2017). Performances of music from various cultures, as part of music festivals brings into the limelight the importance of cultural representation and diversity in the arts. Students witness the power of music as a universal language that transcends boundaries and connects people from different parts of the world, reinforcing the value of cultural exchange and understanding (DeNora, 2013). When students engage with diverse musical traditions, interact with musicians from different cultural backgrounds, and also participate in cross-cultural collaborations, they are exposed to a rich tapestry of global musical heritage. This exposure not only broadens their musical horizons but also nurtures a deeper understanding and appreciation for the diverse cultural contexts in which music thrives.

2.9.2 Skill Development through Teamwork and Collaboration

Through rehearsals, feedback sessions, and performances, students have the opportunity to enhance their musical skills, including singing, instrumentation, and stage presence. This practical experience complements theoretical learning in the classroom. Rehearsals and performances play a crucial role in the development of music students' skills, offering unique opportunities for the practical application of theoretical knowledge and the honing of performance abilities. Rehearsals serve as a significant platform for skill enhancement among music students. Through regular rehearsals, students engage in a systematic process of practice, receiving feedback from instructors and peers. According to McPherson and McCormick (2006), consistent rehearsal enables students to refine technical proficiency, develop interpretive skills, and enhance musical understanding. Concert performances provide music students with a real-world context to showcase their abilities and receive constructive critiques. Research by Williamon (2004) suggests that performances not only bolster technical skills but also foster stage presence, confidence, and emotional expression, essential components of a well-rounded musician. The synergy between rehearsals and performances is crucial for comprehensive skill development in music students. Integrating regular rehearsals for technical mastery and performance opportunities for stage experience, aid students cultivate a holistic skill set that encompasses technical prowess, artistic expression, and professionalism. As students prepare for the National Choral and Cultural Festivals, they indirectly learn from each other, and even more, from the instructors.

Rehearsals and performances are integral components of music education that significantly contribute to the skill development of students. Music students can grow as proficient

musicians capable of expressing themselves artistically and captivating audiences when engaged in a structured regimen of rehearsals and embracing performance opportunities.

2.9.3 Confidence Building

Public performances at these festivals provide students with opportunities to overcome stage fright, boost their self-confidence, and improve their presentation skills. This experience can have long-lasting effects on their overall self-esteem.

According to Jones and Su (2016), attending music festivals had a good effect on students' self-efficacy and self-esteem. Additionally, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory suggests that social interactions and collaborative learning experiences in festivals play a crucial role in shaping students' confidence and identity development (Vygotsky, 1978). As students rehearse and face large audiences during the performance, it helps build their confidence, especially pointing to the fact that they perform in groups. Dances that are done in groups serve as catalysts to dwindle shyness among students, and even build in them more self-assurance. Cohen (2014) also states that the experience of performing in front of an audience, alongside other talented musicians, often boosts students' confidence and self-esteem.

Furthermore, Grant (2018) conducted a longitudinal study, which highlights the long-term benefits of festival participation, indicating that students who engage consistently in such events demonstrate higher levels of self-assurance and willingness to take on musical challenges. The sense of accomplishment derived from successful festival performances reinforces students' belief in their capabilities, leading to a positive cycle of confidence building.

In conclusion, Choral and cultural festivals serve as integral components of music education, offering invaluable avenues for students to cultivate confidence in their musical skills. Students' interactions with peers and experts, the provision of performance opportunities to students, and the engagement of promoting cultural exchange, contribute significantly to the holistic development of music students. This study underscores the importance of integrating festival participation into music curricula to nurture students' confidence and passion for music.

2.9.4 Motivation and Inspiration

The festivals serve as motivation for students to excel in their music education. The opportunity to perform on a larger stage and receive recognition for their efforts can inspire students to pursue further musical training and instil a lifelong passion for music.

Participating in these festivals enlighten music students to a different music styles, genres, and cultural traditions. This exposure encourages them to develop an appreciation for diverse musical forms and expands their musical horizons (Miksza, 2011). Through performing and observing the performances of others, students can witness the creativity and artistic expression of their peers, which can serve as a powerful source of inspiration.

Additionally, choral and cultural festivals often feature workshops and masterclasses conducted by renowned musicians and educators. These opportunities enable music students to learn from experts in the field, further refining their technical skills and musical understanding (Hallam, 2012). The guidance and feedback received from these professionals can be highly motivating, as students strive to improve their craft and reach new levels of excellence. Participation in choral and cultural festivals also fosters a sense of

camaraderie and teamwork among music students. Collaborating with their peers, rehearsing together, and working towards a shared performance goal creates a strong bond within the group (McPherson et al., 2015). This sense of belonging and shared purpose can be deeply motivating, as students draw inspiration from one another and develop a collective sense of pride in their achievements. Overall, choral and cultural festivals in SHS provide a rich and immersive musical experience that motivates and inspires music students. These events offer valuable performance opportunities, exposure to diverse musical styles, learning from experts, and fostering teamwork. The combination of these factors contributes to the development of students' musical abilities, passion, and commitment to their craft.

To conclude, the National Choral and Cultural Festival Celebration plays a crucial role in enriching music education at SHS by offering a platform for students to develop their musical talents, appreciate diverse cultural expressions, enhance their skills, build confidence, foster collaboration, and cultivate a lifelong love for music. Educators and policymakers should recognise the importance of such events in shaping well-rounded individuals with a deep appreciation for the arts.

2.10 Importance of Playing Musical Instruments

The benefits of musical training for the individual but from different perspectives, the emotional episodes that accompany the performance and musical composition are understood as a cycle of creativity (Zhao et al., 2025). Learning to play a musical instrument provides a peaceful retreat from the pressures of daily life. Therapeutic outcomes of playing music include better communication skills, improved emotional release, and decreased anxiety and agitation. Musical training promotes cognitive function, mental health, and a

connection to others (Shipman, 2016). Musical instruments are important for developing cognitive skills and well-being in general. It can help in enhancing coordination, improving memory capacity, promoting social skills, reducing stress, fostering a sense of responsibility, time management, boosting math skills and enhancing creativity. According to Rose et al. (2015), an enjoyable and goal-oriented reward system appears to support musicians in developing their skills over time, motivating them to continue practising as they come to appreciate the intrinsic satisfaction of playing their instrument.

Peripatetic music teachers observe a range of benefits, including the development of social interaction, teamwork, and self-discipline. Students also note gains in "life skills," such as improved concentration and the ability to stay calm under pressure. According to Clift and Hancox (2001), a large proportion of choral society members reported social (87%) and emotional (75%) advantages. Physically, piano playing offers heart stimulation on par with brisk walking, and singing has been found to boost immunity through increased salivary immunoglobulin production. Overall, musical instrument learning (MIL) is broadly seen as promoting physical health, mental wellness, and a higher quality of life (Rose et al., 2015). Campayo-Muñoz and Cabedo-Mas (2017), connotes that the benefits of playing a musical instrument fall into three groups: Intellectual development, Personal and social development and Physical development and well-being, although they all take place at the same time and are closely linked. The study reviews the psychological, emotional, social, and health (therapy) importance of playing musical instruments.

2.10.1 Psychological

Learning a musical instrument has a positive impact on students' other school activities, increases academic achievement, and improves their overall quality of school life (Carnovalini & Caneva, 2022). Parents may want their children to learn to play musical instruments because of their many advantages. This is because students who learn to play musical instruments show better cognitive abilities and academic achievement, and are more conscientious, open-minded, and ambitious than students who do not learn to play musical instruments as learning to play a musical instrument was found to be more than twice as effective as learning sports, theatre, or dance in improving cognitive abilities, positively impact students' self-concept. Shipman (2016) in his submission also suggested that learning to play musical instruments not only improves cognitive ability, but can also effectively reduce stress by alleviating pressure and creating a sense of stability in daily life. According to Blasco-Magraner et al. (2021), music is capable of providing educational, formative, and socio-emotional benefits. In this regard, its emotional impact can improve aspects such as deductive reasoning, creativity, graphic representation, reading, spelling, education in values, or practical instrumental skills.

Music training in childhood has positive associations with abilities in a variety of domains, including speech perception, other language abilities (i.e., reading, vocabulary, spelling, second-language acquisition), and visuo-spatial abilities, as well as with domain-general abilities such as memory, executive functioning, intelligence, and academic achievement. Cognitive abilities also tend to increase in tandem with duration of music lessons, and there is some evidence that music training causes small enhancements in these areas (Schellenberg et al., 2015). Bussu and Mangiarulo (2024) indicated, music training may encourage

reflection and critical thinking by putting the learners in situations without clear-cut answers. More broadly, music-making and practice contribute to the development of self-motivation in students and career professionals, suggesting long-term effects of music practice.

According to Carnovalini and Caneva (2022), enjoying playing musical instruments has benefits even in old age. For example, a systematic review and meta-analysis revealed that playing musical instruments could prevent older adults from developing dementia. This effect may occur because learning to play a musical instrument increases verbal memory and the efficiency of the nervous system. Shipman's (2016) contribution emphasises Carnovalini and Caneva (2022), as he suggested that the brain works on a principle of "use it or lose it." Therefore, exercising the brain is important, and musical training may fill that need. Learning a skill such as playing an instrument reorganises the brain's neural pathways. Brain plasticity is the ability of the brain to change its structure, and engaging older adults in sensory, cognitive, and motor activities creates positive outcomes. Shipman's (2016) research also indicates that active participation in music lessons creates larger plasticity effects than does passively listening to music. Musical training provides a multisensory activity that requires integrating signals from different sensory modalities with motor responses, and piano lessons improved the brain's executive functioning (regulates abilities and behaviours) and working memory (keeping track of information).

2.10.2 Emotional

According to Campayo-Muñoz and Cabedo-Mas (2017), music is an ideal vehicle for working with emotions because of the natural connection between the two. The influence and effects of music on emotion have been explored at different times and from diverse

perspectives, and can be observed between performing with a musical instrument and diverse traits and dimensions of emotional development, intrapersonal skills, particularly well-being, self-control and emotionality. Active musical practice is a useful tool for developing emotional skills, which in turn contribute to enrich musical learning and promote students' interaction because training musical abilities could develop factors of trait EI such as self-motivation, emotional-expression and emotionality, and they might increase with longer musical training, intrapersonal skills because learning a musical instrument requires a great deal of self-study.

The link between music and emotion has contributed to the value of music as a discipline that can be implemented in formal education to develop students' emotional competence. One of the advantages of musical activities is that they mostly require collective participation, which requires cooperation and coordination on the part of the members of a society, making them useful tools for the advancement of socio-emotional development. In addition, the social interactions required for music-making offer many opportunities for students to develop their abilities to evaluate their feelings and, at the same time, try to relate constructively to the feelings of others. Music was more capable of recognising and expressing their emotions and regulating their emotional states, such as aggression or anger (Blasco-Magraner et al., 2021). Bussu and Mangiarulo (2024) indicated that individuals involved in musical activities, showed more remarkable growth in inhibitory control and self-regulation, which is an essential skill that involves young people developing the ability to regulate their emotions, thoughts, and behaviours to act positively towards a challenge/task, for example, instilling a sense of discipline needed for continuous and

consistent practice as described by our participants in their research, than those who were not. This affirms the emotional benefits of playing a musical instrument.

2.10.3 Social

Playing music is an important activity for developing children's and young people's life skills, which can be defined as essential psycho-social competencies and interpersonal skills that enable people to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life. Among the examples of transferable life skills for young people, effective communication emerges as a cornerstone, playing a pivotal role in fostering interpersonal relationships and adeptly navigating diverse social interactions. Furthermore, in light of the progressively intricate decisions encountered by youths, the cultivation of robust decision-making abilities assumes paramount importance. Young people's involvement in music groups can contribute to social inclusion and group identity by fostering shared unity and togetherness (Bussu & Mangiarulo, 2024). According to Blasco-Magraner et al. (2021), playing musical instruments can also boost attitudes such as sympathy, empathy, and other prosocial skills, and reduce anxiety, depression, and defiant attitudes and therefore recommended in his study that music be incorporated into the different curricular levels, educational contexts, and areas of knowledge. Scholars have documented how music participation contributes to the formation of social relationships and promotes a sense of security among participants. Particularly noteworthy is the appreciation among young people for ensemble participation, recognised for its musical and psycho-social benefits. Additionally, long-term musical group interaction positively influences empathy in children and young people. Furthermore, successful musical activity can enhance an individual's sense of social inclusion and social cohesion (Bussu & Mangiarulo, 2024).

A key factor in music playing is the interaction between the musicians: when there is a written score, it is necessary for them to keep the same tempo in order to effectively play the written music. In the case of improvisation, the interaction becomes even more evident: even if a common ground is chosen beforehand (like a fixed chord progression, for example) it is necessary for the musicians to proactively listen to what the others are playing to obtain good musical results. This interactivity of music playing is the basis of many of its recognised educational benefits: the “social” aspect of music develops a sense of belonging and strengthens the social skills as well as self-esteem and satisfaction (Carnovalini & Caneva, 2022)

Lafser (2020) provided evidence that most people who learn to play a musical instrument find the action to be helpful and enjoyable. Musicians and students notice more benefits in their own behavioural and social health than those who did not learn to play an instrument or ceased to continue their music education.

