

RECRUITMENT AND MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NJ
4-12 BAND PROGRAMS

A Thesis
Submitted to
the Temple University Graduate Board

in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for the Degree
MASTER OF MUSIC

by
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December 2020

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate recruitment strategies currently in place by band teachers for their band programs and their effects on minority student participation in 4-12th grade public school band programs of Middlesex County. Participants include grades 4-12 band teachers in Middlesex County, NJ. Via online survey, participants responded to questions about current demographics in their band programs, recruitment strategies, and perceived effects of those strategies on minority student participation. After receiving survey responses, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics for emergent trends. The findings indicated that of the 3,818 students accounted for, 26% were White, 7% were Black, 49% were Asian, 8% were Hispanic, and 10% were an unspecified minority. Participants were given a list of recruitment strategies where they chose which strategies they actively used in their classrooms. On average, elementary school teachers used 6.93 of the given strategies, middle school teachers used 6.65 of the given strategies, and high school teachers used 5.4 of the given strategies. Many participants found their band programs reflected the demographics of the community. Other participants felt financial burdens put on the family and lack of cultural representation in music and teaching staff leads students not to join their school's band program.

Keywords: Band, Diversity, Music Education, Participation, Recruitment

DEDICATION

To the future - where I hope access and equity are built into the fabric of music
education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I acknowledge God. For as long as I can remember, His favor has been a constant friend. He has opened doors and blessed me beyond measure. I know that all of my help comes from Him and I am eternally grateful. To Him, I say thank you for your grace, mercy, and unconditional love.

“It takes a village to raise a child” is an adage that has been applied to many people in many situations. I’d like to acknowledge my village. My family has been a source of strength as I navigate through this academic journey and life. This village of mine has expanded to include the supportive professors I have built a relationship with during my time at Temple University. The music education faculty are not only exceptional teachers and researchers, but they are compassionate and kind people. Dr. Deborah Confredo has been my advisor throughout this writing process and has lent me patience and understanding while continuing to challenge me as a professional. To you, I say thank you for your trust and counsel.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the band directors who have participated in this study. Some of you have known me as a friend and colleague for years. Some of you, I have never met. Regardless, your willingness to participate in this study is appreciated. The gesture is even more meaningful during a global pandemic. These questions were tough to digest and answer, but you worked through it. On behalf of myself and your future students, I thank you.

“If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won’t he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it?” - Luke 15:4 (NKJV)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
CHAPTER	
1. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	1
2. PROCEDURES.....	8
3. RESULTS.....	12
4. DISCUSSION.....	19
5. CONCLUSION.....	23
REFERENCES.....	25
APPENDICES	
A. INITIAL RECRUITMENT EMAIL.....	28
B. SECONDARY RECRUITMENT EMAIL.....	30
C. PARTICIPANT SURVEY.....	33
D. CONSENT FORM.....	38
E. REMINDER EMAIL TEMPLATE.....	41

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Racial Demographics by School Level.....	13
Table 2: Collective Minority Demographic by School Level.....	15
Table 3: Racial Demographics by School Level in One District.....	15

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Frequency of Strategy Use.....14

CHAPTER 1

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Even in poetry and song, dating back to the early 19th century, America has been viewed as the “land of the free and home of the brave” with open borders to people from across the globe. Most immigrants came with the goal of the American Dream (Library of Congress, n.d.). Included in this dream is comprehensive and substantive education for all students. As immigrants became a part of American society, the population at large and the student body became diverse. Schools are tasked with serving these diverse learners with the best possible education. Too often, schools fall short of creating a fully inclusive environment for a multicultural and multiracial student body. The music classroom is not excluded. As of 2004, only 34.3.2% of the nation’s high school students who participated in voluntary music ensembles were minorities while 65.7% were White (Elpus & Abril, 2011). Studies have shown that students of color believe there are significantly less students of their race in the music classroom compared to non-music classrooms (Hamann & Walker, 1993). Large music ensembles, like band, orchestra, and choir, are the traditional foundations of many music programs, particularly in secondary schools. In Hamilton’s (2016) study, results showed that 64.3% of participants strongly agreed that participation in music programs led to their decision to go into music as a career, implying that participation plays a huge role in the diversity of the music profession. Given the role that music programs play for students in life beyond high school graduation as well as the disproportionate numbers of minorities to white students who participate in these programs, music teachers must do better in creating ensemble environments that encourage minority student participation. The change must occur not

only to ensure that every child, regardless of background, feels welcomed, but to make sure that every child has the same access to music education.

