



**STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THEIR
DECISIONS TO STUDY ELECTIVE MUSIC IN YEAR 8 AND YEAR 11 OF
SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Suzanne Oyston

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the perceptions of Year 8 and Year 11 students in relation to the influence of various selected factors upon their decisions to study elective music in secondary school. These factors included students' achievement-related beliefs (for example, their expectancies for success, competence beliefs, and task values), their various musical experiences, their history of musical involvement, and the influence of other people. This study was conducted in a selective girls' high school in the Sydney metropolitan area. The participants were Year 8 students who were studying the Additional Study Course, Year 11 students who were studying the Music 2 course, and their classroom music teacher. In order to gain greater insights into students' perceptions this study employed a predominantly qualitative design for the collection and analysis of data. The collection of data involved a combination of methods including semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire. The results showed that the students in this study who chose to study elective music had a history of previous musical experience beyond the secondary school music classroom, perceived themselves as musically competent, and considered music to be an important component of their lives. In addition, most students had support from home for their involvement in elective music and appeared to come from families in which music was a valued activity. Apart from their families, students' decisions were also influenced by other people including their music teachers (classroom and private) and friends. Secondary classroom music teachers were shown to be a more significant influence upon students' decisions than has been found in previous research. Overall, the Year 11 students were extrinsically motivated to study elective music because they thought it was a subject in which they could achieve good marks for their Higher School Certificate. In contrast, the Year 8 students were intrinsically motivated to study elective music because they derived enjoyment and interest from the subject. However, it was evident that a complex network of possible factors have the potential to influence students' decisions to study elective music in secondary school.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The study of music within the classrooms of New South Wales schools is compulsory in primary school (Kindergarten to Year 6) and in the initial years of secondary school. Once students have completed the compulsory course of music study in secondary school they are required to make a decision in relation to whether they will continue their involvement in classroom music courses. The decision to continue participation in classroom music courses is generally made by students within the first few years of secondary school. This study explores the perceptions of secondary school students regarding the influence of various factors on their decision to elect to study classroom music.

An Overview of Music Education in New South Wales Schools

New South Wales secondary school classroom music courses are situated within the K-12 (Kindergarten to Year 12) continuum of music studies (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1999b¹). All students in New South Wales secondary schools are required to study a compulsory course of classroom music which is the Mandatory Course of the Music Years 7-10 Stages 4 and 5 Syllabus (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1994). This course enables students to broaden the musical experiences and learning they have acquired during primary school, and provides a core experience in music for students in Years 7-10 (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1994).

Secondary school students who wish to continue studying classroom music after completing the Mandatory Course must elect to study classroom music. Elective classroom music courses are generally chosen by students in Years 8, 9, and 10 of junior secondary school and Years 11 and 12 of senior secondary school. During junior

¹ The syllabuses referred to in this section were all current during the year (2003) in which this study was conducted.

secondary school students may elect to study the Additional Study Course of the Music Years 7-10 Stages 4 and 5 Syllabus (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1994). This course follows sequentially from the Mandatory Course, is designed for students who wish to extend their musical experiences and learning, and provides students with the knowledge and skills required as a foundation for various elective senior music courses (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1994).

In Year 11 of senior school students may elect to study the Music 1 course of the Music 1 Stage 6 Syllabus (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1999a) or the Music 2 course of the Music 2 and Music Extension Stage 6 Syllabus (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1999b). The Music 1 course builds on the knowledge and skills acquired in the Mandatory Course and is designed for students with both informal and formal musical backgrounds (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1999a). The Music 2 course builds on the knowledge and skills acquired in the Mandatory and Additional Study Courses and assumes that students have a formal background in music (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1999b). The Music 1 and Music 2 courses are studied in two components. The Preliminary component is generally studied in Year 11 and the Higher School Certificate (refer to Appendix 1) component is usually studied in Year 12.