2.10.4 Health (Music Therapy)

According to Shipman (2018), playing a musical instrument provides health benefits without the adverse effects that accompany pharmacologic therapy. It can also help improve social skills and provide individuals with a sense of achievement. Shipman (2018) found that playing an instrument can positively impact well-being, and to read and play the piano might enhance mood and certain aspects of the quality of living indicators in older adults and playing music creates a temporary escape from the stress of daily life. This claim was buttressed by a comparison study of a piano training group with a control group (nonplaying) and found that those who played piano experienced a decrease in psychological distress,

depression, and fatigue. Zhang et al. (2024) prescribe playing musical instruments for mental health to be necessary because it relieves negative emotions such as anxiety and depression.

Music therapies using musical instruments have been utilised clinically because of such proven effects, and according to several studies, musical activities, including playing musical instruments, may positively affect health and promote well-being. Summarising previous studies, enjoying playing musical instruments not only has a therapeutic effect, but can also enrich human life. Learning how to play a musical instrument is a workout for the brain, just as physical exercise is a workout for the body; both are necessary for optimal health. Evidence exists to support the hypothesis that playing an instrument elicits brain changes that positively influence cognitive functioning and decrease stress. Despite the lifelong benefits of playing an instrument, only about 8% of adults aged > 18 years play a musical instrument. A healthful lifestyle includes holistically addressing issues about mental and physical well-being (Shipman, 2018).

Dingle et al. (2021), in their review, identified cognitive mechanisms such as improved memory and attention associated with music activities, including playing instruments, leading to enhanced mental health outcomes. According to Dingle et al. (2021), playing a musical instrument was associated with improved cognitive health and well-being in school students, older adults, and people with mild brain injuries via effects on motor, cognitive and social processes. Zhang et al. (2024) contribute to Dingle et al. (2021) as they concluded in their study that playing musical instruments contributes to psychological well-being, highlighting emotional elevation and cognitive development as significant factors.

The sustained popularity of these musical activities suggests that they provide significant benefits. Although playing music has numerous potential benefits, it should be addressed from the most appropriate perspective for each student to enable them to develop these benefits properly and deal with the potential social and emotional skills to be gained from playing a musical instrument (Campayo-Muñoz & Cabedo-Mas, 2017). Beyond honing their musical abilities, young participants reported significant advancements in cognitive, emotional, and socio-relational skills through group music engagement. One of the most significant findings is related to the impact of young people's interpersonal skills on promoting community building, facilitated by playing music together, pedagogical practices aimed at peer support (such as peer mentoring), and the dissemination of a collaborative and social culture (Bussu & Mangiarulo, 2024). Musical engagement can have significant cognitive and emotional benefits, which underscores the importance of accurately measuring enjoyment in these activities. This contributes valuable knowledge about the characteristics of playing musical instruments, which should be addressed to promote individuals' subjective well-being and happiness (Zhang et al., 2024).

2.11 Summary

The literature has revealed how Ghana's history of music education dates back to the Gold Coast, where it gained independence from European colonial rule. Dr Kwame Nkrumah's leadership focused on African unity and international peace, leading to the introduction of Western instruments and the emergence of school brass bands, orchestras, and concert bands. Governor Hill Guggisberg impacted the Gold Coast's development, introducing African music and developing textbooks. However, the Ministry struggles with music education issues. Additionally, Ghana's music education has a history influenced by

Western music, with the SHS Curriculum studying Western musical history. Despite embracing indigenous music, Ghana maintains a Western standard, with instruments studied primarily by Western instruments.

Secondly, every student in music elective course has an instrument area prescribed by WAEC, which they are examinable termly and also, at the end of the three years course. Teachers must be knowledgeable enough to guide students through the process, using various pedagogical skills for students to excel in their exams. The review revealed that the Western instruments dominate, when compared to the local and traditional instruments.

Thirdly, ensemble performance in music promotes social skills, cooperation, and listening skills among musicians. It fosters camaraderie and unity, resulting in engaging experiences. Practical lessons help students build technical proficiency, while the SHS music syllabus emphasises performance opportunities for students to showcase their skills and receive constructive feedback.

Furthermore, Music teachers' musical background significantly impacts the quality and effectiveness of music education. A solid musical foundation equips teachers with the skills, knowledge, and passion needed to inspire students, foster musical growth, and contribute to a vibrant learning environment. The need for highly qualified teachers is increasing, and cultural and educational standards are changing. Various instructional practices, such as the Kodaly-Suzuki method, Dalcroze, and The Orff Approach, are used to simplify and assist in teaching practical areas in music. For teaching African traditional instruments, pedagogical approaches such as master-apprentice relationships and cultural immersion experiences can be effective. These approaches provide students with a well-rounded and

culturally enriched musical education. The SHS Music Teaching syllabus prescribes traditional music instruments like membranophones, idiophones, aerophones, and chordophones, which often use these pedagogical approaches.

Again, the literature reviewed revealed that textbooks and teacher's manuals are essential resources for students to achieve syllabus goals. Teachers should study curriculum materials to create effective teaching and learning activities. Teaching aids, which are didactically shaped objects, are crucial for students to learn and comprehend concepts effectively. Concrete materials promote meaningful communication, retention, and accessibility. They also help overcome limited classrooms, develop late learning experiences, stimulate and motivate students, and encourage participation by allowing them to manipulate materials.

The study also reviewed literature on the factors that can affect students' performance during practical examinations. Factors such as unpreparedness, performance anxiety, socio-cultural background and time management were discussed.

To add, the National Choral and Cultural Festival Celebration in Music Education in Senior High Schools (SHS) is an annual event organised by the Ghana Educational Service (GES) to imbibe culture in young Ghanaians. These festivals provide students with opportunities to showcase their musical talents, enhance their performance skills, and engage with diverse cultural expressions. They expose students to a wide array of musical genres, styles, and traditions, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for global music traditions. These festivals are integral components of music education, fostering confidence, cultural exchange, and teamwork. Integrating festival participation into music curricula is crucial for

nurturing students' confidence and passion for music. However, it has not been patronised by some SHSs, and needs to be advocated.

Finally, the cognitive and socio-emotional impacts of learning of musical instruments on the students were discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter focuses on the methodology that was used in the study. Subthemes covered include the study area, study population, research design, sample technique, data collection instruments, data collection tools, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures.

3.1 Research Paradigm

The qualitative approach was used for the study. Kuranchie (2016) opines that qualitative research involves gathering narrative data on variables over a period of time in order to gain insights into issues of interest. It seeks to discover meanings and understanding of phenomena and entails both interpretation and a critical approach to the social world. This method was chosen because the study looked into the phenomenon (state of the music practical component) in the selected schools in the Eastern region, discovered how it is approached, and narrated the findings, which will be followed by suggestions to improve it. Data was gathered and analysed qualitatively in this study.

3.2 Research Design

The design chosen for this study was case study, which refers to an in-depth, or intensive description and analysis of a single bounded system (Merriam, 2000). “The case study approach is particularly useful to employ when there is a need to obtain an in-depth appreciation of an issue, event or phenomenon of interest, in its natural real-life context”

(Crowe et al., 2011, p. 1). Multiple Case Study was specifically adopted for the study. This is the type that involves selecting and analysing two or more cases that share some common characteristics, but differ in a few aspects (Hunziker & Blankenagel, 2024). This is when researchers select more than a geographical area, but are interested in looking at factors that may have caused certain things to occur. The study looked into the cases of the three selected schools (Asamankese, Atweaman and Ghana Senior High schools), which are all in the Eastern region of Ghana. This design helped the researcher to look into the phenomenon, which was how the music practical lessons were taught in the three selected schools, to cause the unsatisfactory results, and also look into the factors that contribute to it. The design will also strengthen the validity of the results, since more than one field was selected for the study.

3.3 Setting

The research was conducted in three different settings in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Eastern Region was selected for the study due to the limited attention it has received for research, as far as the music practical component in the SHS are concerned. Acquah and Kwofie (2021), Petrie (2015), Dzansi-McPalm (2017), and Kwofie (n.d) have conducted research in other region, about music practical lessons and performances but unfortunately, the SHS in Eastern Region specifically has received less attention. Borgman (2015) argues that “researchers should not neglect studying underrepresented or marginalised communities, as it can lead to a more inclusive body of knowledge” (p. 45). When researchers focus only on well-studied locations, populations, or phenomena, there is a risk of overlooking important insights, experiences, and perspectives that may exist in less-studied areas. Conducting research in these ignored or overlooked places will draw

researchers' attention to unique contexts and voices that might otherwise go unnoticed, thereby enriching the overall body of knowledge. First is Akim Manso, which is found in the Asene Manso Akroso District, where Atweaman SHS is located. The second is Asamankese, which is in the West Akim Municipality, where Asamankese SHS is located. The third and last setting for the study was Efiduase, which is found in the Koforidua. This is where Ghana SHS is located. All three schools are found in the Eastern Region of Ghana, where the research focused. Also, other regions have gained the attention of researchers, but the Eastern Region has fewer studies conducted, as far as the topic of SHS Music Practical Component is concerned. This is why these settings were selected. The main occupations of the people in these three towns are farming and trading.

3.4 Population

The population of the study was the music students, music teachers, and Head of Music Departments of Atweaman Asamankese and Ghana Senior High schools. The rationale for the selection of these schools was that these schools offer music as a course, and the study sought to focus on the Eastern Region of Ghana, where these three schools are located.

3.5 Sample

The sample for the study was one art class of the S.H.S 2 & 3 music students of the selected population, music teachers, and the head of the music department in each of the schools. In each school, one Form Two Art or Visual Arts class was selected to be observed. At Asamankese SHS, two classes, of which one had 23 (Form 2), and 46 (Form 3) students was observed during instructional periods. At Atweaman SHS, 42 (Form 2), and 22 (Form 3) students was also observed during practical lesson periods. At Ghana SHS, 28 (Form 2) and

44 (Form 3) students were also observed during lesson hours. Out of these participants, four students were selected at random for interviews. The teachers, who also doubled to be Head of Department were interviewed. Below is the distribution table showing the details of the sampled participants.

Table 1

Sample Distribution

School	Asamankese SHS	Atweaman SHS	Ghana SHS
Head of Department	1	1	1
Teachers	1	1	2
SHS 2 Students	23	42	28
SHS 3 Students	46	22	44
Total	71	66	75

3.6 Sampling Techniques

The techniques for the study were purposive, convenient, convenient cluster (stage one, and stage two). The purposive sampling technique, as Etikan et al. (2016) postulate, is the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities that the participant possesses. The sample was composed of SHS music students in their second year, and also SHS music students in their final year. These students have at least gone through learning for a year and have gained a level of knowledge, which will be beneficial to the study. Students had gone through sight-reading skills, rudiments and theory of music, and were assumed to give much

better responses than freshers who had just entered the school. Etikan et al. (2016) also describe convenience sampling as a type of nonprobability or non-random sampling where members of the target population meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility and geographical proximity availability, at a given time.

I employed purposeful and convenient sampling techniques in selecting Asamankese SHS, Atweaman SHS, and Ghana SHS. As they are all in the Eastern Region of Ghana, which was the setting for the study, these schools were selected. Other schools offer music as a course of study, but were not selected due to inconveniency. This reason led to the selection of the convenient technique.

Students, teachers, and the Head of the Music Department of the selected schools were purposefully selected. This was because they were the ones from whom I could get the information I sought. The Form two classes were chosen for the study using convenience sampling technique because they have already been in the school for at least a year, and have experienced practical lessons for a relevant period. The Form Three classes were also selected because they are in their final year, having their preparations for the WASSCE. The specific Form Two and Three students were selected using the convenient cluster sampling technique. This is a non-probability sampling technique in which the researcher selects intact groups (clusters) such as classes, departments, communities, or organisations, based on ease of access, availability or practical considerations, rather than random selection (Lorh, 2019). Using the “two-stage” of the convenient cluster sampling technique, four students were randomly selected for interview. The teachers, too, are the instructors, who, aside from my observations, could help gather more data concerning how the teaching of the practical aspect of music for the past years in the school.

The SHS Music Syllabus was also sampled because it contains the information needed to serve as a benchmark for the practical lessons.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

Instruments for the collection of data were semi-structured interview, and observation.

3.7.1 Interview

Interview is one of the hallmarks of a case study, and it is said to be one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow human beings (Fontana & Frey, 2005). It can be used for measurement or its scope can be the understanding of an individual or a group perspective, as it allows the researcher to record and quote the words and expressions of the respondents (Fontana & Frey, 2005). To gather data about how the practical lessons are handled, and also to know the challenges that could not be seen immediately by observations, it was prudent to conduct interviews to know what was really happening on the grounds.

