



Perception of General Music Education



Xavier Gauthier

Luke Morrison

Crystal Berner, MME

Abstract

Colleges around the US feature many robust programs in the field of music education. Additionally, there has been increased research recently into the new question of the benefits of studying music such as increased executive function and improved problem-solving skills. Despite this, the US continues to face the issue of a lack of support of music education programs which is potentially one of the contributing factors causing many teachers to leave the profession within the first five years. The purpose of this study was to examine preservice and in-service music teachers' perceptions of general music education. Participants in this study consisted of preservice teachers enrolled in an undergraduate music education degree and in-service teachers with at least one year of employed music teaching experience. All respondents completed a Qualtrics questionnaire that measured their perception of general music education. 94% of participants believed that general music courses should be required and 76% of those who thought it should be required, mentioned every year in Elementary school and at least twice in both middle and high school.

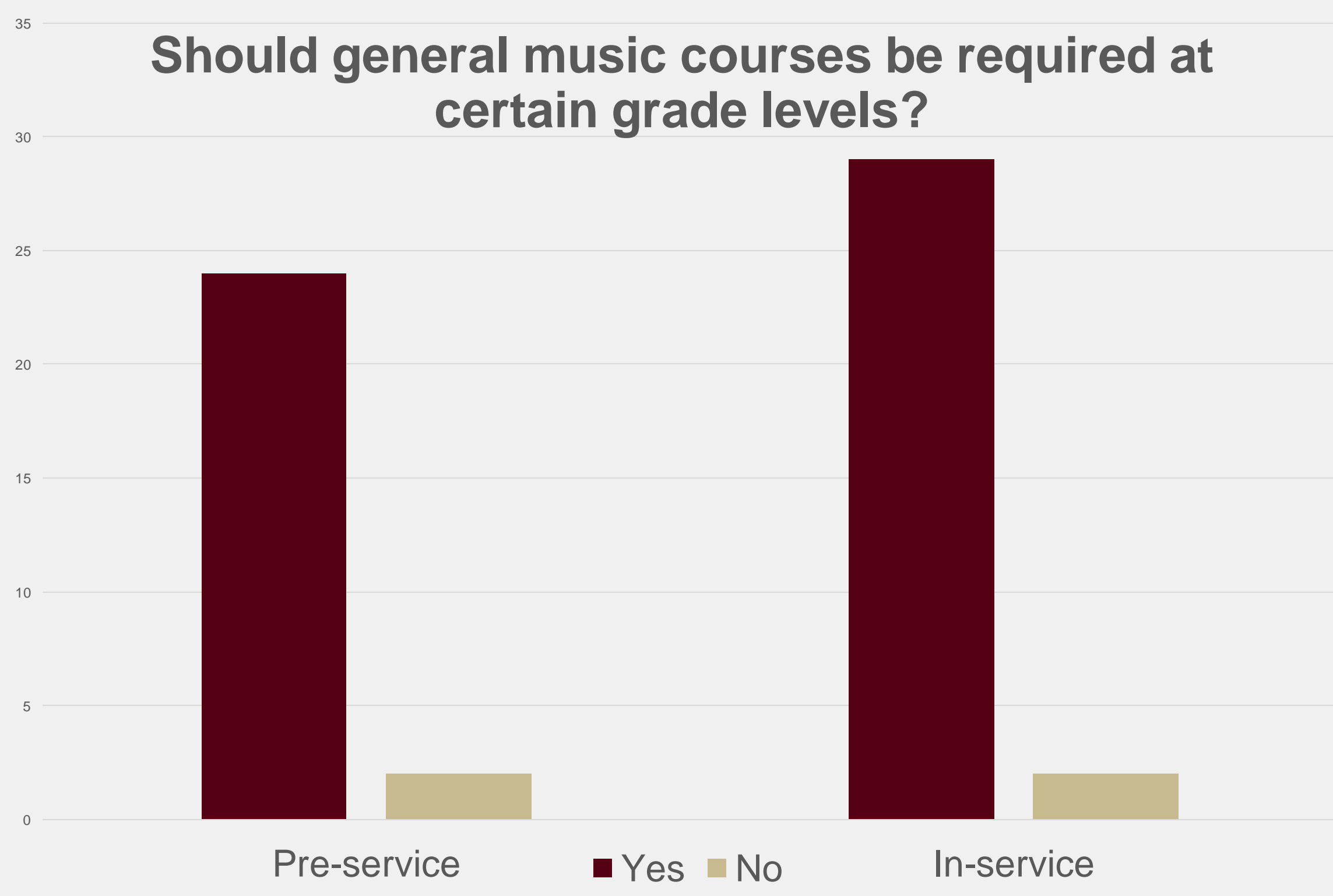


College of Music

Method

The participants (N=77) for this study were pre-service and in-service educators from a Southeastern state. For this study, we created a questionnaire to survey perceptions of general music education. The questionnaire contained five major sections including demographics, a checklist of musical experiences, musical history questions, rating questions about general music activities, and a free-response questions about feelings towards general music education. Participants were recruited by convenience sampling; education classes and various social media groups for teachers. We used two unbiased participants in the pilot study whose responses were not included in the results. Participants completed the survey on their personal devices and the survey took about 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

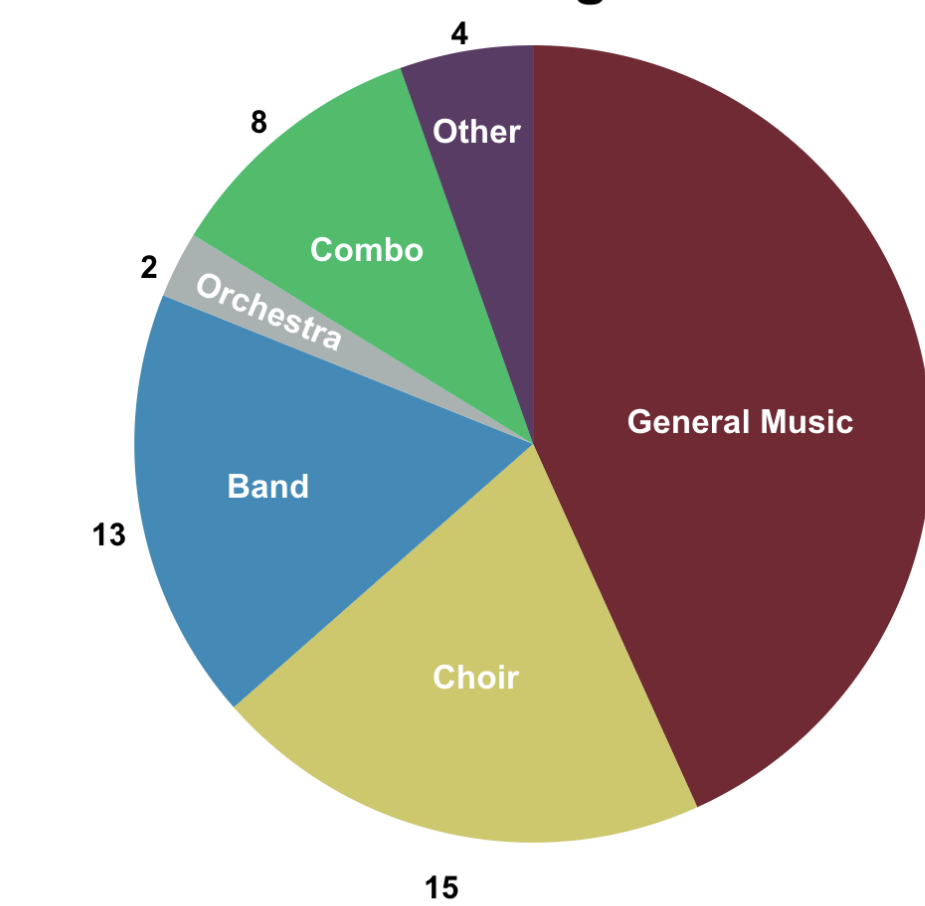
Should general music courses be required at certain grade levels?