Students who study the Music 2 course may also elect to study the Music Extension course of the Music 2 and Music Extension Stage 6 Syllabus (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1999b). The Music Extension course is generally studied in Year 12 and allows students the opportunity to expand the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the Music 2 course. The various elective classroom music courses that students study in secondary school allow them the opportunity to engage in an integrated study of music through the learning experiences of performance, composition, musicology, and aural (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1994, 1999a, 1999b). Secondary schools throughout New South Wales make decisions at the individual school level in relation to the way in which the various music courses are implemented.

McPherson and Dunbar-Hall (2001) state that one of the key strengths of Australian music education is the acknowledgement that children at all stages of their schooling should have access to music. However, McPherson (1997) states that despite concerted efforts during recent decades to make music a more attractive subject in Australian schools, only a small percentage of the total student population choose to study elective classroom music in secondary school. According to McPherson, in secondary schools throughout Australia only 8-20% of the total student population in Years 9 and 10 of junior secondary school choose to study elective music after they complete compulsory music courses. Furthermore, this figure declines to less than 6% of the total student population by Year 12. Similarly, research conducted in other countries has identified a decrease in students' interest in general classroom music courses and instrumental music as they become older (Austin & Vispoel, 1998; Mota, 1999; Wragg, 1974). Numerous researchers have stated that attracting and retaining students' interest in school music constitutes a fundamental problem for music educators (Sandene, 1994; Wragg, 1974).

McPherson (1997) maintains that there are complex and varied reasons for why so few students elect to study music in secondary schools. He suggests that music may be perceived by both students and parents as an elitist subject for the talented few or as an educational frill. Sloboda (1999) proposes that the message "... if you haven't got talent, then you should stop wasting your time messing about with music, and concentrate on your maths or business studies" (p.188) projected within society discourages students from participation in various musical activities.

However, some American research has also shown that opportunities for music participation in high school are not accessible to all students to the same degree (Stewart, 1991). McPherson (1997) proposes that that cutbacks in educational funding have exacerbated the situation in Australian schools and have led to the concern that elective music in senior secondary school will potentially undergo further decline.

Stowasser (1993) has argued that music education research has a critical role to play in ensuring that music occupies a secure position within Australian schools. However, she

suggests that the failure of researchers to reach agreement on why music is so important has led to the societal perception that music is irrelevant and expendable. Stowasser maintains that in order for music education to survive, greater emphasis needs to be placed upon its relevance to the society in which it belongs.

It would appear that research which considers the choices of students who elect to study classroom music in secondary school is potentially valuable in addressing the motivation of students who continue their involvement in secondary music education. Research exploring the choices of students who study elective music in secondary school is important in highlighting the relevance of music education to the lives of these students. Furthermore, this research is potentially valuable in addressing the factors that influence the decisions of these students to continue their musical involvement in secondary school classroom music.

However, few studies have explored the decisions of students who study elective music in secondary school. Research which has investigated the choices of students in relation to their learning has shown that there are many possible factors which can potentially influence their decisions. Nazareth (1999) states that an understanding of the various factors that motivate students to be involved in musical activities at different stages of their learning is necessary for the design, provision, and delivery of music programmes. The following section outlines some of the factors that influence students' decisions for involvement in music education.

Influences upon Students' Decisions for their Involvement in Music Education.

The following discussion briefly contextualises this study within a framework provided by the relevant literature which is reviewed in detail in Chapter 2. Definitions of terms are outlined in Appendix 1.

The decision to study elective music in the junior years and senior years of secondary school presents students with a situation in which they are required to make choices

between the various subjects they wish to study and necessarily have to forgo the study of some of these subjects. Austin and Vispoel (1998) state that students' decisions regarding their involvement in music courses have consequences for their long-term academic achievement, career opportunities, and pursuit of activities during adulthood. Previous research has shown that students' choices for involvement in various musical activities are potentially influenced by numerous factors, including their own personal reasons and influences within their environment.