Semi-structured interview type was chosen for this purpose. Semi-structured interviews normally have predetermined questions to be asked but have spontaneous follow-up questions. (McLeod, 2014). The interviewer asked open-ended questions based on a specific research topic and will try and let the interview flow like a normal conversation. The said type of interview was conducted among eleven music students and four teachers across the three Senior High Schools to find out what exactly they find and think about the learning of their principal instruments. The main strength of the semi-structured interview was that the option to respond allowed the informant not only to express an opinion but also to explain

why that opinion is held. This interview type paved the way for follow-up questions to be asked when information was unclear to me. This was one main reason why the said type of interview was chosen. Music teachers and the head of the music department of the said schools were interviewed, alongside some students. They were asked questions concerning the music practical lessons, and they gave responses that were very beneficial to the study.

3.7.2 Observation

Observation refers to a means of watching participants, listening, and recording what is been seen rather than asking questions (Kuranchie, 2016). The complete observer type was employed in this study. According to Little (2014), a complete observer in the context of observational research is an observer who remains completely detached and uninvolved in the setting or context being observed. Little (2014) continues that the observer does not interact or interfere with the individuals or events being observed and simply records what is observed without any active participation (p. 67). This type was chosen because I wanted to observe and document how the lessons were handled, and would have been difficult to notice certain benchmarks on my observational checklist. The researcher designed an observational guide to help him scrutinise the participants' methods of instruction, students responses, and interest in the lessons.

3.8 Tools for the Collection of Data

Tools for data collection were a smartphone (Samsung A03) for video and audio recordings, and an exercise book, with a pen for note-taking.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

When embarking on data collection, it was prudent to make a formal written approach to the individual or organisations involved in outlining plans. Introductory letters from the School of Graduate Students in the University of Education, Winneba, were sent to the various Headteachers of the schools selected to inform them about the intention and the nature of the research to obtain their commitment to their participation. After it was granted, individual dates were scheduled before the visit to the various schools. Before the data collection, the observation guide and interview questions that guided the exercise to collect the data, and kept the researcher in check, were designed. The researcher began the observations and interviews at appropriate times, with the help of the guides and tools already mentioned. Observations were made during practical lessons to see how the music practical lessons were being handled in the schools. Observations were made at all three schools. At Ghana Senior High, Observation was made in two different classes – the General Arts 2A class for 40 minutes, and the Visual Arts final years, of the same duration. At Atweaman, an observation was made for a lesson with the Form Two General Arts 2 class. Then, at Asamankese, the observation was made for an hour with the Form Two General Arts class.

The classes were observed for a day, in each school, during which pictures, audio recordings, and field notes were taken. An observation checklist was designed to guide the observation process. The checklist included areas that were to be critically looked at for the benefit of the study, to gather appropriate information that was relevant to the study.

3.9.1 The Interview Process

The researcher conducted a semi-structured interview with the teachers and the Head of Department for music education of each school, where questions which were generated from each of the research questions were written and served as a guide in the interview process. There were further questions that were not necessarily written but were asked regarding the answer given by the interviewee when it was found relevant. I got in touch with one of my proposed informants, who happened to be a music teacher at Atweaman SHS on a phone call, and briefed them about the purpose of the study, which granted me a spot for formal preliminary interaction with them, to create rapport prior the actual data collection, and also to schedule the date for the interview. He suggested that we have an online interaction, instead of a face-to-face interaction, so that I can come and have the observation on a different day, and ask further questions when needed. The first interview was scheduled for the following Monday dated 15th May 2023, at 16:00. The researcher started the interview process with Atweaman Senior High School. The interaction was made via the WhatsApp application, where the researcher asked the questions written in his interview guide, which the informant answered. Follow-up questions were also asked when relevant. The data was written (WhatsApp chat), and later transcribed into a notebook to document the relevant details.

On 19th May 2023, the researcher went to Asamankese SHS as scheduled. The researcher arrived there around 9:10 a.m., and the interview was scheduled to commence at 10:00 a.m. At 10:00 a.m., the researcher started the interview process with the first participant in the school. The interview took place in the classroom. The semi-structured interview was successfully conducted within about fifteen minutes. On that same day, the second

participant's interview was scheduled for 1:00 p.m. At 1:00 p.m. as scheduled. Questions about the state of music practical lessons in the school.

The third interview happened in Ghana Senior High, Koforidua. Time was scheduled for the interview (1:00 pm) on October 13th, 2023. The music teacher of Ghana SHS was interviewed on the state of the Music Practical Lessons in the school. Students were also interviewed about their interests and how the lessons have benefited them in their general studies and social life. The interview lasted for 14 minutes. The interview was conducted using my interview guide, and I also asked relevant follow-up questions. The interview was very successful.

3.9.2 The Observation Process

Following the successful completion of the interviews, the researcher set up specific days and times for the three schools to observe their music practical lessons. The goal of the observations was to ascertain the methodological strategies used by teachers, the resources available, and the environmental influences. Days and hours for the study were arranged with the three participants before the observation procedure. It was the week that followed the interview sessions. Nonetheless, individuals talked to the researcher and both parties about their schedules. The researcher created an observational guide to help him scrutinise the participants' methods of instruction. Following the successful completion of the interviews, the researcher set up specific days and times for the participants to observe practical lessons, as well as the resources available for the lessons, and how students interact with the teachers and fellow students during lessons. The goal of the observations was to ascertain the methodological strategies used by participants when they occasionally teach

music. This was done because, when something is difficult to approach as it should be, one may become disinterested in doing it. The researcher had a successful observation of the participants on the scheduled days and times accordingly.

3.11 Ethical Consideration

Research fosters the qualities that are necessary for collaborative work, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness, and frequently entails a considerable deal of coordination and cooperation among ethical norms. Bassey (1999) emphasises that ethical principles that supports democracy, truth and individual respect must be taken into account during the research process and in the publication of findings in any scientific study. It is prudent for researchers to ensure that the information is true and genuine, while confidentiality of the information is kept, to ensure trustworthiness.

3.12 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was ensured in the study. This is where credibility, transferability and dependability were ensured in the findings. Credibility was assured because the respondents indirectly revealed evidence that they were truly teachers of the schools, and therefore all information given is considered genuine and true. Due to its genuineness, the information could be used in other settings and contexts, when talking about music practical lessons. The genuineness also makes the information dependable, and valid for reference making, since it is consistent and factual. The information presented in the findings of the study is exactly what was gathered on the field. There were therefore no biases, fabrications nor falsifying of the findings. Informed permission, honesty, integrity, and secrecy were used as ethical guidelines to safeguard the rights, welfare, and dignity of research participants. To obtain

informed consent, respondents were asked for permission to record prior to the start of the interview. I made a great effort to uphold integrity by making sure that I adhered to our agreements regarding the reporting schedules for each respondent, and made them aware that their names identities would not be revealed. In all three interviews, confidentiality regarding study data was also maintained.

3.13 Data Analysis Procedure

Data collected were analysed using a narrative data analysis procedure. Narrative analysis according to Smith (2016), as he cites Riessman (2008), is an umbrella term for a family of methods that share a focus on stories. The raw data (pictures, and audio recordings) obtained from the interviews and observation transcribed were documented information in a notebook. Afterward, the media was replayed and checked diligently with the transcription made to do away with possible incongruities. The study analysed the results from the observation made, and interview responses from respondents to understand how music practical lessons are taught in the SHS, how equipped the teachers are to handle the lessons, and how the lessons have fulfilled the requirements in the music teaching Syllabus for SHS, thematically. Findings from observations and interviews were categorised into sub-themes, and narratively analysed by using both a story-telling standpoint and a story-analyst standpoint, as Smith (2016) postulates. Content analysis was also used to interpret information on the music teaching syllabus under document analysis which provided the framework of what the music practical lessons should cover, and its objectives. Content and objectives, under the performance aspect of the music syllabus, were the themes looked at. They were analysed by describing what they stated concerning music practical lessons.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the data collected from the field using interviews and observation. It also discusses the findings derived from the data collection in line with the research questions. The data collected from the schools is being discussed with reference to the research questions.

4.1 Presentation of Findings

Findings from the data collected from interviews and observations are presented in this section.

4.1.1 Findings from Interview

The results from the interviews were categorised into the following themes;

1. Instrumental areas taught
2. Music Facilities available
3. Students' performance in formative assessments
4. Teachers' music education background and proficiency
5. Students' cognitive, emotional and social behaviour during lessons
6. Effect of Lessons on the Cognitive, Emotional and Social Development on students

4.1.1.1 Instrumental Areas Taught

Results from the interview revealed that not all the instruments to be taught are available. From all the respondents, the instruments available were the piano (keyboard), trumpet, voice, and *atenteben*. Respondent 1 submitted that:

There are only four different instruments available here. We have a piano, atenteben, trumpet, and of course, the voice. Among these, it is only the atenteben that I could boldly say that the students have easy access. This is because it is affordable and portable too. This makes most students choose the atenteben as their major instrument. During occasions, the school authorities hire setoff traditional drums to help us prepare the students for traditional dance performances, but those instruments are not taught and examinable. (R1)

Findings from the interviews also revealed that the keyboards, and trumpets available are not enough for students to practice. The respondent indicated that:

The voice and atenteben students are doing well, as compared to the trumpet and the piano students, due to the availability of instruments. You know, practice is very vital in performance, and without the instrument, practice cannot be effective, though there are other ways one could practice. (R.2)

In general, the interview revealed that the instruments that were taught in the selected schools were the *atenteben*, voice, piano, and trumpet.

4.1.1.2 Teaching and Learning Activities

The interview revealed that the practical lessons are held in the classrooms, and each student comes with their instruments (*atenteben* specifically). When the class is large, the teacher divides the class into groups and meets them at different times. Lessons last for a period of one hour. Students are given the pieces and are guided on how to go about some complex passages and other technicalities. Sight-reading abilities of the students are good but need improvement. Students are encouraged to sight-read, but they (especially trumpet and *atenteben*) end up writing the solfege of the pieces and use that to play.

A respondent indicated that:

Lessons are relatively effective and have few challenges. Most of the students are unable to sight-read and end up learning by rote. (R.5)

It was revealed that sight-reading lessons are effective, but students' interest is not encouraging. It was revealed that the female students were more interested in the voice class than the male students.

It was observed that each lesson had a duration ranging from one hour to two hours in all the schools, and was held twice every week. However, teachers sometimes organised special sessions when needed. Depending on the situation in the class, the teachers chose the appropriate methods to teach. During rhythm interpretation, echo clapping was used first, by clapping the rhythms of the pieces, and sometimes, the tactile method was used. Teachers tapped the rhythms on the shoulders of learners who were finding it challenging to interpret

the rhythms well. Imitation was used at times. Teachers demonstrated to the students how to play or sing the pieces, and they imitated. These approaches were used during the lessons.

4.1.1.3 Music Facilities Available

The findings revealed that the spaces for the music practical lessons were not sufficient. The storage places were not sufficient as well. The musical instruments in Atweaman SHS were kept in the Head of Music Department's office, and sometimes in the Head Master Academic's office, and were mostly mishandled. Furniture for keeping the brass instruments were not available in all the three schools.

4.1.1.4 Students' Performance in Formative Assessments

The findings from the interview revealed that assessments are done formatively. In some cases, practical assessments are conducted every month, after which the end-of-term exams follow. In some cases, it is done twice a term, as a mid-term examination and as an end-of-term examination. The findings revealed that students performed well.

4.1.1.5 Teachers' Music Education Background, and Proficiency

All the respondents had studied music at the tertiary level. They all have a bachelor's degree in music education. A respondent indicated;

I have a first degree in music. I attended the University of Education, Winneba. I read music as a course. I did Music Education. I learnt how to play the keyboard before going to the university, and I did voice major. (R.3)

The findings revealed that some of the teachers are limited in knowledge, regarding some instruments. This makes teaching of those instruments challenging. This challenge requests for the school authorities to purchase other instruments void, due to the lack of resource persons to teach. A respondent said that at times, he wishes to let other colleague music teachers in other Senior High Schools who are good at other instruments come and help, but he has not been given the go-ahead. He added that if he does, it will have to be at his own expense.

The interview also revealed that some of the teachers love to research new methods and strategies to teach musical instruments and use them to create their own techniques.

4.1.1.6 Students' Interest in Music Practical Lessons

Two students were randomly selected from each class and asked questions about their interests in the lessons. The interview revealed that some students loved the practical lessons more than the theory lessons. A respondent said

The practical lessons are always fun. I love music very much, and I always want to hear music. So, when music practical lessons are approaching, I become very happy. As for the theory, it is difficult. (R.7)

However, some students expressed disinterest. They said that music is core and they wished they could leave that class and join the other classes that did not take music as core, but elective.

4.1.1.7 Effect of Lessons on the Cognitive, Emotional and Social Development

My interview with one of the students revealed that the learning of the musical instrument (*atenteben* in his case) has helped him a lot. He submitted that;

Since I began learning this instrument, I have somehow seen changes in the way I understand concepts in other subject areas, especially in Mathematics.