Even though music promotes thought and imagination in students while building strong internal skills (Heimonen, 2006), minority students still do not participate as often as their White peers. Bopp, et al. (2017) state that minorities have perceptions of those activities which will or will not welcome their involvement. The same research also suggests that perception of “White” or “Black” activities play a role in students’ perceived welcomeness (Bopp, et al., 2017). It seems that the field is out of touch with its Non-White students. The racial gap, as evidenced in the paucity of minority participation, is more egregious in the upper grades, particularly in instrumental music. Minority participation in band programs is most present at the elementary school level while the high schools have lower levels of minority participation (Watts, Doane, & Fekete, 1994; Wheelhouse, 2009). Of the participating districts in her study, Wheelhouse (2009) found only 34.1% of elementary band students, 30.6% of middle school band students, and 22.8% of high school band students were minorities. This shift is puzzling and deserves investigation. This change affects the overall racial demographic of music programs and should raise concerns among music teachers as well as music teacher educators. Music educators must realize how important it is to maintain diversity in music education and fight to make racial equity a reality in their classrooms.

It might be assumed that participation in band programs would reflect racial distributions found in overall student populations. Classrooms are the primary context where students engage with their peers and build relationships that foster learning

(Cappell, Kim, Neal, & Jackson, 2013). Minority students want to feel like their cultural identities are not compromised while their unique combination of experiences and insights are being acknowledged (Plank & Rohdieck, 2019). Teachers should acknowledge students' individual cultural insights (Bond, 2017) and guide their lessons and teaching praxis to be culturally inclusive rather than based on what works for the majority which often excludes minorities (Barth, 1969). Minorities must be considered to give them the confidence needed to succeed. Bond (2017) stated, "In recognizing each student's cultural and social capital, one is able to validate students' backgrounds and empower them to promote their experiences as a resource" (p. 155). Unfortunately, cultural representation and racial representation seem all but absent in instrumental programs. If music educators aspire a full, enriching musical experience for all students, opportunities to learn from peers of all backgrounds must be provided, thereby facilitating positive relationships and impactful interactions. This will give students the opportunity to be excited about their cultural relevance (Albert, 2006) and prevent minority students from feeling alienated because they have not been recognized (Walker & Hamann, 1995). The cultural inclusion that students desire is often reciprocated in their desire to feel racially included.

Students, whether consciously or not, desire to see themselves represented in their teachers. In a 1993 study, it was found that 55% of student participants considered their role model to be a music teacher of the same race and sex while 34% of student participants considered their role model to be a music teacher of the same race but not sex, 8% to be of the same sex but not race (Hamann & Walker, 1993). Having a teacher

of the same race provides positive representation and allows students to envision a possible, successful future for themselves. Hudson (2017) suggested that students with a teacher of a similar background, like race, often demonstrate higher levels of performance. With these revelations, one would hope the teaching staff reflects the student population. However, Wheelhouse surveyed 18 school districts and found only 20.5% of teachers were minorities (Wheelhouse, 2009). This finding is not shocking. It is fair to assume that if there are few minority students in band programs, even fewer will choose to continue as music students at the university level. If racial and cultural diversity are not addressed in music teacher education programs and in the recruitment of prospective music educators, we are doomed to repeating the cycle of a monocultural teaching profession, thereby lessening the chance of the teaching field representing the students. Colleges and universities need to specifically recruit minority teachers (Hudson, 2017; Wheelhouse, 2009). Hudson (2017) goes on to suggest that minority college professors should actively recruit minorities and, thus, support the need for representation. Barnes (2016) found that 50% of participants, which included college band directors, recruited with strategies meant to attract their underrepresented groups. The same study found college professors used outreach as the main recruitment tool to recruit African Americans to their universities and had ensembles predominantly composed of African American students.

The strength of racial representation does not imply that White teachers cannot effectively recruit minority students. Because of the natural boundary between people of different races (Barth, 1969), it is important for teachers to take the responsibility to

relate and build rapport with their students beyond race rather than simply adding something “different” to the concert program to fulfill the expectation of multiculturalism (Bradley, 2006). All teachers are at an advantage to interrogate their own practices (Bradley, Golner, & Hanson, 2007) and constantly adapt their instruction to meet the “needs, expectations, and norms of cultures outside of one’s own” (Bond, 2017, p. 154). These consistent, responsive teaching practices allow for teachers to effectively reach their students. Goldsmith (2003) advocated recruitment can break through social norms of appropriate racial participation - which will truly provide a musical experience designed with every student in mind.

To address this issue of diversity, it is prudent to examine current recruitment practices. Recruitment strategies are important for band students’ participation, particularly because instrumental music is rarely cursory in most schools. In certain African American communities in which parents mostly work blue-collar jobs and work long hours, music is seen as a non-profitable profession not worth the indulgence (Silverman & DeLorenzo, 2016). Besides teachers, parents and other family members, hold the biggest influence in a child’s choice to choose a career in music or participate in music (Brändström, 2000; McClellan, 2011). It can be surmised, then, that participation in school music programs at the secondary level might be viewed as superfluous and not important to future professional life. In such cases, the encouragement to participate in music might only come from band teachers’ recruitment efforts. When recruitment is viewed through one generic lens, the probability that fewer students of color will participate and positively contribute to music programs undoubtedly grows. Efforts to

diversify music education in secondary schools, in particular, must be tangible and consistent. Music teachers credit exposure through performances or “petting zoos” as a major element to their successful recruiting strategies (Albert, 2006; Barnes, 2016). Students want to be reached out to and communicated with. Music educators would be better equipped to reach all students through the use of culturally appropriate and inclusive recruitment strategies.