Studies exploring the factors that influence students' choices are generally situated within the context of achievement motivation research. This research examines the motivation of students to pursue their learning within achievement settings for example, schools. Theories relating to motivation and learning provide educators with an understanding of how students approach their learning (Taelte & Cutietta, 2002). The study of motivation in the context of music education is a relatively new endeavour (Asmus, 1994). According to some, the motivational processes at work in the arts are different from other subjects, as they are more dynamic and unique (Austin & Vispoel, 1992). Austin and Vispoel state that a comprehensive awareness and understanding of these motivational processes is important if music educators are to provide a challenging and stimulating educational environment that is accessible to all students.

Motivational research is concerned with investigating students' various behaviours and psychological responses in relation to their learning, such as their choices for participation in various activities, the quality of their involvement, their degrees of persistence and intensity, and their interpretations and feelings regarding their experiences in these activities (Maehr, Pintrich, & Linnenbrink, 2002). This research proposes that it is students' own interpretations and perceptions of reality that will determine their various behaviours for example, their choices (Eccles, 1983).

Within the context of achievement motivation students' achievement-related beliefs (for example, their expectancies for success, competence beliefs, and task values) are proposed to influence their motivation to engage in and perform various activities and

tasks (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). The level of value students assign to an activity is influenced by their perceptions of the importance of the activity, the intrinsic value of the activity, the usefulness of the activity, and the cost associated with participating in the activity (Eccles, Adler, Futterman, Goff, Kaczala, Meece, & Midgely, 1983). Motivational research which has considered students' choices for musical involvement within the context of music education has highlighted the important influence of students' achievement-related beliefs upon their decisions for musical involvement (Hayes, 1996; Hurley, 1995; McPherson, 2000-2001). These beliefs have been found to not only influence students' choices for initial involvement in musical activities but also their decisions for continued musical involvement.

Thomas (1992) states that research into students' motivation to learn and achieve has shifted from perceiving motivation as a relatively fixed trait to viewing it more as a constantly shifting interaction of the person with their environment. It is evident from the review of related literature (Chapter 2) that apart from students' achievement-related beliefs, various factors within their environments play an important role in their motivations for musical involvement. These environmental factors include other people (for example, family, teachers, and friends), home environments, school environments, and previous musical experiences.

Purpose of the Study

Austin and Vispoel (1998) maintain that the early years of secondary school are an important period in which students develop their motivation to learn and are required to make various decisions in relation to their involvement in music courses. The purpose of this study has been to explore the factors that influence students' decisions to study elective music in Years 8 and 11 of secondary school, in order to gain insights regarding the choices that students make in relation to their continued involvement in classroom music courses during secondary school. Students in this study were encouraged to express their perceptions of the influence of various factors upon their decisions to study elective music. In utilising a predominantly qualitative approach to address the study's

purpose, it has been possible for this study to ask questions that elicit a more detailed understanding of students' perceptions regarding the influence of various factors upon their decisions to study elective music.

Bresler (1992) states that in choosing which realities to study, qualitative researchers are interested in the unique aspects of a particular setting or context. The setting that has been chosen for this study is a selective girls' high school, in which I am a music teacher. The context of this school is discussed in Chapter 3. This study has specifically sought the viewpoints of the Year 8 students who elect to study the Additional Study Course and Year 11 students who elect to study the Music 2 course at this school.

It was not within the parameters of this study to explore all of the possible factors that may influence students' decisions to study elective music in secondary school.

Therefore, this study has focused upon a broad range of selected factors that have been shown by the review of literature (discussed in Chapter 2) to influence students' choices for musical involvement. In considering the factors that influence students' decisions to study elective music this study has specifically investigated students' perceptions of the influence of their achievement-related beliefs and factors within their environments. In addition, this study has examined students' initial involvement in formal musical activities including the nature of this initial involvement and the influences of other people upon their initial involvement. In so doing, this study has sought to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the history of musical involvement for Year 8 and Year 11 students?
 - a. When did Year 8 and Year 11 students first become involved in formal musical activities, what was the nature of this initial involvement, and who influenced their initial involvement?
 - b. What are Year 8 and Year 11 students' perceptions of the influence of various musical experiences upon their decisions to study elective music?