I struggle less to understand, as compared to how I was before. (R.10)

Other students also attested to the same submission. Four of the respondents also added that playing musical instruments, as part of partaking in the music practical lessons, has helped their memory. They revealed that they can remember things faster than before. She had not thought about that, but when I questioned further, she confirmed that the change began when she was introduced to the *atenteben*.

Almost all the interviewees attested to how they enjoyed performing together as an ensemble, and how it has helped built confidence in them. Though a few expressed how “annoying” it sometimes is, when others are slow in grasping a passage. At the end, they all pointed to the fact that they are able to interact, and embrace other’s short comings.

4.1.2 Findings from Observation

The results from observation are revealed under the following themes:

Available Instruments

1. Students’ interest in practical lessons
2. Music facilities

3. Sight-reading ability of students
4. Teachers' proficiency
5. Students' socio-emotional behaviours

4.1.2.1 Available Instruments

My observation revealed that not all the musical instruments prescribed in the syllabus were available in the schools. Among the three schools, none of them had up to five different musical instruments. *Atenteben* was found in all the schools. In all the schools, there was at least one keyboard which was not necessarily used by piano majors but served as accompaniment for the other instrumental areas. It was also used to assist theory lessons.

The voice, as an instrument, is natural and does not need any special means to make it available. The trumpet as a musical instrument, was found in two of the selected schools and was few in number. Two of the schools had three, of which two had developed faults.

One school had a brass band, which captured almost all the brass instruments. They had four trumpets, two trombones, and one euphonium. These were the instruments that were available in the schools. In some cases, there were some traditional musical instruments, but those instruments were not learnt and assessed as an academic requirement, but as an extra-curricular activity.

4.1.2.2 Students' Interest in Practical Lessons

Results from my observation showed that students' interests varied, based on the instrument that was being taught. At one school, there was only one music teacher, who was to teach all the practical areas. He had to meet the groups at different times. The voice students' interest was relative. The males looked not too interested in the lesson, but the females were. Generally, the voice students' interest was encouraging.

Those taking *atenteben* as their major instrument had much interest in the lessons and were passionate about what they did. They enjoyed playing the *atenteben* and were even seen often blowing their instruments during break times, and free periods, even in their dormitories. Other observations revealed that some students took the practical lessons for fun, without attaching any level of seriousness.

4.1.2.3 Music Facilities

Regarding the facilities, the classroom was the main venue for the practical lessons. Students were gathered in the classroom and taught practical lessons. During voice lessons, students sing together, the songs they are being taught. The *atenteben* lessons were also done in like manner, as the voice lessons. Generally, all the schools I observed used classrooms as venues for the practical lessons. The space for storing the instruments were not sufficient. Some were kept in the offices of the teachers, which were rarely properly handled.

4.1.2.4 Sight-reading Abilities of Students

Sight-reading was not really what was used to teach the students in either class. In one of the schools, the teacher sang the solfege to the students to imitate during *atenteben* lessons, after which they played on the instrument. During the voice lessons too, the teachers sang the song to the students to imitate and commit to memory. Sight-reading was not used as a medium to teach the students their pieces. In some cases, the students did some warmup exercises before they began to perform or learn the pieces. All these activities were done by rote. Interestingly, those taking trumpet as a major instrument were not seen having lessons, at the periods I visited. However, the teachers were interviewed, and the results would be captured in the results from interviews.

4.1.2.5 Teachers' Proficiency

Per my observation, the teachers had little challenges with the pedagogical approach towards the practical lessons entirely. The teachers at the various schools taught by rote, by singing the songs to the students to imitate, or demonstrated the playing of the *atenteben* to the students to hear, and sang the tonic solfa to them, while they found their way out.

4.1.2.6 Students' Socio-Emotional Behaviour

I closely observed students participating in a group practice and performances as well. During these sessions, the teacher often assigned small groups. Usually, they were grouped into three or more to perform pieces they had been working on using their musical instruments. After each performance, the remaining students were invited to listen attentively and offer comments on what they observed. This peer assessment activity was

guided by the teacher, who encouraged students to provide constructive and specific feedback. This approach proved to be highly beneficial for both the performers and the listeners. For the students performing, it created a sense of accountability and motivation to practice, knowing they would be presenting in front of their peers. It also helped build confidence and stage presence, which are important aspects of musical development.

For the students providing feedback, the activity fostered active listening skills and critical thinking. They were encouraged to assess elements such as rhythm, pitch accuracy, dynamics, expression, and overall presentation. This not only deepened their understanding of musical elements but also allowed them to internalise what effective performance looks and sounds like.

Moreover, the use of peer assessment contributed to a collaborative classroom environment, where students learned to value each other's opinions and support one another's growth. It promoted a sense of shared responsibility and respect, and allowed students to see learning as a communal process rather than a purely individual one. This method of integrating performance with peer feedback helped reinforce musical knowledge, sharpen performance skills, and build a supportive learning community within the classroom.

The students loved this approach and made it a point to bring a healthy competition between themselves. This act, from my point of view enhanced the social behaviour of the students. They also encouraged each other when performances did not go well. Observations made in the voice class also revealed that students feel the emotional effect of the songs they learn when they perform them. Especially when they relate to the music text. Comparing the music theory lessons to the practical lessons, the practical lessons were a vast avenue for

students to engage their social and emotional development. Students who were seemingly shy and relatively inexpressive were slowly and indirectly engaged by their colleagues.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

The findings were discussed here in relation to the objectives and research questions of the study. They are categorised into themes that relate with the research questions.

4.2.1 How Music Practical Lessons are Taught

Music practical is a component that cannot be underemphasised as it is the peak of music education (Amuah et al., 2017). Music is a performing art, and whatever is learned is supposed to find expression, otherwise, its existence cannot be proven. This notion is very true and is even emphasised by Amuah et al. (2017) that music is practically oriented, and whoever learns music without practical skills becomes “half-baked”. They continue to talk about how individual students make use of their theoretical knowledge in the practical works;

One needs to perform on an instrument to show evidence of his studies in music because the music syllabus stresses the development of practical skills and attitudes. Practical works, which incorporate sight reading are regarded to be effective, simply because students can transfer their theoretical knowledge to actuality. This in effect helps them to internalise concepts of rudiments and theory. (p.68)

Teachers taught by guiding the students to sight-read, and through echo clapping, they taught the students how to interpret the rhythms appropriately. This resonates the ZPD, where the student immersed in the learning environment for the teacher who is more experienced to

be their guide. The tactile was also applied where it was necessary. This method is very effective, as the learner feels the rhythm in their body and guides them to interpret the rhythms correctly. The teachers sometimes sang the songs to the students for them to imitate. Though it is expected that the performance is geared towards producing result, the process is very important. Students should be guided on how to interpret music themselves, rather than being demonstrated to. This does not help enhance their musicality. It is good to note that teachers used diverse approaches as and when they were needed and appropriate. The tactile, echo clapping, and demonstration approaches were used relatively effectively during lessons.

The allocated durations for the lessons were relatively sufficient. Students had quite a moment with their teachers, but had less time to have personal practice. This, to an extent may affect their performance, but also enough to help build their proficiency, especially at this level.

The availability of musical instruments to foster learning will be looked at. Not all of the musical instruments listed in the syllabus were available in the SHSs in the Eastern Region of Ghana, according to the results of a study on the practical component of music education instruction at those institutions. None of the three schools possessed more than five different kinds of musical instruments. The *atenteben* was the only musical instrument that was available in all the school. There was always at least one keyboard in each school, which was utilised as accompaniment for the other instrumental sections but was not always used by students taking piano as their principal instrument. It was also employed to support theory instruction. The trumpet as a musical instrument was found in the schools and was few. Two of the schools had three, of which two had developed faults. The observation also revealed

that practically all of the brass instruments were in the brass band at one school. They had one euphonium, two trombones, and three trumpets. These were the instruments that the educational institutions had on hand. There were instances where conventional than as something that had to be learnt for credit.

The availability of musical instruments plays a crucial role in aiding music practical lessons. Elger (2012) mentions immersion as part of his axioms, which involves putting learners in a quality learning environment to enhance teaching and learning. The presence of instruments enables students to have hands-on experience and practice playing various musical compositions, contributing to their overall musical skills and knowledge. It allows students to develop their technical skills, where they can practice playing different instruments, which will enhance their proficiency and dexterity. In the Theory of Performance by Egler, the axiom 'immersion' elaborates how crucial the learning environment is, in the process of learning. Through regular practice and experimentation with various instruments, students can master different playing techniques, develop a sense of rhythm, and improve their coordination skills (Djokoto, 2015). Moreover, the presence of musical instruments fosters creativity and musical expression among students in Ghana. When students have no or less access to musical instruments during practical lessons, it hinders their ability to develop technical skills (Djokoto, 2015). However, as Swets (2019) emphasises, having access to a variety of instruments is crucial in allowing students to experiment with different sounds, tones, and harmonies, thus fostering their creativity and musical expression. The absence of musical instruments limits students' ability to compose their music or adapt traditional Ghanaian melodies, hampering their artistic growth and connection to their cultural heritage. The ZPD as a framework for this study hammers on how imperative it is when learners are

challenged with tasks above their capabilities and are guided to achieve greater levels. When students do not have instruments to practise, they cannot challenge themselves to improve through their own efforts. This cannot help reveal what the students can do with help, and without help. One interviewee lamented that sometimes practical lessons have become challenging due to the lack of piano to accompany the voice and the *atenteben* majors, and also there are no trumpets for those who have taken trumpet as their principal instrument to learn and practise. He added that the school authorities always promise to fix that challenge, but it is yet to be fulfilled. This serves as a testament to why students' performance in the WASSCE was not good.

On the other hand, music teachers are also trained to have the ability to improvise when there is unavailability. The importance of improvised musical instruments in music pedagogy lies in their ability to enhance creativity, facilitate musical exploration, and broaden students' understanding of different sound possibilities. According to Wiggins (2011), creating and playing improvised instruments can ignite students' imagination and allow them to explore music in a non-conventional way. Through guiding of students about how to make or improvise their instruments from common and available objects, teachers in this regard open up possibilities for students to develop their creative ability, not just in music making, but also musical instrument making. As highlighted by Gill (2016), these instruments encourage students to actively listen and observe to discover and manipulate sounds around them. Music teachers could creatively develop improvised musical instruments to aid teaching. However, I argue that the impact will not be the same as the original instrument. The sound production may differ from the original sound, and even some could not produce the sound at all. Moreover, getting materials to create these

improvised instruments would not be easy. For instance, in an attempt to build the *atenteben*, one may use Poly Vinyl Chloride (PVC) pipes to make one, by cutting to a relevant length, making the holes and the mouthpiece. But making it sound may need another expertise. However, it would play a good role in showing what it looks like, how to handle it, and how to blow it. Making music with it may be a challenge.

Aside from the insufficient and unavailability of musical instrumental resources, factors like the learning environment, students' interests, and their sight-reading skills were also investigated. My observation findings demonstrated that depending on the instrument being taught, students' interests differed. There was only one music instructor at one school, and his job was to teach every practical subject. He had various times to meet the groups. Students' interest in the voice was relative. While the girls appeared engaged in the lecture, the males did not appear to be. Some students claimed that the music course was mandatory, and they would have opted for change if it was elective. This showed that the interests were not equal.

Individuals who were majoring in *atenteben* demonstrated a great deal of interest in the lessons and a strong sense of passion for their work. They delighted in playing the *atenteben*, and during free hours and break times, they were frequently observed playing their instruments, even in their dormitories.

According to Hallam and Harrison (2018), student motivation is a key determinant of success in learning a musical instrument. When students are interested in and motivated to learn an instrument, they are more likely to engage in regular practice, persevere through challenges, and have a positive attitude toward their learning experience. This motivation

can lead to increased skill acquisition, improvement in music performance, and overall success in learning the instrument. If students lack interest, it affects their learning, and hence, their performance. Showing less interest in the music practical lessons. Egler's 'mindset' as an axiom of his theory states that students should be engaged in actions that engages positive emotions. Although teachers will offer all that they have rightfully, the disinterest of the student will still dwindle the learning outcome. Schellenberg (2011) found that intrinsic motivation (fixed factor of Egler's Theory of Performers), which arises from personal interest and enjoyment, is particularly crucial in learning a musical instrument. Intrinsically motivated students tend to experience greater satisfaction from their musical activities, leading to increased effort and commitment. This motivation, combined with regular and focused practice, results in improved technical skills, musicality, and performance ability, which affirms Egler's "Levels of Knowledge, Skills, and Identification." Furthermore, a study by Hickey, M. (2012) suggests that students who have a genuine interest in a particular instrument may develop a stronger connection with it, which can enhance their learning experience. This emotional connection to the instrument can deepen their commitment, motivation, and investment in learning, ultimately leading to greater success in mastering the instrument.

Sight-reading was not really what was used to teach the students in either class. In one of the schools, the teacher sang the solfege to the students to imitate during *atenteben* lessons, after which they played on the instrument.