Every effort must be made to make minority students feel included in the collective and collaborative music education experience. This experience is incomplete and one-sided without them. Effective recruitment methods which embrace and encourage all students, and African American students in particular, to feel welcomed to participate in voluntary school music education ensembles are necessary. The examination of current recruitment practices in areas of the country that include a large minority population is warranted. Middlesex County (NJ) stands as the 4th most diverse county in New Jersey (Middlesex County, NJ, 2020a) and investigation into recruitment practices here may reveal useful information. Based on recent data from 2018, (Middlesex County, NJ, 2020b), approximately 58.91% of the population identifies as White while 41.09% are minority citizens.

The purpose of this study is to investigate recruitment strategies currently in place by band teachers for their band programs and their effects on minority students’ participation in 4-12th grade public school band programs of Middlesex County, NJ. The following questions will guide this study: 1) What are the current demographics in Middlesex County, NJ public school 4-12 grade band programs? 2) What recruitment

strategies are currently in place by band teachers for their band programs? 3) Why do certain recruitment strategies lead to, or discourage, student participation in band programs in 4-12th grade public schools of Middlesex County, NJ?

CHAPTER 2

PROCEDURE

Included school districts ($n=23$) were public school districts in Middlesex County, NJ. This county was chosen because it is the 4th most diverse county in New Jersey (Middlesex County, NJ, 2020a) and investigation into recruitment practices here may reveal useful information. Out of the 29 public school districts in Middlesex County, NJ, vocational schools, charter schools, and educational commissions were omitted. Private or parochial schools were also omitted. These schools were omitted because there are many factors that make comparing their band programs and the band programs of the public schools ineffective. Twenty-three school districts were invited to participate in this study. The invited participants encompassed elementary, middle, and high school band teachers from each school district. These participants may teach other subjects but were only asked to report on their band programs. Being a certified, current band teacher in Middlesex County, NJ was the only qualifier for participant inclusion.

This project used a descriptive study design. Data were garnered via survey. Google Forms, a web-based program, was used as the tool for survey distribution. Google Forms provides secure data storage and can be configured to protect the anonymity of the participants. Invitations to participate were disseminated to participants via emails available publicly from school district websites. There was an initial recruitment email (see Appendix A) meant to introduce the researcher and the project. A secondary recruitment email (see Appendix B), containing the links to the survey, were then sent to garner full participation. Participating fully meant to complete the survey in its entirety

and submit the survey before the given deadline. All participation was voluntary. All surveys were completed in an online format. The survey for participants (see Appendix C) provided the consent form (see Appendix D) and asked for racial demographic information of their band programs and information on recruitment strategies.

Within each district, a certain number of band teachers responded ($n=27$). Among the participants, 15 school districts ($n=15$) were represented and included: Dunellen Public School District, East Brunswick Township School District, Edison Township School District, Jamesburg Public School District, Monroe Township School District, New Brunswick School District, North Brunswick Township School District, Piscataway Township School District, Sayreville School District, South Amboy School District, South Brunswick School District, South Plainfield School district, South River Public School District, Spotswood Public School District, and Woodbridge Township School District. The responses provided the opportunity to examine elementary ($n=13$), middle ($n=9$), and high school ($n=5$) band programs. After receiving the survey responses, the data were analyzed for emergent trends using descriptive statistics. Tables highlight the demographics in each band program separately, organized by grade and racial groups. This information is compared to the numbers of White and minority students. Data garnered from the open-ended responses were analyzed to determine participants' current recruitment strategies and what recruitment practices music educators believe encourage or discourage racial balance in their band programs using a descriptive analysis.

After the secondary recruitment email was dispersed, three reminder emails (see Appendix E) were sent in an effort to recruit more participants. The first two reminder

emails were sent in two-week intervals after the initial survey was sent. The third, and final, email reminder was sent the first week of September. The third survey was sent at that time because that is when teachers returned to their classrooms. Once the survey closed, data was downloaded from Google Forms to complete the data collection process and begin the analysis process.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

- This study has been limited to only Middlesex County, NJ and does not represent the entire New Jersey population.
- There was a 24% ($n=27$) response rate of the subjects invited to participate. The sample does not represent Middlesex County, NJ band programs in their entirety.
- Data do not include every school district in Middlesex County, NJ. There are 15 districts ($n=15$) represented in this study which is roughly 65% of Middlesex County, NJ districts.
- This study only concerns band programs and does not include data on orchestra and choir programs in Middlesex County, NJ. Information from these ensembles will help complete the gathered data.
- This data is from the teacher's perspective. Student voices would allow researchers to get a better idea of why students do or do not participate in band.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

The following research questions were used to guide this study: 1) What are the current demographics in Middlesex County, NJ public school 4-12 grade band programs? 2) What recruitment strategies are currently in place by band teachers for their band programs? 3) Why do certain recruitment strategies lead to, or discourage, student participation in band programs in 4-12th grade public schools of Middlesex County, NJ? To answer the research questions, participants were asked 10 questions ($n=10$) which provided an opportunity to share their own thoughts or comments.