2. What are Year 8 and Year 11 students' perceptions of the influence of their achievement-related beliefs upon their decisions to study elective music?
 - a. Do Year 8 and Year 11 students choose to study elective music because they expect to do well and/or perceive themselves to be musically competent? If so, what are the influences upon these beliefs?
 - b. What do Year 8 and Year 11 students perceive to be the influence of task values upon their decisions to study elective music?
3. What are Year 8 and Year 11 students' perceptions of the influence of other people upon their decisions to study elective music?

In relation to these research questions this study has sought to identify the differences and similarities between the two year groups. In addition, even though individual differences were noted by this study the overall intention of the study was to highlight general themes that occurred both within and between the two year groups.

Significance of the Study

Radocy (1986) suggests that because of the elective nature of much musical activity beyond the elementary school years, research which considers the choices of students who elect music is potentially valuable. The small percentage of students who choose to study elective music in secondary schools throughout Australia indicates the need for research to explore the reasons that students have for choosing to continue their musical involvement in classroom music courses during secondary school. The significance of this study is that it investigates the factors that influence the decisions of students to study elective classroom music in secondary school. Even though this study was conducted within the context of a specific school and the results are not necessarily generalisable to other educational settings, it is anticipated that the results may illuminate the reasons that students have for their continued involvement in classroom

music courses during secondary school. Furthermore, it may be possible to infer from the results of this study why it is that students do not choose to study elective music.

Previous research exploring the decisions of students to study elective music in secondary school has only looked at the influences upon students' choices to study elective music in junior secondary school (Hayes, 1996). The cross-sectional design of this study has enabled comparisons to be made between students who choose to study elective music in junior secondary school (Year 8) and students who decide to study elective music in senior secondary school (Year 11). The comparisons between the two year groups have highlighted both the differences and similarities in the factors which influenced students' decisions to study elective music.

Of additional significance in this study is its consideration of a broad range of possible factors that may potentially influence students' decisions, in contrast to the limited scope of previous studies. For example, in a previous Australian study, Hayes (1996) focused on the influence of teacher behaviour upon students' choices to study elective music in Years 9 and 10 of secondary school. This current study will expand the factors to include students' achievement-related beliefs and factors within their environment.

In considering the reasons that students have for studying elective music, this study draws upon the findings and theories of motivational research. Much motivational research relates to the motivation of students studying various academic subjects (for example, mathematics and English). However, less research has examined the motivation of students who study music as a subject. In investigating the factors that motivate students to study elective classroom music this study will contribute to the existing knowledge of the motivational process at work in the context of music education.

Minimal research has studied the motivational decisions of students in relation to their involvement in various musical activities. In addition, the studies that have explored students' motivational decisions focused on their choices in relation to involvement in

instrumental music activities (Hurley, 1995; MacKenzie, 1991; McPherson, 2000-2001; Pettengell, 1997). Furthermore, most of the students in these studies were generally primary school students. Less research has been conducted to investigate the choices of students in relation to their musical involvement in secondary school. Even fewer studies have considered why students choose to study elective classroom music in secondary school. The significance of this study is that it examines the decisions of secondary school students who choose to study elective classroom music, thus providing information potentially of benefit to educators and educational policy makers who are concerned with music in secondary school.

Very little of the motivational research in music education is conducted within the context of Australian educational settings. Furthermore, Elkan (1996) states that there is a lack of motivational research in music education in relation to all age groups in Australian schools. The significance of environmental factors upon students' motivational decisions highlights the importance of conducting research in different educational contexts. It is anticipated that the results from this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge obtained in different educational settings across various countries.

Few studies have utilised qualitative methods in order to address the factors which influence students' decisions for musical involvement. In adopting a predominantly qualitative design to consider the factors which influence students' decisions to study elective music in secondary school it is anticipated that the results from this study will contribute to the knowledge acquired in previous quantitative studies. Howe and Sloboda (1991a) maintain that qualitative methods enable a greater depth of data which is not always possible with purely quantitative methods.