Amuah et al. (2017) emphasise sight-reading as a major aspect of performance. They postulate that practical works that incorporate sight reading are regarded to be effective, simply because students can transfer their theoretical knowledge to actuality. Even if

students do not perform by sight-reading, they should learn by sight-reading. One of the major reasons for schooling is to acquire the skill to read and write. When students cannot sight-read, they are not building themselves holistically in music. During the voice lessons, my observation revealed that some teachers sang the song to the students to imitate and commit to memory. Sight-reading was not used as a medium to teach the students their pieces. In some cases, the students did some warm-up exercises before they began to perform or learn the pieces. All these activities were done by rote. This will make the students fail the sight-singing test in the WASSCE music practical test, and not help them build their musicianship.

One major concern was also the teacher-student ratio. The teacher-student ratio in music practical lessons is an important factor that can significantly impact the quality of instruction and learning outcomes. One study by Abril and Gault (2008) explored the effects of class size on the experiences and outcomes of middle school instrumental music students. The researchers found that smaller class sizes, and subsequently lower teacher-student ratios, were associated with higher levels of individual attention, more frequent feedback and guidance from the teacher, and increased opportunities for student participation and engagement. These findings suggest that a smaller teacher-student ratio can enhance the quality of instruction and individualised attention, leading to improved music learning outcomes. In my research, I observed that the number of students was way larger than the teacher could effectively handle. Every lesson spanned for one hour, and on average, each class had a roll of 45 students. Welch et al. (2004) investigated the impact of different teaching group sizes on the development of instrumental skills in young beginners. The researchers found that smaller teaching group sizes, characterised by a low teacher-student

ratio, facilitated more individualised instruction, increased opportunities for student participation and practice, and enhanced teacher-student interaction. With one hour, the teacher cannot attend to all students to know their challenges and assist them. The best they could do was to do chorus singing, group singing and playing. This certainly does not contribute effectively to helping students achieve high musicality, to perform well during the WASSCE Music Practical Examination. As Egler (2012) states, reflective practice should be part of both teachers and learners are encouraged to reflect of their pedagogies and techniques, and learning strategies respectively. This will help music teachers and students thrive well in their education, and entire music careers.

4.2.2 Facilities Available for Music Practical Lessons

Concerning the facilities, the classroom was the main venue for the practical lessons. Students were gathered in the classroom and taught practical lessons. During voice lessons, students sing together, the songs they are being taught. The *atenteben* lessons were also done in like manner, as the voice lessons. Generally, I observed that all the schools used classrooms as venues for practical lessons.

The music facilities play a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness and outcomes of music practical lessons. Several studies have investigated how different aspects of the facilities, especially the learning environment can impact music learning. One study by Creech et al. (2018) examined the impact of the physical environment on instrumental learning in a music school setting. The researchers found that factors such as the availability of practice rooms, instrument storage facilities, and appropriate instrumental resources positively influenced students' engagement and progress in their music learning.

At Atweaman Senior High School, the Music Department did not have a set-apart laboratory for music practical lessons. The lessons, especially voice and *atenteben* tutorials were held in the classroom, and was quite a distraction to the other classes that were in session. The loud sounds produced by the students' voices and the sound of the *atenteben* distracted other non-music lessons. The brass instruments practical lessons were held under trees, and quite detached from the classrooms in order, to prevent the sounds from distracting other students in the classrooms. Also, instrumental storage rooms were not available. The results of my interview revealed that the lack of storage room is a contributing factor to the state of the brass instruments. However, the headteacher's office was where they were mostly kept. The cleaners of the said office may not know how to handle the instruments with care and may mishandle them. They may fall or sometimes be removed from their cases, by workers who may be curious to know the instruments. The music teacher added;

Sometimes, when the headteacher is not around and it is time for lessons to commence, it becomes a challenge. We have to reschedule the lessons, or change the agenda for the day. When students want to practice on the piano, they could not have access due to where it is kept. They cannot just go to the headteacher's office to practice. This makes the work difficult sometimes.

(R.2)

Drums for the African Traditional Music Ensembles were not seen. The music teacher revealed that they do not engage in that aspect. This in my view, is not only as a result of the unavailability of the instruments, but the taste of the students, in relation to the choice of musical instruments, and to a large extent, the value placed on the indigenous musical instruments by the Ghanaian society. From my general observation, many parents love to

see their children play western instruments, as compared to the indigenous ones. However, during cultural celebrations at schools, these traditional instrumental and dance displays are most enjoyed. This strikes a parallel difference in context of “taste” with regards to Western and indigenous musical instruments, and dance performances in the Ghanaian SHS. Although colonialism may be a strong factor that has influence the preference of the Ghanaian society, Kwakofi (2017) argues that western musical instruments are often perceived as more prestigious and valuable due to economic factors. He argues that that it could easily lead to job opportunities, and social mobility. This assertion to an extent attempts to answer the question of why the Ghanaian society prefer western musical instruments, but from my observation, I have come to the realisation that Ghanaian musicians who focus on the indigenous musical instruments and dances really thrives well globally. The western world also enjoys the Ghanaian traditional music, and patronise them.

Adu-Gyamfi (2014) states that formal education in Ghana prioritises Western classical music which can lead to a lack of emphasis on traditional music and instruments. This statement raises a lot of questions and stirs up thoughts about the idea of education. Education primarily, has a focus of teaching learners to read and write. Among many other reasons, music education primarily, also seeks to guide learners to read and write music. To achieve this purpose, it is prudent to use materials which will guide learners to read and write music, of which the Western world has done so well in that. Certainly, their material would be useful for our education, and hence may appear that theirs is being prioritised. One other factor is that most of our indigenous music and dances are not written, and hence though appreciated, not given prestige as the western instruments. A respondent shared his

thought on how the society has been “western biased” when it comes to musical instruments.

He asked and said;

... how many churches use only our traditional instruments? Do our military men use mensuon and fontomfrom? We use the western musical instruments to create our music, and we can add the indigenous ones. (R8)

This statement in a way justifies the need to encourage the learning of the western musical instruments. In the lens of cultural preservation, there would be a need to emphasise on the learning and equally appreciate the indigenous music. Both are of same value and ought to be learnt. However, it appears that the indigenous music and dances are given the needed attention only when programmes such as cultural festivals, Speech-and-Prize-Giving days, and some others, that may involve such musical performances are approaching.

In the music class, the marker board was not the one appropriate for music lessons. The teacher has to rule lines of the music staff during theory lessons, and also when he needs to make demonstrations during practical lessons. The provision of science laboratories and its apparatuses to SHSs by the government is adorable and commended but, the attention paid to music as a discipline sometimes is not encouraging. Musical lessons without the appropriate board will make teaching and learning challenging. Research has showed that visual aids such as marker boards with staff, are essential for effective music instruction (Hanna-Pladdy, 2015), and hence the absence of the marker board is not the best when carting out music instructions.

In Ghana Senior High, the situation was not too different from that of Atweaman Senior High. The music department had an electric piano, and was kept in the office of the Head of

the Music Department. Music practical lessons were held in the classrooms, and no laboratory was specifically built for music practical lessons. According to one of the music teachers, some of the students wish to learn wind instruments, and even stringed instruments, but there are no provisions made for them. Firstly, the instruments themselves, and secondly, the space to facilitate learning.

In Asamankese Senior High, the situation was not different from the other schools. Music practical lessons were held in the classrooms and the space for storage of the available musical instruments were not available. The school had five brass instruments – three trumpets and two trombones, in addition to the electric piano, and were all kept in the Head of the Music Department's office. As postulated by Varvarigou (2017), the availability of these facilities has a positive impact on students. A well-equipped and supportive physical environment enhances students' access to practice and resources, which at large, advantageous to their music learning outcomes. Egler's ToP and Vygotsky's ZPD emphasise on the learners' interaction of the learning environment, being a main factor to build learners to higher heights. The presence of the facilities is the main enhancer of learning, especially with practical lessons. Music practical lessons without musical instruments would be absolutely ineffective. Learners will always need the instruments to practice, and the unavailability of these instruments may lead to the discouragement of students to even select such instruments as principal.

Though the unavailability of special places specifically designated for music practical lessons were not found in all three schools, efforts were made by the teachers to make sure that the lessons were organised and facilitated to the optimum best they could.

Appendix E of the syllabus (p.37) lists the instruments prescribed for learning. It reads;

Recommended musical instruments and equipment to be procured by the school;

1. Keyboard (preferably Piano, Organ, etc.)
2. Guitar
3. Western Orchestral Instruments (Strings, Brass, Wind, Percussion, etc.).
4. African Musical Instruments (Idiophones, Membranophones, Aerophones, Chordophones).
5. Computers, music software, CD players, Video deck and monitor, turn tables, etc.

All schools per my observation had the keyboard, at least one. Only a school had a bass guitar which was used during worship. The Western orchestra instruments were not found in any of the schools. However, a respondent claimed that some students had personal ones, that they brought occasionally. Unfortunately, those students were not music students. African musical instruments were found but not in full set. What was available could at least almost form an ensemble. The *atenteben* was popular in all the three schools. The fifth component was not considered because it was not the focus of the study.

With reference to the prescribed instruments, it supposedly suggests that there should be a provision of such musical instruments and facilities to both accommodate, and also serve as teaching and learning space. When it does not happen like this, students who may have the instruments may be compelled to bring their instruments to school, of which may be a good thing, but also will have some negative implications. Although it may enhance the teaching

and learning process, factors like storage and care taking may not be the best. Students may have their instruments not having proper storage and care, and may gradually have it faulty. Instruments that are expensive to purchase will be difficult to have. This raises an alarm to the government to assist in that manner. On the other hand, regardless of the insufficiency of the instruments, the teachers manage to create small ensembles from them for beautiful performances.

4.2.3 Effects of the Availability of the Facilities on Learning

Learning, especially in music, involves a lot of practical activities, which also involve the use of special facilities to ameliorate smooth teaching and learning process. The availability of facilities is crucial for this. As postulated by Varvarigou (2017), the availability of these facilities has positive impacts on the students. This suggests that a well-equipped and supportive physical environment can enhance students' access to practice and resources, ultimately benefiting their music learning outcomes. Learning environment do not only mean the physical environment but also the social and psychological environment. It was also observed that the ambiance was very friendly. Students had the confidence to express themselves. The ZPD by Vygotsky expresses extensively how learners could be guided in an appropriate environment to bring out their potentials. A study by Hallam, et al. (2002) affirms it with their investigation about the impact of the learning climate in instrumental music lessons. The researchers found that a nurturing and positive learning climate, characterised by clear expectations, constructive feedback, and emotional support from the teacher, fostered students' motivation, self-confidence, and willingness to take risks in their music learning. The findings from the schools indicate a striking parallel situation when related to Katsarou and Mosely's assertion. Though the teachers and learners were not fully

furnished with the facilities needed, the teaching and learning process was fairly good. The learning atmosphere was fairly interactive. Student's feedback was positive, and were always ready to deliver. However, in the long run, their level of achievement when put in an environment where there is the availability of facilities may be far better when compared to what they find themselves in.

4.2.4 The Influence of music practical lessons on the cognitive, emotional and social development of students

Music performance engages the body in diverse ways – psychologically and emotionally, in this case. The performance itself begins way back, tracing from the learning process. The performer (student) begins the learning process by analysing the music score given, sight-reading, and all that is needed for practice and rehearsals before the actual performance. These acts engage the mind a lot, and have positive effects on the cognitive capacity of the student. Sloboda (2011) postulates that music heightens emotional life. He explains that music is a powerful tool to communicate emotions to humans. The results from the interviewees from the three schools to a larger extent, agreed to what Sloboda asserted. McPherson et al. (2012) explored the influence of the social environment on music lessons. They found that positive interpersonal interactions between students and their music teachers, as well as with peers, had a significant impact on student motivation, engagement, and enjoyment of music lessons. Furthermore, the study highlighted the importance of a supportive and collaborative learning environment in fostering positive relationships and promoting effective learning in music education, as Vygotsky's ZPD states. The interviews and observations made at the three schools, Asamankese SHS, Atweaman SHS and Ghana

SHS revealed that music performance lessons have great impact on the cognitive, emotional and social development of the students.

4.2.5 Influence on the Cognitive Development of Students

Learning musical instruments is highly a cognitive skill, and engages the mind a lot. Sloboda (2011) elaborates extensively about this issue. The music practical lessons in the SHS is a strong avenue for students to learn musical instruments, and to improve their musicality through the skills they gain through these practical lessons. Piaget's theory of Cognitive development captures various stages in an individual's life, from early childhood to adulthood – the sensory motor stage, the pre-operational stage, the concrete operational stage, and the formal operational stage. Considering the age range of the SHS students, they do not fall within the first three stages Piaget proposed. They rather fall within the last stage, which is the formal operational stage, where individuals have the ability to think abstractly, combine and classify items in a more sophisticated way. Sloboda (2011) also researched about the developmental psychology of individuals. According to him, enculturation always precedes training. Enculturation is when individuals, more specifically, children are put in a musical environment, and unconsciously or subconsciously learn from that environment, without a deliberate effort to learn. Training is when there is a deliberate effort to learn. Under this stage there is a more experienced person, who guides a less experienced person. This buttresses the ZPD as it encourages peer collaboration, in relation to social environment. Lessons taken under training requires that the instructor consider the cognitive capability of the student during instructions. In this context (music practical lesson), and considering the age range of SHS students, the students could be engaged in abstract

concepts, and apply during learning process, since the students' age range suggests that ability of the cognitive.