Out of the 113 band teachers who were invited, 27 responded which provided a 24% response rate. Of the 27 participants ($n=27$), elementary school teachers made up 48% ($n=13$) of the sample, middle school teachers made up 33.3% ($n=9$) of the sample, and high school teachers made up 18.7% ($n=5$) of the sample. The racial demographic of the participants is as follows: 88.9% White ($n=24$), 3.7% Black ($n=1$), 3.7% Asian ($n=1$), and 3.7% other ($n=1$).

To answer research question 1, the researcher asked the following questions:

- What is the total number of students in your band program? (If exact is not known, round to the nearest 10.)
- What are the demographics of your band program (# of unknown, # of White, # of Black, etc...)? If not sure, report as accurately as possible.

The band teachers reported a total of 3,818 students ($n=3,818$). Of those students, 26% were White ($n=987$), 7% were Black ($n=296$), 49% were Asian ($n=1854$), 8% were

Hispanic ($n=307$), and 10% were an unspecified minority ($n=374$). Elementary school aged students accounted for 40% of the data while middle school aged students accounted for 51.2% and high school aged students accounted for 8.4%. In table. 1, you will find how each race was represented in each school level (elementary school, middle school, high school).

Table. 1

Racial Demographics by School Level

School Level	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
White	20%	29%	37%
Black	7%	8%	12.5%
Asian	56%	48%	12%
Hispanic	9%	4%	30.5%
Unspecified Minority	8%	11%	6%

To answer research question 2, I provided recruitment strategies from which participants could choose. Participants were able to choose any strategies they actively used and add strategies that weren't listed. The list of given strategies was compiled from personal experiences and observations of several band programs at various levels. These strategies are also common recruitment strategies practiced by band teachers (Albert, 2005). The results can be found in Figure 1. One of the participants stated they do not actively recruit. Out of the 13 recruitment options provided, 11% of participants ($n=3$)

used 3 or less of the given recruitment strategies, 70% of participants ($n=19$) used 4-8 of the given recruitment strategies, and 19% of participants ($n=5$) used at least 9 of the given recruitment strategies. 15% of the participants ($n=4$) provided more strategies using the “other” option. On average, elementary school teachers used 6.93 of the given strategies, middle school teachers used 6.65 of the given strategies, and high school teachers used 5.4 of the given strategies.

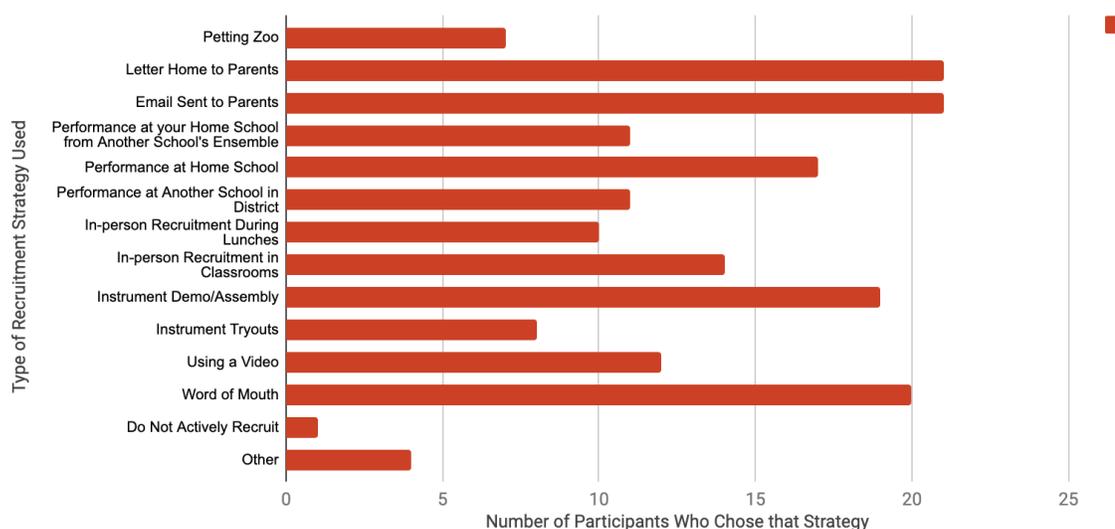


Figure 1: Frequency of Strategy Use

When given a 1-5 Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) and asked to what degree they agreed with the statement “My current recruitment strategies target minority groups,” most answered in the neutral while 24% agreed or strongly agreed and only 15.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Several participants did not recruit with certain underrepresented groups in mind. This may unwittingly result in teachers recruiting without acknowledging its possible effects on

varying culture groups. These results combined with other factors could lead to the steady decrease of minority student participation as they age. Table. 2 shows this decrease.

Table. 2

Collective Minority Demographics by School Level

School Level	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
White	20%	29%	37%
Minority	80%	71%	63%

The data presented thus far has been an overall representation of participants from Middlesex County, NJ. There was an opportunity to study the data from one school district in its entirety and study demographic trends on a smaller scale. The results can be found in Table 3.