An additional significant aspect of this study is that it directly seeks students' perceptions. Sloboda and Howe (1991) state that the insights of individual learners provide an understanding of how they perceive and experience various aspects of their musical development. By investigating the influence of various factors through students'

own perceptions this study will facilitate a more in depth understanding of their reasons for choosing to study elective music in secondary school.

Furthermore, the results of study are potentially significant for the school in which the study is conducted and for myself as a teacher at the school. The insights gained from this study will enable other music teachers at the school and myself to gain a better understanding in relation to the influences upon students' decisions to study elective music in junior and senior secondary school.

In addition, there are numerous practical implications of the results of this study. If elective music class sizes become too small in senior secondary school then the subject may have to operate on a reduced period allocation. In junior secondary school elective music may not be offered at all if class sizes are too small. The results of this study will also enable my colleagues and myself to design classroom music programmes which will hopefully increase students' interest to continue their involvement in classroom music by choosing to study elective music. In conclusion, even though the results of this study are unique to the school in which the study was conducted, it is anticipated that in highlighting the factors which influence students' decisions to study elective music in secondary school the study may have potential significance for other educational settings both in Australia and internationally.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In examining the choices of students who study elective music in secondary school, this study has explored the factors that influence these decisions. In reviewing the literature relevant to this study this chapter outlines the research that relates to the various factors which can potentially influence students' motivational decisions for musical involvement. These factors include students' achievement-related beliefs (for example, their expectations for success in an activity, their beliefs regarding their competence to perform the activity, and their values for the activity) and various influences within their environments including other people, home and school environments, and previous musical experiences. This study has sought students' own perceptions in relation to the influence of these various factors upon their motivational decisions to study elective music.

The initial part of this chapter reviews definitions, models, and theories of motivation. This is followed by an examination of the nature of students' achievement-related beliefs, the various components of these beliefs, and the influences upon these beliefs. The subsequent part of the chapter reviews the literature relating to the influence of students' achievement-related beliefs upon their motivations for initial musical involvement, continued musical involvement, and discontinued musical involvement. This is then followed by an exploration of the influence of various environmental factors upon students' motivations for musical involvement. The final part of this chapter presents the conclusions drawn from this review.

Definitions, Models, and Theories of Motivation

This purpose of this first part of the chapter is to provide a conceptual framework for the subsequent sections in the literature review. The initial section outlines the various definitions of motivation as they appear within the literature. The subsequent section

presents some of the more prominent models and theories of achievement motivation, and the conceptual framework upon which they are based.

Defining Motivation

Motivation is perceived as an essential, if not fundamental part of both the teaching and learning process (Asmus, 1994; Austin & Vispoel, 1992; O'Neill & McPherson, 2002). Within the body of motivational research and literature, numerous conceptions of motivation are related to different motivational theories and models. These conceptions have changed and continue to evolve as a result of ongoing research in this area.

The study of motivation is essentially concerned with the causes of goal-oriented activity (Dweck, 1986). Austin and Vispoel (1992) state that “[m]otivation is an umbrella term for any number of psychological constructs that may be used to interpret goal-directed behaviour” (p.1). O'Neill and McPherson (2002) maintain that motivation is no longer perceived purely as a distinct set of psychological constructs, but rather as an essential component of learning. Consequently, motivation is perceived as a component in the learning process that enables students to adopt a range of behaviours which will help them achieve their full potential and personal goals.

Maehr et al. (2002) suggest that student learning can be viewed not only in terms of their degree of skill, but also their degree of will. Therefore, from this perspective motivation can be interpreted as a student's ongoing will to learn. Similarly, Bowman (2002) views the outcome of education as not just what a person knows or can do but “. . . the attitudes and dispositions that orient and motivate an individual” (p.66).

Asmus (1994) defines motivation as the driving force behind behaviour that supplies individuals with the energy for seeking out and engaging in tasks. In relation to music, he states that it is the driving force behind students' decisions to be involved in musical activities and to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge inherent to these activities.