When students engage in sight-reading, they take a challenge to think quickly to know what note to play next, consider all that is needed to sight-read. The staff, clef, key, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, articulations, tempo markings, and more. This highly involves cognitive skills. Locker (2016) postulates that the brain learns to hear and interpret sounds unique to the experience of playing (performing) music, that is not trained by just listening. This statement brings into the limelight, how advantageous the performance, and hence, playing of musical instruments is essential to the cognitive development of the individual. The performance of music demands more attention and concentration, as compared to listening. As I observed the students at the practical lessons, I discovered that they were more focused and attentive and careful not to miss any note. My interview with one of the students revealed that the learning of the musical instrument (*atenteben* in his case) has helped him a lot. He submitted that;

Since I began learning this instrument, I have somehow seen changes in the way I understand concepts in other subject areas, especially in Mathematics.

I struggle less to understand, as compared to how I was before. (R.9)

Other students also attested to the same submission. This confirms what Stoklosa (2016) asserts. She states that playing musical instrument involves the interconnectedness between the motor, sensory, auditory visual and emotional components of the central and peripheral nervous system systems. This is to say that during the playing of a musical instrument, almost all the components of the nervous system are engaged. Reading of music engages

the eyes (visual), what is played is heard (auditory), and physiological acts are engaged too. All these are navigated by the brain. Doing this often makes the brain active and more effective. Stoklosa terms this engagement as “brain mental workout”. She adds that it involves artistic and aesthetic aspects of learning that is a unique characteristic of playing a musical instrument, that an individual cannot stimulate by any other activity, even athletics. This shows how great the learning of musical instruments is in the cognitive development of an individual.

One respondent also added that playing musical instruments, as part of partaking in the music practical lessons has helped her memory. She revealed that she can remember things faster than before. She had not thought about that, but when I questioned further, she confirmed that the change began when she was introduced to the *atenteben*. Collins (2014) states that the combination of linguistics and mathematical precision in the left hemisphere of the brain is trained to work in coordination with the creative and novel functions of the right hemisphere. In engaging in the learning of musical instruments the brain is trained to coordinate in a higher dimension. While the brain is engaged to help produce musical sounds, the sounds naturally register in the mind, and this strengthens the memory’s capacity of the individual. Collins (2014) added that it increases the activities in brain, allowing them messages to get across the brain faster and through more diverse routes, hence the musician’s ability to solve problems more effectively.

4.4.6 Emotional and Social Development of Students

Individual development is crucial for a healthy life, particularly in early childhood through to adolescence. The golden age of early childhood is crucial for developing self-potential, with emotional and social development playing a significant role. Social-emotional development is essential for children and teenagers to form relationships, develop social skills, and adapt to adults and peers, indirectly enhancing their emotional abilities. Music fascinates individuals with its means of expression which evoke in them adequate movement responses accompanied by emotional experiences (Wirahandayani et al., 2023). An emotional response to music then evokes changes in preschoolers' structural, dynamic, and character spheres of their nascent personality. They also stimulate activity in children, encourage their attention, and creative skills affect their rational processes, and can even have psychotherapeutic effects (Kołodziejewski & Králová, 2016).

Music stimulates all aspects of child development and prepares children for school. This includes socio-emotional, motor language, and other aspects. Musical performances especially ensemble-based performances provide a good approach for students to explore notions of fear and safety, right and wrong, and cause and effect. Collaborative performances involve two or more students playing individual roles towards one goal requires the effort to explore and manage feelings and behaviours per the demands of a situation helps build their emotional development. The music practical lessons in the SHS creates an avenue for students to engage with their peers during ensemble rehearsals and also, performances. Students play individual roles, but geared towards a group's (ensemble) goal. During these sessions, students are to collaborate with their peers in the ensemble to bring out the expected outcome. The school holistically represents the first context of

socialisation immediately after the household. In school, students observe, identify, learn, and replicate social and emotional skills, social norms, and behaviour codes. At the same time, both emotions and relationships play an important role in their learning process (Villaseñor, 2017). Music has a dramatic impact on an individual's social and emotional development, increasing social skills and empathy while also fostering emotional expression and bonding.

In my observations, I gathered that the social interactions between students was very encouraging, as students learn together, teach each other at points in time, and perform together too. Through this, the confidence of those of less courage is enhanced. Students who may be not able to perform alone build their confidence from the collaborative performances. One teacher emphasised that some students who were very reserved from the beginning are now able to “come out” after collaborative performances began. This verified the statement that the confidence level of students is enhanced through collaborative performances. Musical activities, whether singing, dancing, or playing an instrument, provide learners with a secure and inclusive environment in which to explore their emotions, interact with others, and develop critical skills for navigating the world around them. Students can learn to trust their abilities and develop a distinct sense of self by participating in musical activities. They will also be discovering and learning about their physical and mental talents as they try various musical styles and genres. Though music practical lessons were basically geared towards an individual achievement, it more often involved a group of students, since groups of students were all undertaking a specific musical instrument as their principal.

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development offers valuable insights into the role of social interaction and language in cognitive development. The recognition and leveraging the ZPD in educational settings will enable educators support students' learning, foster collaboration, and facilitate intellectual growth. The findings reflect Vygotsky's theory in that students' interactions during lessons fostered collaborations, that helped them to build confidence. More skilled peers provided support and guidance to those in their ZPD, facilitating learning through social interaction. Recognising the cultural and social aspects of music is essential in leveraging the ZPD in music education.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This chapter presents the summary of the key findings of the research, conclusions and recommendations. The study sought to find out how music practical lessons are taught in the Senior High Schools in the Eastern region of Ghana, the facilities available in the schools, and examine how the music practical lessons affect the cognitive, social and emotional development of the students.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

Findings revealed how practical lessons are taught in the Senior High Schools in the Eastern region of Ghana using themes; instrumental area taught and their availability, teaching and learning activities, students' performance in formative assessment, Teachers' music education background, and proficiency students' cognitive, emotional and social behaviour at lessons, effects of lessons on the cognitive, emotional and social development of students

The findings revealed that students' interest in practical lessons varied based on their instrument, with males showing less interest, while females were more enthusiastic. Voice students, particularly those playing *atenteben*, were passionate about their lessons and often played during breaks and free periods. Some students took practical lessons for fun without seriousness. Findings under learning environment revealed that classrooms were the primary learning environment for practical lessons, including singing and *atenteben*, in all schools observed, where students gathered for group singing and teaching.

It was discovered that students are taught to sight-read music, but find it a bit challenging. Teachers sometimes used sight-reading to teach students their pieces, and sometimes sang solfege for the students to imitate, which is much more traditional. These activities were done rote, with some students doing warm-up exercises before performing. However, it appeared that students thrived well in tests and examinations, since it was formative.

Teachers' Proficiency results revealed that teachers successfully taught practical lessons using rote methods, singing songs, and playing *atenteben*. Findings also revealed that all tertiary level music students have a bachelor's degree in music education. However, some teachers have limited knowledge about certain instruments, making teaching them challenging. This lack of a resource person makes requests for additional instruments unfulfilled. Some teachers wish to have other colleagues with other instruments, but are not given the go-ahead.

The findings also revealed the availability of facilities that will create an appropriate environment for the music practical lessons. Considering the facilities available, the findings revealed that none of the schools had a specific facility allocated for music practical lessons, lavished with musical instruments and other needed equipment to support the lessons. Rehearsal and performance space, musical instruments, and their store rooms were not found. Though there were relatively appreciable quantity of some musical instruments in all the schools, its sufficiency was not convincing. The musical instruments prescribed in the syllabus were not all available. They had at least three, of which the *atenteben* and voice were "constant variables." Although two schools had three trumpets, two were not functioning properly. All selected schools had at least one keyboard, although its purpose was to serve as an accompaniment for other instruments. One of the schools had a brass

band, capturing almost all brass instruments: four trumpets, two trombones, and one euphonium. There were some traditional musical instruments, but they were not learnt and assessed as an academic requirement, only an extra-curricular activity.

Respondents were also engaged and asked about how the music practical lessons have influenced their cognitive and socio-emotional. The findings revealed that the playing of musical instruments has helped enhance their learning and social interactions. Their memory work has improved, and they can grasp concepts faster since they started playing musical instruments. Also, from observation, it was noticed that the lessons involve a lot of engagement, which contributed positively to their socio-emotional development. Interacting with each other at rehearsals and participating in ensembles also helped them build confidence.

5.2 Conclusions

Firstly, Music practical is crucial for students' success in music education, as it allows them to apply theoretical knowledge to real-life situations. It is therefore important to channel more attention to the playing of musical instruments as part of music performance. Music teachers' backgrounds are crucial for effective teaching and inspiring students. Most participants grew up with strong musical experiences, and their passions influenced their pursuit of music education. Enculturation and training play a significant role in music education, providing individuals with a strong background through a musical learning environment. However, a large percentage of teachers lack proficiency in any musical instrument, and some also lack expertise in certain areas. Music education should focus on broader aspects like composition, improvisation, listening skills, and contextual

understanding. Teachers should be well-trained in music theory, history, pedagogy, and instructional techniques. The teacher-student ratio is not appropriate in this regard. This reduces the efficiency of the class. Students who can sight-read and learn become better as far as musicianship is concerned when compared to those who struggle to sight-read and learn by rote.

The facilities in the learning environment, including classrooms, space for rehearsals and performance, and availability of musical instruments, play a significant role in influencing students' progress. None of the schools has dedicated labs for music practical lessons. The absence of such facilities limits students' opportunities to engage in essential practical experiences, such as experimenting with different instruments, recording, or group performance rehearsals. This can hinder the development of key musical skills and reduce the overall quality of music education.

Musical instruments listed in the syllabus are not enough and made available in Senior High Schools in the Eastern Region of Ghana. This lack of access hinders students' ability and interest in exploring the musical instruments of their choice.

This shortcoming runs a parallel advantage, as music teachers improvise when resources are unavailable, enhancing creativity and facilitating musical exploration. They are often required to adapt creatively to limitations in resources, and through their training, they develop the ability to improvise effectively in such situations. This adaptability not only enables continued instruction despite constraints but also fosters a more dynamic and inventive learning environment. Teachers through these innovations encourage students to think outside the box and engage more deeply with musical concepts. Improvisation in

teaching can lead to richer musical exploration and can inspire students to experiment with their creativity.

Lastly, the playing of musical instruments enhances the cognitive and socio-emotional development of students. On a cognitive level, playing an instrument engages multiple areas of the brain simultaneously, strengthening skills such as memory, attention, problem-solving, and spatial-temporal reasoning. It also enhances auditory processing and fine motor coordination, which are beneficial not only in music but in academic subjects like mathematics and language. Beyond intellectual growth, musical practice also supports socio-emotional development. It encourages self-expression, builds self-discipline, and boosts self-esteem as students achieve personal goals and overcome challenges. Participating in ensembles or group performances fosters collaboration, empathy, and communication skills, as students learn to listen to others, contribute to a shared outcome, and respect different perspectives. These involvements help shape well-rounded individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also enhance emotional intelligence and good social skills. The findings confirm this. Students' engagement with each other during lessons, playing and performing together in ensembles, among others, creates an avenue for more interactions and also builds confidence in them. The process of learning the pieces to perform and repetitions engages the mind a lot, and helps the mind to become sharper.

5.3 Recommendations

Firstly, teacher training seminars and quarterly workshops must be organised by the Ghana Education Service (GES), to help in continuous professional development, which is essential for teachers to stay updated with current trends and teaching strategies. Teachers play an

important role in teaching and learning, generating exciting surroundings and encouraging critical thinking. The GES should organise seminars, workshops, and collaborations with experienced educators to help teachers improve their pedagogical abilities and modern teaching approaches. Also, mentorship programmes at senior high schools should be introduced to the Eastern Region SHS by the Regional Director of education through the Member of Parliament to help teachers develop, guide mentees, and progress professionally. Investing in resources, technology, and community participation promotes creativity, cultural awareness, and student development.

Secondly, with regard to the facilities availability, I recommend that the ministry of Education through the GES should provide more musical facilities in Atweaman, Asamankese, and Ghana Senior High Schools, in the Easter Region, in order to boost motivation and enjoyment to promote active learning and performance. The study suggests a smaller teacher-student ratio for better music learning outcomes. The Ghana Education Service should employ more music teachers in Senior High Schools to regulate the teacher-student ratio to enhance better teaching-learning activities.