Table. 3

Racial Demographics by School Level in One District

School Level	Elementary Schools	Middle School	High School
White	20%	28%	35%
Black	25%	24%	15%
Asian	24%	29%	27%
Hispanic	31%	16%	23%
Unspecified Minority		3%	

To answer research question 3, participants were asked the following questions and given a chance to share their thoughts:

- Racial balance is when a program has racial equity (i.e. similar numbers of Black students as White students as Asian students). If your program has not received racial balance, please share your thoughts on why.
- If your program has achieved racial balance, please share your thoughts on the practices that made this happen.
- If you feel that more can be done to recruit minority groups, what recruitment strategies do you suggest?

Band teachers who did not find racial balance had a myriad of reasons. In many cases, the demographics of the band reflected the demographic of their school district or community which makes racial balance, an equal number of all races, very challenging. Financial limitations were cited as another reason band programs are not racially balanced. Some participants shared that many of their families cannot afford to buy or rent an instrument. These same participants do not have the inventory to provide instruments for those in financial need, so many students miss out on the experience. In these cases, the students that miss out are often minority students. From personal experiences, it was found that cultural relevance plays a role in preventing racial balance. Some cultures view classroom, formal music as an activity that is superfluous, or even distracting. This view, along with repertoire being “white-washed,” as a participant put it, and not including music that represents the cultures of the students, may discourage minority students from participating in their band programs. This cultural relevance is

also lacking in the staff as students are discouraged from participating in their district's band programs because the entire music staff is White. It was gathered that the lack of representation in the staff and repertoire could lead minority students to choose another activity when there is a scheduling conflict.

For the same reason that many districts do not have racial balance, other districts achieve racial balance. Participants who have racially balanced bands reported that their programs reflect the demographics of the school or community. Many participants shared they had enough inventory to provide instruments to families who could not afford to rent or buy an instrument - which is possible with strong administrative support. Many participants choose to focus on representation by programming diverse repertoire with diverse composers, employing diverse staff, sending information home in languages other than English, and having guest performers/teachers who are minority musicians. Additionally, building rapport with the students is cited as another source of recruitment.

When asked what more can be done to recruit minority students, the responses were thoughtful. Class schedule was a theme among participants. It was stated that many minority students are punished during their pull-out lesson in elementary and middle school. Pull-out lessons are when students miss another class to have their band lesson and are responsible for making up the missed work. When these students fall behind academically, they are often withheld from their band lesson to focus on academics. These students are often too far behind in their band classes, get frustrated, and quit often disinclined to rejoin future band programs. In the participants' experiences, minority students are often the students referenced. Fixing the irregularity found in pull-out lessons could promote minority student participation. Along the same line, some

participants feel it necessary to recruit from lower-level classes rather than just gifted and talented students. Showcasing one's current diverse students will show other students there is a place for them in the band program. Reflecting many of the sentiments from previous responses, participants suggest building the budget to provide instruments for families in financial need, having a diverse staff, choosing culturally relevant music, and showcasing diverse performers in all genres of music - not only jazz.

When given a chance to share other thoughts and comments, a point was made about the schedule of teachers. Many teachers are overworked and do not have the time to recruit purposefully and effectively. The teacher makes the difference, but only if they are available to make an impact.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate student recruitment strategies currently in place by band teachers and their effects on minority students' participation in 4-12th grade public school band programs of Middlesex County, NJ. In general, racial equity refers to the demographics match the community. In the case of this study, racial equity was defined as even representation of racial groups in the band program. Participants have been asked to report on whether or not their band programs have racial equity. However, the makeup of the community was a factor. The degree to which program demographics matched those of the community was a window into the level of racial equity in band programs. Although several programs have racial demographics that reflected their school or community, there were still varied factors which prevented a racial balance in the participants' band programs. One of these factors is cultural representation. Any teacher can make meaningful a connection with their students. However, it was found that 88.9% of the participants were White teachers which leaves only 11.1% of the participants as minority teachers. When compared to the 26% of White students and collective 74% of minority students reported, this statistic draws attention. Hudson (2017) suggested that students with a teacher of a similar background, like race, often demonstrate higher levels of performance. Hamann & Walker (1993) found that students were most likely to find their role model in a music teacher of the same race. These cases theorize two outcomes: 1) If students do not have a band teacher of the same race to look up to, they are less likely to remain in band, and; 2) On average, students will not perform as well on their instrument if they do not have a teacher of the same cultural

background. There are many exceptions to this viewpoint, but the discussion must be had if true diversity is the goal. The need for minority teachers is not a recent development. Hudson (2017) and Wheelhouse (2009) cite the specific need for colleges and universities to focus on recruiting minority teachers. Diverse staff, along with music representing cultures of the students will allow minority students to feel welcomed and more inclined to participate in band.