In general terms motivation may be viewed along two dimensions: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is cognitive in nature and is a result of factors that are internal to the individual (Asmus, 1994). Students are intrinsically motivated for example, if they engage in an activity because they derive enjoyment from their participation. Harter (1981) defines intrinsic motivation as students' orientation toward their learning and mastery within the context of the classroom. Therefore, students who are highly intrinsically motivated are more inclined to engage in the process of learning and mastery. In contrast, when students are motivated by factors that are external to themselves they are described as extrinsically motivated (Asmus, 1994). Asmus suggests that extrinsic motivation can be a result of reinforcement contingencies, and environmental and social factors.

Findings from motivational research contribute to our understanding of students' goal directed behaviour (O'Neill & McPherson, 2002). These findings illustrate how students vary in the degree and intensity of persistence they display in reaching their goals, the choices they make, and how they assess and attribute causes for their success and failure in numerous achievement contexts. This knowledge is potentially important because it can enable teachers to improve student behaviours and outcomes in relation to their learning (Taelte & Cutietta, 2002).

Models and Theories of Motivation

Although there is apparent conflict among researchers and theorists as to how motivation emerges and is initiated within academic settings, agreement exists regarding certain types of indicators of motivation (Maehr et al., 2002). The degree to which an individual is motivated to pursue an activity and the nature of this pursuit, are indicated by certain types of behaviours and psychological responses (for example, cognitive and affective responses).

The various degrees to which students display these behaviours and psychological responses can provide information to music educators regarding students' motivation to

learn (Maehr et al., 2002). Motivational research which explores various behaviours and psychological responses is concerned with students' degrees of persistence, intensity and quality of engagement, reasons and preferences for engaging in various tasks, interpretations of their experiences, and their feelings in relation to these experiences (Maehr et al., 2002).

Theories and research that endeavour to explain behaviours and psychological responses in achievement contexts are situated within the field of 'achievement motivation'. Eccles, Wigfield, and Schiefele (1998) define achievement motivation as "... the motive related to performance on tasks involving standards of excellence ... " (p.1017). Research relating to achievement motivation explores the motivation of individuals within achievement settings such as schools.

Recent psychological and motivational research has been dominated by socio-cognitive models of motivation (Austin & Vispoel, 1992). Socio-cognitive theories of motivation perceive motivation in terms of a decision-making process, whereby individuals make cognitive interpretations of past events, future events, or their own cognitions (Austin & Vispoel, 1992). Therefore, it is not reality as such, but individuals' interpretations or perceptions of this reality and their associated thought processes that will determine their subsequent achievement behaviours and psychological responses (Austin & Vispoel, 1992; Eccles, 1983). Various models and theories of achievement motivation posit that students' interpretations of their achievement outcomes affect their achievement behaviours and psychological responses more so than their actual past performances (Eccles, Wigfield, Harold, & Blumenfeld, 1993). Eccles (1983) states that if students differ from each other in the way they interpret their past experiences, then they will also differ in the conclusions they make regarding the meaning of these experiences.

The increasing emphasis upon socio-cognitive theories of motivation (for example, 'expectancy-value theory' Eccles et al., 1983; 'attribution theory' Weiner, 1974; and 'self-efficacy theory' Bandura, 1977) represents a shift away from perceiving motivation as a global, internal state that is dependent upon external factors, toward emphasising the

role of cognitive mediators (Dweck, 1986). Expectancy-value theory proposes that students' expectations for success and the value they attach to this success are important in determining their degree of motivation and choices to perform various tasks (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). Attribution theory posits that students' motivation can be understood by exploring the causes to which they attribute their successes and failure in learning (Weiner, 1974). Within self-efficacy theory the beliefs students have in relation to their own effectiveness are proposed to influence their ability to cope with various situations, their levels of persistence, and the choices they make regarding their involvement in activities (Bandura, 1977).