Finally, the GES should make it mandatory for all students to learn musical instruments in Atweaman, Asamankese, and Ghana Senior High Schools, and all SHS in Ghana. Considering the cognitive and socio-emotional benefits associated with learning to play an instrument, this initiative has the potential to enrich the holistic development of students across the country. Playing and learning musical instruments promote critical thinking, memory retention, and fine motor skills, while also nurturing emotional intelligence, self-discipline, and social cohesion—traits that are essential for personal growth and national development, like sports, which cut across the entire educational levels in the country. When

similar support is extended to music education through policy, funding, and infrastructure, encouraging musical instrument learning would help preserve Ghana's rich musical heritage while preparing students for a variety of academic and career opportunities.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This study, focusing on its objectives, may have only explored its scope, leaving other possible areas with great potential. Hence, future research should explore other areas in music practical lessons, considering how they have fulfilled the requirements of the curriculum, how performance anxiety affects students' performance in the SHSs, and also investigate the same topic in other regions in Ghana.

REFERENCES

- Abril, C. R., & Gault, B. M. (2008). The state of music in secondary schools: The principal's perspective. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 56(1), 68-81.
- Acquah, E. O., & Kwofie, F. D. (2021). The challenges of preparing students for music practical performance tests at the Senior High Schools in the Central Region of Ghana. *International Journal of Education Humanities and Social Science*, 4(2), 133–144. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361880374>
- Addaquay, A. P. (2024). Re-thinking inclusivity in music learning: The implications of multiple Ghanaian languages in Western-leaning music theory. *African Musicology Online*, 13(2), 1-11. Retrieved from <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/amo/article/view/288067>
- Adjei-Mensah, I., & Ghana Education Service. (2001). *Teaching education studies for basic school teachers*. Ghana Education Service.
- Adjepong, B., & Obeng, P. (2018). Fifty-nine years of formal music education in Ghanaian primary schools: a chronology. *British Journal of Education*, 6(12), 11-15.
- Adu-Gyamfi, S., Donkoh, W. J., & Addo, A. A. (2016). Educational reforms in Ghana: Past and present. *Journal of Education and Human development*, 5(3), 158-172.
- Adu-Gyamfi, Y. (2014). Music education in Ghanaian schools: Challenges and prospects. *Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 3(1), 1-12.
- Agbenyo, S. (2022). The effect of mental rehearsal and imagery on music performance anxiety among junior high school students. *Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Studies*, 2(1), 1-8.
- Agordoh, Akorli, A. (1994). *Studies in African music*. Age Publication.
- Amabile, T. M., Barsade, S. G., Mueller, J. S., & Staw, B. M. (2005). Affect and creativity at work. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 50(3), 367-403.
- Ampeh, G. K. (2011). *Developing effective strategies for teaching creative arts in the lower Primary Schools: a case study in Agona Swedru District Administration 'B'School* [Doctoral dissertation, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology].
- Amuah, I. R., & Adum-Attah, K. (2016). *Music and dance for basic school teachers*. College of Distance Education, University of Cape Coast.
- Amuah, I.R., Adum-Attah, K. and Arthur, K.K. (2011). *Music and Dance for Colleges of Education: Principles and Practice*. Kramad Publication Ltd.

- Amuah, J. A., Acquah, E. O., & Dzansi-McPalm, M. P. (2017). Assessment of music teachers on the poor performance of West African Examinations Council (WASSCE) music practical test. *African Musicology Online*, 7(1), 67–87. Retrieved from <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/amo/article/view/236355>
- Bagci, H., & Can, A. (2016). Study habits of music students: A study on the students of music education department in Kocaeli University. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 232, 145–150. doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.10.037
- Baiden, S.O. & Amofa, D. (2008). *Basic training and community practices for the teacher*. Ghana Ministry of Education, Science and Sports.
- Barrett, M. S. (2015). *Teaching African and African American music through performance*. Oxford University Press.
- Barry, A. (2019). *The Dalcroze Method: a Correlation of Experiential Music Education to Enhance Student Success in the General Music Classroom*. [Doctoral dissertation, Boston University].
- Bassey, M. (1999). *Case Study Research in Educational Settings*. Open University Press.
- Blankson, G. (2022). *Program Evaluation of Music Teacher Education in Ghana: Implications for Practice, Policy, and Research*. [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Mississippi.]
- Blasco-Magraner, J. S., Bernabe-Valero, G., Marín-Liébana, P., & Moret-Tatay, C. (2021). Effects of the Educational Use of Music on 3- to 12-Year-Old Children's Emotional Development: A Systematic Review. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(7), 3668. doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18073668
- Boafo, A. R. (2010). *Creative Arts in crisis: Teaching and learning of creative arts in selected Public Primary Schools in Kumasi Metropolis*. [Doctoral dissertation, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.]
- Borgman, C. L. (2015). *Big data, little data, no data: Scholarship in the networked world*. The MIT Press.
- Brewu, J. K., & Adjepong, B. (2020). Alternative approach to teaching music in the primary school. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 7(2). doi.org/10.46827/ejes.v7i2.2982
- Britton, B. K., & Tesser, A. (1991). Effects of time-management practices on college grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 83(3), 405–410. doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.83.3.405
- Brown, A. L. (1980). Metacognitive development and reading. In R. J. Spiro, B. C. Bruce, & W. F. Brewer (Eds.), *Theoretical issues in reading comprehension* (pp. 453-481). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Bussu, A., & Mangiarulo, M. (2024). Playing music together: Exploring the impact of a classical music ensemble on adolescent's life skills self-perception. *PloS one*, 19(7), e0306326. doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0306326
- Campayo-Muñoz, E. Á., & Cabedo-Mas, A. (2017). The role of emotional skills in music education. *British Journal of Music Education*, 34(3), 243–258. doi.org/10.1017/S0265051717000067
- Campbell, P. S. (2004). *Teaching music globally: Experiencing music, expressing culture*. Oxford University Press.
- Campbell, P. S., & Diamond, B. (2008). *Exploring African music: A complete guide to learning to play African music styles* (2nd ed). ProMusic Press.
- Carnovalini, F., Rodà, A., & Caneva, P. (2022). A musical serious game for social interaction through augmented rhythmic improvisation. *arXiv*. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2208.14748>
- Choksy, L. (1981). Exploring the Kodály Method. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 29(1), 3-11.
- Choksy, L., Abramson, R. M., Gillespie, A. E., Woods, D., & York, F. (2001). *Teaching Music in the Twenty-First Century* (2nd ed.). Prentice Hall.
- Cohen, A. (2014). The influence of musical activities on mood and affect in upper elementary school children. Update: *Applications of Research in Music Education*, 32(1), 14-21.
- Collins, A. (2014). *How playing an instrument benefits your brain*. TedEd. Retrieved from <http://ed.ted.com>
- Collins, J. (2009). Music Education in Ghana. *Journal of African Musicology*, 25(2), 45-62.
- Curriculum Research and Development Division. (2010). *Music teaching syllabus for senior high schools*. Ministry of Education.
- Creech, A., Hallam, S., & Varvarigou, M. (2018). Physical and perceived affordances of the music classroom environment: A mixed-methods investigation. *Psychology of Music*, 46(6), 811-825.
- Crowe, S., Cresswell, K., Robertson, A., Huby, G., Avery, A., & Sheikh, A. (2011). The case study approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 11, 100. doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-11-100
- Davidson, J. W., & Scripp, L. (2011). The musician as (in)effective communicator. *Musicae Scientiae*, 15(1), 101-124.
- DeNora, T. (2013). *Music as a Technology of the Self*. Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

- Dingle, G. A., Sharman, L. S., Bauer, Z., Beckman, E., Broughton, M., Bunzli, E., Davidson, R., Draper, G., Fairley, S., Farrell, C., Flynn, L. M., Gomersall, S., Hong, M., Larwood, J., Lee, C., Lee, J., Nitschinsk, L., Peluso, N., Reedman, S. E., Vidas, D., Wright, O. R. L. (2021). How Do Music Activities Affect Health and Well-Being? A Scoping Review of Studies Examining Psychosocial Mechanisms. *Frontiers in psychology*, 12, 713818. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.713818>
- Djokoto, R. N. (2015). The state of Ghanaian music education: Challenges and the way forward. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(16), 147-151.
- Đurđanović, M. M. (2015). The use of teaching aids and their importance for students' music education. *International Journal of Cognitive Research in Science, Engineering and Education*, 3 (2), 33-40.
- Durrant, C., Bowman, W., & Cacciaglia, M. (2017). Reciprocal interaction in ensemble rehearsal. *Psychology of Music*, 45(5), 728-743.
- Eddison, M. F. (2020). In Search for Comprehensive Philosophy of Music Education in Ghana. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 11(9), 207-213 doi.org/10.7176/JEP/11-9-21,
- Elger, D. (2012). *Theory of performance*. Corwin Press.
- Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4.
- Flolu, E. J. (1994). *Re-tuning music education in Ghana: a study of cultural influences and musical development, and of the dilemma confronting Ghanaian school music teachers* [Doctoral dissertation, University of York].
- Flolu, J. & Amuah, I. R. (2003). *An introduction to music education in Ghana for Universities and Colleges*. Black Mask Limited.
- Frega, A. L. (2012). Linking Erik Erikson's theory of the life cycle with Emile Jaques-Dalcroze's concept of music and movement education: A lifespan approach to Dalcroze Education. *Research in Dance Education*, 13(1), 67-79.
- Gill, E. A. (2016). Exploring the sound playground: Young children's engagement, creativity, and learning with improvised musical instruments. *Music Education Research*, 18(2), 127-144.
- Grant, E. (2018). The long-term effects of music festival participation on student confidence. *Journal of Music Education Research*, 25(2), 143-158.
- Gredler, M. E. (2012). Understanding Vygotsky for the classroom: Is it too late? *Educational Psychology Review* 24(1), 113-131. doi.org/10.1007/s10648-012-9199-2

- Hall, S. (2018). *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*. Routledge.
- Hallam, S. (2012). The power of music: Its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people. *International Journal of Music Education*, 30(3), 155-170.
- Hallam, S. (2017). The power of music: Its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people. *International Journal of Music Education*, 35(3), 274-293.
- Hallam, S., & Harrison, C. (2018). Instrumental learning motivations of children and adults: Individual and group differences. *Psychology of Music*, 46(1), 97-113.
- Hallam, S., Katsarou, G., & Mosley, P. (2002). The effects of age, experience and level of playing on musical performance. *British Journal of Music Education*, 19(2), 161-183.
- Hanna-Pladdy, B. (2015). The role of music in education. In R. J. Colwell & P. R. Webster (Eds.), *MENC handbook of research on music learning* (pp. 33-51). Oxford University Press.
- Heyworth, J. (2013). Developing social skills through music: The impact of general classroom music in an Australian lower socio-economic area primary school. *Childhood Education*, 89(4), 234-242. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00094056.2013.815553>
- Hickey, M. (2012). *Music outside the lines: Ideas for composing in K-12 music classrooms*. Oxford University Press.
- Hickey, M. (2012). Why Teach Music Theory? *Music Educators Journal*, 99 (4), 35-39.
- Hickok, R. (1993). *Exploring Music* (5th Ed). Brown and Benchmark.
- Higgins, L. (2019). *Community Music: In Theory and in Practice*. Oxford University Press.
- Houlahan, M., & Tacka, P. (2011). *Kodály Today: A Cognitive Approach to Music Education*. Oxford University Press.
- Hunziker, S., & Blankenagel, M. (2024). Multiple case research design. In *Research Design in Business and Management: A Practical Guide for Students and Researchers*. (pp. 171-186). Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Igiri, E. C. & Effingo, E.O. (2015). Impact of Instructional Materials in Teaching and Learning. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, 62, 27-33 <http://doi.org/10.18052/www.scrippress.com/ILSHS.62.27>
- Isbell, D. S. (2008). Musicians and teachers: The socialization and occupational identity of preservice music teachers. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 56(2), 162-178.

- Isbell, T. and Raines, C. S. (2003). *Creativity and the Arts with Young Children*. Delmar Learning.
- Jaques-Dalcroze, E. (1921). *Rhythm, music and education*. Kegan Paul
- Jones, L., & Su, M. (2016). Building confidence through music: The impact of music festivals on student self-esteem. *Music Education Journal*, 42(4), 321-335.
- Jorquera, J. J. (2008). The ‘Dalcroze phenomenon’ and its impact on the transmission of music in Chile. *International Journal of Music Education*, 26(3), 227-237.
- Kalliny, M., & Gentry, J.W. (2017). *Global Perspectives on Advertising Self-Regulation: Principles and Practices in Thirty-Eight Countries*. Taylor & Francis.
- Kataoka, S. (1989). The Philosophy and Practice of the Suzuki Method. *American String Teacher*, 39(2), 26-30.
- Kendall, J. D. (1995). *The Suzuki violin method in American music education: What the American music teacher should know about Shinichi Suzuki* (Rev. ed.). Alfred Music.
- Kietzman, G. (2007). The Orff approach to music education. In L. Bresler (Ed.), *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education* (pp. 773-786). Springer.
- Kluger, J. (2008). *Simplexity: Why simple things become complex (and how complex things can be made simple)*. Hyperion.
- Kodály, Z. (1974). *The Kodály Method*. Boosey & Hawkes.
- Kovács, O. (2015). *The Dalcroze Method in Today’s Music Education*. Orpheus Instituutvzw.
- Kozulin, A. (2003). *Psychological tools: A sociocultural approach to education*. Harvard University Press.
- Kreitman, N. (2015). Suzuki Method: Implementing and Adapting the Approach in Different Cultural Contexts. *International Journal of Music Education*, 33(2), 187-202.
- Kuranchie, A (2016). *Research Made Easy*. Bookwarm Publications.
- Kwakofi, E. K. (2017). The impact of Western music on Ghanaian music culture. *Journal of Music and Dance*, 4(1), 1-10.
- Kwami, R. M. (1998). Music education in Ghana: A look at the past and a glance at the future. *International Journal of Music Education*, 32, 10–14. doi.org/10.1177/025576149803200104
- Kwasi, A. (2015). Historical Perspectives on Music Education in Ghana. *International Journal of Music Education*, 9(3), 177-192.