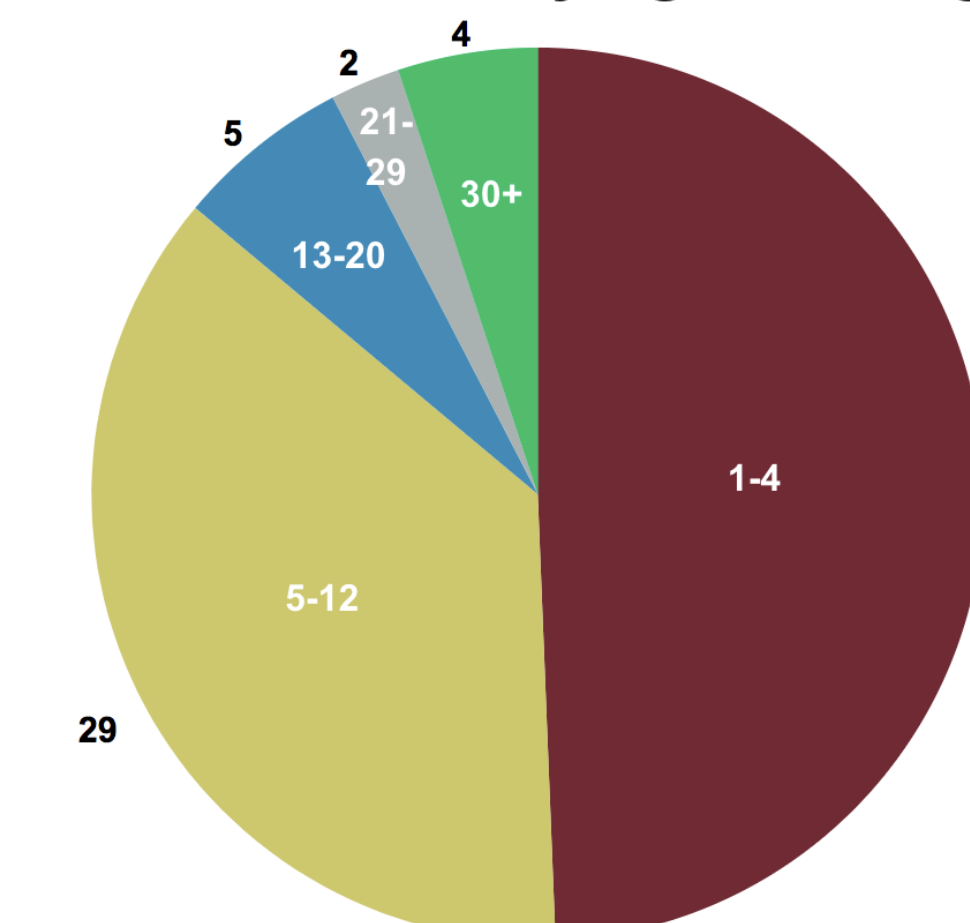
To what extent do you think these activities support a curriculum in General Music?

	Pre-service		In-service	
	M	SD	M	SD
Instruments	4.55	0.81	4.55	0.81
Singing	4.84	0.37	4.84	0.37
Attending Concerts	4.06	1.18	4.06	1.21
Composing	3.58	1.18	3.58	1.18
Extracurricular Ensembles (marching band, etc.)	3.97	1.15	3.97	1.15
Listening/Analyzing	4.48	0.72	4.48	0.72

Teaching Area



Years of Studying/Teaching



Discussion

- General music education is important for introducing musical skills that are transferrable later in life.
- Musical activities, such as playing instruments, involve using different parts of the brain, resulting in elevated cognitive skills.
- Music education is closely connected to social-emotional skills, as practice and performance provide emotional outlets of expression.

Future Research

- Investigate the impact of elementary general music education on students' lives by self-report (SEL/cognitive skills)
- Investigate teachers' perceptions in other countries or cultures where they have a different educational structure