Having a diverse staff is not exclusive to the music classroom. With most of the teaching force being White, many minority students do not perform as well as they would with teachers of the same race (Gershenson, et al., 2019). In the case of some of our participants, it led to minority students taking resource classes and not being able to participate in pull-out lessons or fit band class into their schedule. These scheduling conflicts lead to some minority students to fall behind in band, become frustrated because they cannot perform as well as their peers, and quit band as they get older. Not addressing the scheduling issues or actively preventing ways for minority students to have equal access to the band program leads to lower minority enrollment. Scheduling issues, along with the decreasing diversity in recruitment strategies as the students get older, pose an issue to recruiting minority students.

On average, the number of recruitment strategies used by participating teachers is the highest at the elementary level and the lowest at the high school level. While examining Tables 1 and 2, one may take note of the large increase of Hispanic student participation from elementary through high school or the large decrease of Asian student participation from elementary through high school. Certain included school districts have populations with high numbers of certain populations compared to others. These districts

do not reflect the overall status of the schools of Middlesex County. Tables 2 and 3 are better representations of the county band program demographics. When viewing Table. 2, it is not only important to notice the increase of White students every school level, but it is crucial to observe the decrease in minority students as they progress from elementary school to high school.

An opportunity presented itself to examine the minority enrollment of the most diverse school district in Middlesex County, NJ. The entire band program in this district was represented which gave room to test theories that have been presented. On average, of the given recruitment strategies, elementary school teachers used 6.33 recruitment strategies, middle school teachers used 11 recruitment strategies, and high school teachers used 12 recruitment strategies. In regard to the teaching staff, 20% of the staff is Black and 80% is White. The data collected from this individual district is an interesting comparison to the group data. When examining Table 3, the percentages of minority students as they progress through school levels can be seen.

Despite a higher number of minority staff members and a higher average of recruitment strategies used by higher school levels, the percentage of minority students still decreases while the percentage of White students increases which is consistent with other studies (Watts, Doane, & Fekete, 1994; Wheelhouse, 2009). In this specific district, the population is made up of the following: 21% White, 24% Black, 22% Asian, and 33% Hispanic (Public School Review, 2020). The school band programs have a lower minority demographic when compared to the community's minority demographic.

This data emphasizes the notion that there is no exact science to diversity and inclusion. Each student is different with their own set of needs. What works for one

district may not work for the next. It is important to design and practice recruitment strategies that reach every student.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Participants found a myriad of factors that affected the diversity of their band programs. Often, the band reflected the racial demographics of the school community which allowed for, or prevented, racial balance. Many felt improving cultural representation and relevance will encourage minority student participation. Family finances played a role as instrumental ensembles are one of the few activities families have to pay for to be involved. Despite every effort to recruit and retain all students, minority participation steadily decreased from elementary school through high school. Scheduling conflicts and the lack of varying recruitment strategies in the higher grades may contribute to the decrease. Although the decrease in minority participation is present, countless teachers still want to see diversity in their band programs.

Many see the need for research on diversity in music education. Unfortunately, there is still opposition. While collecting responses, there were two participants who found offense. One balked at being asked the racial demographics of their band program. The other proceeded to mention how he does not “do this race stuff,” that his concern is “kids and music,”. He advised me that my time would be better spent practicing my secondary instruments. These responses have been mentioned because they are the “why.” Responses of this nature are emblematic of the reason diversity should be researched. Responses of this nature are why one should concern themselves with recruiting minority groups. Responses of this nature should ignite a fire to dive deeper into this area of study. This is the “why.” Engaging the entire student is the only way to guarantee music for all. Examining the factors that lead to an imbalance will only make

the field of music education more equitable and inclusive. There is not an exact answer to any question proposed and there may never be. However, while there is still any form of imbalance, questions must continue to be offered. While responses, like the two above, still exist, an extra effort must be made to protect and advocate for every student that music educators come in contact with. And even if the answers are never found, music educators must never relent.

As minority participation in music education continues to be studied, there are areas that require immediate attention. Research must be done that includes orchestra and choir. Gaining data from other ensemble areas will provide a clearer picture of the current demographics. Research including student perspectives is a needed addition to fill in the gaps created by exclusively providing teacher insights. Including other counties and states would give music educators a more in-depth idea of the current state of diversity in music education. Lastly, questioning current minority music teachers on their experiences as K-12 students and how it led them to choose a career in music teaching.

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**APPENDIX A:
INITIAL RECRUITMENT EMAIL**

Hello Colleagues and Friends,

I hope this email finds you well. Please allow me to introduce myself. I am Isaiah Mason. I teach elementary band and orchestra in the North Brunswick Township School District. Currently, I am also completing my MM in Music Education at Temple University.

For my thesis, and under the guidance of Dr. Deborah Confredo, I am studying current racial demographics in Middlesex County, NJ band programs and recruitment strategies used by the band directors. Your input is very valuable to these objectives; I am writing to ask for your kind assistance. If you are willing to assist, please watch for an email I will send that contains a link to a survey that should take about 20 minutes to complete. After you complete the survey, you have the option to send a student version to your band students which asks them to share why they joined, and remained in, band. Would you be willing to be a participant in my study?