- Lafser, C. (2020). *Learning to play a musical instrument affects student behavioral health* [Master's thesis, Liberty University]. Liberty University Digital Commons. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/masters/616>
- Lehmann, A. C., & Davidson, J. W. (2018). Singing together: Investigating the influence of rehearsal contexts on ensemble cohesion. *Frontiers in psychology, 9*, 2263. doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02263
- Locker, M. (2016). *How music can change your brain*. TIME. Retrieved from <http://time.com>
- Macan, T. H., Shahani, C., Dipboye, R. L., & Phillips, A. P. (1990). College students' time management: Correlations with academic performance and stress. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 82*(4), 760–768. doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.82.4.760
- Manford, R. (1983). *The status of music teacher education in Ghana with recommendations for improvement*. The Ohio State University.
- Mawang, L. L., Kigen, E. M., & Mutweleli, S. M. (2019). The relationship between musical self-concept and musical creativity among secondary school music students. *International Journal of Music Education, 37*(1), 78-90.
- McLeod, S. A. (2014). *The interview research method*. Simply Psychology. Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/interviews.html>
- McPherson, G. E., & McCormick, J. (2006). Self-efficacy and music performance. *Psychology of Music, 34*(3), 322-336.
- McPherson, G. E., Davidson, J. W., & Faulkner, R. (2012). *Music in our lives: Rethinking musical ability, development and identity*. Oxford University Press.
- McPherson, G. E., Osborne, M. S., & Miksza, P. (2015). The impact of music festival participation on young amateur musicians' motivation, self-concept, and expectations for the future. *Music Education Research, 17*(3), 269-288.
- Mensah, I. K., & Acquah, E. O. (2021). Rejection of Indigenous Music? Reflections of Teaching and Learning of Music and Dance in Tamale International School. *African Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Research, 4*(2), 74-86.
- Mereku, C. W. K & Ohene-Okantah, M. (2010). *Music and dance for the basic school teacher*. Institute for education development and extension, University of Education, Winneba.
- Merriam, S. B. (2000). *Qualitative research and case study application in education*. (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

- Miksza, P. (2011). An examination of the relationship between teaching practices and students' self-concepts in instrumental music. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 59(2), 146-161.
- Miksza, P. (2011). Music festival participation and socioemotional prosociality: A study of adolescent volunteers. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 59(2), 158-175.
- Ministry of Education-Ghana. (2007). *Curriculum for Basic Schools*. Ministry of Education-Ghana
- Monsalve, A. O. (2016). The State of Teacher Education in Region V: Policy Implications. In *proceedings of the International Joint Seminar on the Contribution of Education Institution to ASEAN Economic Community* (pp. 27-28). Johor Bahru, Malaysia.
- Murray, M. (2018). Orff Schulwerk: An integrated foundation for music education. *Music Educators Journal*, 105(4), 41-47.
- Neumann, C. (2006). The Kodaly method and learning theories. *The Canadian Music Educator*, 47 (4), 48.
- Nikolić, L., & Ružkan, S. (2022). Impact of music education on the social and emotional development of the child. *Diacovensia: Teološki Prilozi*, 30(1), 129–149. doi.org/10.31823/d.30.1.7
- Nketia, J. H. K. (2012). Development of Music Education in Ghana. *Music Education Research*, 15(4), 321-335.
- Oehrle, E. (1990). The role of music and dance in African education. *British Journal of Music Education*, 7(1), 95–103. doi.org/10.1017/S0265051700007734
- Otchere, E. D. (2015). Music teaching and process of enculturation: A cultural dilemma. *British Journal of Music Education*, 32(3), 291-297.
- Oxford University Press. (2012). Music technology. In *Oxford Dictionary of Music* (6th ed., p.567).
- Oxford University Press. (2012). Music theory and composition. In *Oxford Dictionary of Music* (6th ed., p.567).
- Papageorgi, I., Creech, A., & Welch, G. F. (2013). Perceived performance anxiety in advanced musicians specializing in different musical genres. *Psychology of Music*, 41(1), 18–41. doi.org/10.1177/0305735611408995
- Payne, D. G. (2012). Orff Schulwerk at the keyboard: A creative approach to music education. *Music Educators Journal*, 99(3), 71-75.
- Petrie, J. L. (2015). *Music and Dance Education in Senior High Schools in Ghana: A Multiple Case Study*. Ohio University.

- Reece, I. and Walker S. (1994). *Teaching training and learning: A Practical Guide* (2nd Ed). Business Education Publishing Ltd.
- Reimer, B. (2015). *A Philosophy of Music Education: Advancing the Vision* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Reitman, L. & Kimura, M. (2019). Motor Skill Development in Suzuki Violin Students: A Longitudinal Study. *Psychology of Music*, 47(5), 635-649.
- Ritchie, L. D. (2020). Lifelong learning in music education. *Music Education Research*, 22(3), 311-325.
- Rose, D. C., Heaton, P., & Bartoli, A. J. (2015). Changes in the wellbeing of children starting to learn to play musical instruments. *Assessment & Development Matters*, 7(1), 26-30.
- Rose, D., Jones Bartoli, A., & Heaton, P. (2019). Measuring the impact of musical learning on cognitive, behavioural and socio-emotional wellbeing development in children. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89(4), 234-242. doi.org/10.1080/00094056.2013.815553
- Sabo, D. (2005). The Orff Schulwerk approach: Curriculum development for music education. *General Music Today*, 19(2), 9-13.
- Schellenberg, E. G. (2011). Music lessons, emotional intelligence, and IQ. *Music Perception: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 29(2), 185-194.
- Schellenberg, E. G., Corrigall, K. A., Dys, S. P., & Malti, T. (2015). Group music training and children's prosocial skills. *PLOS ONE*, 10(10), e0141449. doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0141449PMC
- Schugurensky, D. (2020). The forms of informal learning: Towards a conceptualization of the field. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2020(165), 15-25. doi.org/10.1002/ace.20393
- Sematwa, M. W. (2010). Piaget's Theory of Intellectual Development and its Implication for Instructional Management at Pre-Secondary School Level. *Educational Research and Reviews* 5(7), 366-371.
- Shipman D. (2016). A Prescription for Music Lessons. *Federal practitioner: for the health care professionals of the VA, DoD, and PHS*, 33(2), 9-12.
- Shipman, D. (2018, April 24). *A prescription for music lessons*. MDedge. Retrieved from: <https://community.the-hospitalist.org/content/prescription-music-lessons>
- Sloboda, J. A. (2011). *The musical mind: The cognitive psychology of music* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198521280.001.0001

- Smith, A., & Johnson, B. (2017). The Impact of Music Festivals on Student Learning. *Journal of Music Education*, 42(3), 325-341.
- Smith, B. (2016). Narrative analysis. *Analysing qualitative data in psychology*, 2, 202-221.
- Stoklosa, A. R. (2016). Instruments of knowledge: Music and the brain. *The Review: A Journal of Undergraduate Student Research*, 17, Article 12. <https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/ur/vol17/iss1/12>
- Suzuki, S. & Sugimoto, W. (1978). *Nurtured by love: The Classic Approach to Talent Education*. Warner Bros.
- Swain, J. O. (2009). Emile Jaques-Dalcroze and his method of education through eurhythmics: A philosophical perspective. *British Journal of Music Education*, 26(2), 207-220.
- Swets, M. (2019). Music education in Ghana: Bringing traditional African music and instruments into the classroom. *Music Educators Journal*, 106(3), 20-25.
- Tamakloe, E. K., Atta, E. T., & Amedahe, F. K. (2005). *Principles and methods of teaching*. Ghana Universities Press.
- Tawia, S. A., Awortwe, I., & Oppong, S. (2017). Early childhood education teachers' use of teaching learning resources in the implementation of play-based activities within the Hemang Lower Denkyira District of Ghana. *Research Journal of Education*, 4(20), 28–34. Retrieved from <https://www.academia.edu/123916068>
- Tharp, R. G., & Gallimore, R. (1991). *Rousing minds to life: Teaching, learning, and schooling in social context*. Cambridge University Press.
- Torbert, B. (2008). Orff Schulwerk: A model for music education in the twenty-first century. *Music Educators Journal*, 95(4), 33-38.
- Trudeau, D., Dunbar-Hall, P., & Dillon, J. (2018). *World music pedagogy: Secondary school teaching and learning*. Routledge.
- Varvarigou, M. (2017). Nurturing the twenty-first century musician through playing by ear from recordings in one-to-one and small group instrumental lessons. In E. Lopes (Ed.), *Research themes for the learning of musical instruments* (pp. 171–196). Editora Kelps
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
- Welch, G. F., Wade, L. A., Bader, A. C., & Karageorghis, C. I. (2004). The effects of teaching group size on the development of instrumental skills in young beginners. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 22(1), 37-57.

- West African Examinations Council. (2020). *Chief examiner's report, music performance test*. <https://waecgh.org/chiefexaminer%E2%80%99sreport>
- West African Examinations Council. (2021). *Chief examiner's report, music performance test*. <https://waecgh.org/chiefexaminer%E2%80%99sreport>
- West African Examinations Council. (2022). *Chief examiner's report, music performance test*. <https://waecgh.org/chiefexaminer%E2%80%99sreport>
- Wiggins, T. (2011). *Teaching for musical understanding*. Oxford University Press.
- Williamon, A. (2004). *Intention and interpretation in performance*. In *Musical Excellence: Strategies and Techniques to Enhance Performance* (pp. 1-22). Oxford University Press.
- Williamon, A. (2004). *Musical excellence: Strategies and techniques to enhance performance*. Oxford University Press.
- Wood, D., Bruner, J. S., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 17(2), 89-100.
- Woodyard, G. M. (2017). *Just Jazz: A Plan for Incorporating Jazz, Folk, and American Music into Public School Music Education* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Alabama].
- Zelenkovska Leshkova, S., & Islam, A. (2014). Correlation between the acquired knowledge and practical applications in the class teaching on the subject of music education. *Journal of Education, Psychology and Social Sciences*, 5(3), 437.
- Zhang, Q., Park, A., & Suh, K.-H. (2024). Relationship between Playing Musical Instruments and Subjective Well-Being: Enjoyment of Playing Instruments Scale. *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(9), 744. doi.org/10.3390/bs14090744
- Zhao, W., Park, A., Zhang, Q., & Suh, K. H. (2025, January 1). Predictors for enjoyment of playing musical instruments: Focused on psychological factors: Personality and psychological trait, and enjoyment of playing musical instruments [Preprint]. *ScienceOpen Preprints*. doi.org/10.14293/PR2199.001380.v1

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. How lessons are taught.
 - a) What is your educational background in music?
 - b) For how long have you been teaching?
 - c) How do you handle the music practical lessons?
 - d) How many instrumental areas do you handle?
 - e) How do you manage the number of students at your disposal?
 - f) Do you have any requests to make to enhance teaching and learning?

2. Facilities available
 - a) What facilities are available for the practical lessons?
 - b) How do you manage them?
 - c) How are they kept and maintained if there are?
 - d) How do you personally want it to be?

3. Cognitive and Socio-emotional
 - a) For how long have you been playing this instrument? OR For how long have you been singing (learning songs given for educational purposes)?
 - b) How does it affect you cognitively? Has it had any impact on your studies? Has it made you a poor learner, or a better one?
 - c) How has the playing of the instruments influenced your confidence? Were you a shy person? How about now?
 - d) How is playing in an ensemble like?
 - e) Do you enjoy it?

APPENDIX B

OBSERVATION CHECK LIST

1. Facilities available for the music practical lessons
 - a) Music laboratories
 - b) Musical instruments available
 - c) Store rooms for musical instruments

2. How lessons are taught
 - a) Teachers' expertise
 - b) Students' interest
 - c) Sight-reading

3. Socio-emotional behaviour of students
 - a) How students relate with each other at ensemble performances
 - b) How performing together enhances the learning process of students