Currently, my project is going through its approval stage. It must be evaluated by the Temple University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Once approved, I will send the survey links to your email. I am looking to include only band directors and their students. If you do not teach band, please let me know so I can remove your email. If your district requires approval for this type of research, please let me know and I will share the study protocol and the IRB approval once obtained.

Thank you for considering taking part in this study. I look forward to working with you in examining the relationship between recruitment and minority participation in band programs. Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Isaiah C. Mason

732-824-2410

**APPENDIX B:
SECONDARY RECRUITMENT EMAIL**

Hello Colleagues and Friends,

I hope you are all well as we navigate these uncertain times. A few months ago I contacted you to elicit your participation in my research study. I received emails from many expressing their willingness to participate. Since then, times have changed. COVID-19 has changed our state of normalcy and has affected our lives in more ways than we could imagine. While I hope that you will participate, I certainly understand if your willingness, or ability, to participate has changed.

As a reminder, I am an elementary band and orchestra teacher in the North Brunswick School District. Additionally, I am finishing the Masters in Music Education program at Temple University. Under the guidance of Dr. Deborah Confredo, I am studying current racial demographics in Middlesex County, NJ band programs and recruitment strategies used by the band directors. Your input is very valuable to these objectives; I am writing to ask for your kind assistance. If you are willing to assist, please access the survey using the link below. The survey should take about 20 minutes to complete. After you complete the survey, you have the option to send a student version to your band students (grades 6-12) which asks them to share why they joined, and remained in, band. The student version includes the consent form for minors. It would need to be approved by the parent/guardian.

My project has been approved by the Temple University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The approved IRB Protocol is attached and may be given to building or district administration as needed. Let me know if I need to reach out to certain departments or individuals.

Again, I understand that our teaching circumstances have changed drastically. If this is not the right time to garner your participation, please let me know. If some time in the summer or fall works better for you, I will make sure to reach out again with the survey.

What you will need before you start the survey:

Racial demographic information of your band programs (White, Black, Asian, Native Alaskan, and Hispanic).

Teacher Survey Link:

<https://forms.gle/HRdq3w2Tj9oDfuvu9>

Thank you for considering taking part in this study. I look forward to working with you in examining the relationship between recruitment and minority participation in band programs. Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Isaiah C. Mason, MM Candidate, Music Education
Boyer College of Music and Dance
Temple University, 2001 N. 13th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122
Contact Information: Icmason@temple.edu

Dr. Deborah Confredo
Professor and Director of Online Graduate Study in Music Education
Boyer College of Music and Dance, Temple University
609-680-0536
Contact Information: DebConfredo@temple.edu

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT SURVEY

9/21/2020

Recruitment and Minority Participation in Middlesex County 4-12 Band Programs

Recruitment and Minority Participation in Middlesex County 4-12 Band Programs

Acknowledgment of Consent

* Required

- 1. Link to conditions of consent:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oOCYOEb6_QC3uzxUPpUwQ9EIXFFDBhLF8X-1qGbjNoc/edit *

Mark only one oval.

- I acknowledge that by moving forward to the next section of this survey I am indicating that I am a band teacher in Middlesex County and have read this consent form and agree to participate in this research study.
- I do not consent to participate in this optional research study and will close the survey.

Demographic Information

All information is based off of the 2019-2020 school year.

2. Which school district do you represent?

Mark only one oval.

- Carteret Public School District
- Cranbury Township School District
- Dunellen Public School District
- East Brunswick Township School District
- Edison Township School District
- Highland Park Boro School District
- Jamesburg Public School District
- Metuchen Public School District
- Middlesex Borough School District
- Milltown School District
- Monroe Township School District
- New Brunswick School District
- North Brunswick Township School District
- Old Bridge Township School District
- Perth Amboy Public School District
- Piscataway Township School District
- Sayreville School District
- South Amboy School District
- South Brunswick School District
- South Plainfield School District
- South River Public School District
- Spotswood Public School District
- Woodbridge Township School District

3. For what grades are you reporting data?

Check all that apply.

- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School

Other: _____

4. What is your ethnicity?

Mark only one oval.

- White
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
- Black or African-American
- Indian or Native Alaskan
- Asian
- Prefer not to answer
- Other: _____

5. What is the total number of students in your band program? (If exact is not known, round to the nearest 10.)

6. What are the demographics of your band program (# of unknown, # of White, # of Black, etc...)? If not sure, report as accurately as possible. *

9/21/2020

Recruitment and Minority Participation in Middlesex County 4-12 Band Programs

Recruitment Strategies

This section is meant to bring to light the current recruitment strategies in place in your program and discuss how these strategies may, or may not, affect minority student participation in your program.

7. What current recruitment strategies are in place for your program? Check all that apply. *

Check all that apply.

- "Petting Zoo"
- Letter home to parents
- Email sent to parents
- Performance at your home school from another school's ensemble
- Performance at home school
- Performance at another school in district
- In-person recruitment during lunches
- In-person recruitment in classrooms
- Instrument demo/assembly
- Instrument tryouts
- Video
- Word of Mouth
- Do not actively recruit

Other: _____

8. Racial balance is when a program has racial equity (i.e. similar numbers of African-American students as White students as Asian students). If your program has not received racial balance, please share your thoughts on why.

9. If your program has achieved racial balance, please share your thoughts on the practices that made this happen.

10. To what degree do you agree with the following statement: My current recruitment strategies target minority groups.

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree				

11. If you feel that more can be done to recruit minority groups, what recruitment strategies do you suggest?

12. Please use this section to add any other comments you may have.

**APPENDIX D:
CONSENT FORM**

Title of research: Recruitment and Minority Participation in Middlesex County 4-12 Band Programs

Investigator and Department:

Deborah Confredo, Boyer College of Music and Dance, Temple University

Isaiah C. Mason; Boyer College of Music and Dance, Temple University

Why am I being invited to take part in this research?

I invite you to take part in a research study because you are a 4-12 grade band teacher in Middlesex County.

What should I know about this research?

Someone will explain this research to you.

Whether or not you take part is up to you.

You can choose not to take part.

You can agree to take part and later change your mind.

Your decision will not be held against you.

You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

Who can I talk to about this research?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, contact the research team at: tuf41259@temple.edu; 732-824-2410

This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board. You may talk to them at (215) 707-3390 or e-mail them at: irb@temple.edu for any of the following:

Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.

You cannot reach the research team.

You want to talk to someone besides the research team.

You have questions about your rights as a research subject.

You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Why is this research being done?

The purpose of this study is to investigate recruitment strategies currently in place by band teachers for their band programs and its effect on minority student participation in 4-12th grade public school band programs of Middlesex County. Adult participants include grades 4-12 band teachers in Middlesex County, NJ. Through survey, adult participants will respond to questions about current demographics in their district band programs, current recruitment strategies, and perceived effects of those strategies on minority student participation. Student participants will respond to questions about why they joined, and remained, in band. Descriptive analysis and basic percentages will be used to analyze the data.

How long will I be in this research?

We expect that you will be in this research for 20 minutes. Your participation in this study ends when you submit the survey.

What happens if I agree to be in this research?

If you agree to participate in this research you will complete an online survey that will take about 20 minutes. There will be no follow-up or telephone communications. You will have two weeks from the date of initial contact to complete the survey

Will being in this research help me in any way?

Participating in this research will allow adult participants to better understand their recruitment practices and its effect on their programs. Other benefits include knowing why students choose to join and remain in their program. Lastly, uncovering other recruitment strategies in place by other band teachers across the county will be another benefit.

What happens to the information collected for this research?

To the extent allowed by law, we limit the viewing of your personal information to people who have to review it. We cannot promise complete secrecy. The IRB and Temple University may inspect and copy your information. Survey data from Google forms will be secured in Temple University OwlBox for the duration of the study. Only the researcher will view your responses or have access to the information.

By signing this form, you are indicating that you have had your questions answered, you agree to take part in this research study and you are legally authorized to consent.

Name of Subject

Signature of Subject

Date

**APPENDIX E:
REMINDER EMAIL TEMPLATE**

Hello Colleagues and Friends,

Survey Link:

<https://forms.gle/HRdq3w2Tj9oDfuvu9>

I hope all is well as we begin to enjoy summer. A couple weeks ago I sent out a survey to elicit your participation in my research study. Submissions are anonymous so I can't thank participants individually - so thank you to those who have already participated. I hope that others will still consider participating in this study.

As a reminder, I am an elementary band and orchestra teacher in the North Brunswick School District. Additionally, I am finishing the Masters in Music Education program at Temple University. Under the guidance of Dr. Deborah Confredo, I am studying current racial demographics in Middlesex County, NJ band programs and recruitment strategies used by the band directors. Your input is very valuable to these objectives; I am writing to ask for your kind assistance. If you are willing to assist, please access the survey using the link below. The survey should take about 20 minutes to complete. On account of COVID-19 and unequal access students and their families may have to the internet, student participation is no longer being requested.

My project has been approved by the Temple University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The approved IRB Protocol is attached and may be given to building or district administration as needed. Let me know if I need to reach out to certain departments or individuals.

Again, I understand that our teaching circumstances have changed drastically and some of us check-out for the summer. If this is not the right time to garner your participation, please let me know. If a specific time this summer or in the fall works better for you, I will make sure to reach out again with the survey.

Please consider completing the survey by (insert date). This is a soft deadline, but I would love the opportunity to start analyzing data as soon as possible.

What you will need before you start the survey:

Racial demographic information of your band programs (White, Black, Asian, Native Alaskan, Hispanic, and “Other”).

Survey Link:

<https://forms.gle/HRdq3w2Tj9oDfuvu9>

Thank you for considering taking part in this study. I look forward to working with you in examining the relationship between recruitment and minority participation in band programs. Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Isaiah C. Mason, MM Candidate, Music Education
Boyer College of Music and Dance
Temple University, 2001 N. 13th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122
Contact Information: Icmason@temple.edu

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