Dweck (1986) states that even though external factors and internal affective states are still considered within socio-cognitive theories of motivation they are viewed as part of a process which is best understood by focusing on organising cognitive variables. These organising cognitive variables are commonly referred to as achievement-related beliefs. Various models and theories of achievement motivation incorporate components of these achievement-related beliefs which are used to explain and predict students' achievement behaviours. The following part of this chapter explores these achievement-beliefs further.

Achievement-related Beliefs

This part of the chapter explores the influence of achievement-related beliefs upon students' achievement behaviours. The initial section considers the nature of achievement-related beliefs. The subsequent section outlines the various components of these beliefs and is followed by the final section which addresses some of the influences upon students' achievement-related beliefs.

The Nature of Achievement-related Beliefs

The study of achievement motivation focuses on individuals' achievement-related beliefs as significant mediators of their subsequent achievement behaviours (Wigfield,

Eccles, Yoon, Harold, Arbretton, Freedman-Doan, & Blumenfeld, 1997). Various models and theories of achievement motivation propose that students' achievement-related beliefs exert an important influence on their motivation to perform various tasks or activities (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). Students' achievement-related beliefs have been found to influence their various achievement behaviours such as future choices, persistence levels, and levels of performance (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002).

Eccles and her colleagues (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles et al., 1998; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992) also propose that students' achievement-related beliefs are influenced by various task-specific beliefs. These beliefs include students' perceptions of task difficulty and their own ability, their self-schema (for example, identity), and goals. In turn, these beliefs are thought to be influenced by students' perceptions of the expectations and attitudes of other people, and students' interpretations of prior achievement outcomes.

Achievement-related beliefs refer to students' competence-related beliefs (for example, their expectancies for success and self-perceptions of ability) and their subjective task values (Stipek, 1984; Wigfield et al., 1997). Subjective task values refer to the way in which a task or activity meets the needs of the individual (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992; Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). Within models of achievement motivation there is an assumption that competence-related beliefs and subjective task values are distinct constructs, and that these beliefs exert an independent influence upon an individual's achievement behaviours in various domains (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992, Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). Wigfield (1994) suggests that further research is needed to identify the meaning of these constructs to children across different age levels. Furthermore, McPherson (2000-2001) states that achievement-related beliefs need to be carefully examined as they unfold over time.

Within achievement motivation models and research, competence-related beliefs have been given greater attention than subjective task values (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). Furthermore, competence-related beliefs, more so than subjective task values, have been found to have a greater direct influence upon students' performance and be more

predictive of students' future performance than their decisions to enroll in courses (Eccles et al., 1983; Meece, Wigfield, & Eccles, 1990). In contrast, some theorists while recognising the important influence of competence-related beliefs have argued that children's subjective task values are important predictors of their achievement behaviours, particularly their task choices (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles et al., 1993; Meece et al., 1990; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992). However, Wigfield and Eccles (2002) suggest that it is possible for the different components of students' achievement-related beliefs to have an indirect influence upon their various achievement behaviours.

Wigfield et al. (1997) state that competence-related beliefs are generally conceptualised as either students' estimates of how good they are at a given activity (competence beliefs), their expectations for future performance (expectancies for success), or their self-efficacy. However, Wigfield and Eccles (2002) assert that it is important to acknowledge the apparent differences in definitions of competence-related beliefs that exist between the various models and theories of motivation. Research has shown that even when previous performance is controlled, competence-related beliefs can predict students' future performance, achievement goals, sense of self-worth, and the amount of effort exerted (Eccles et al., 1983; Wigfield et al., 1997).

Studies exploring the degree to which competence beliefs and expectancies for success are differentiated from each other have found no distinctions between the two components of competence-related beliefs (Eccles et al., 1993). It would appear that students do not clearly differentiate between their competence beliefs and expectancies for success (Eccles et al., 1993; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992). Furthermore, even though there appears to be a positive relationship between the two components of competence-related beliefs, the direction of causality has not yet been determined by research.

In contrast, research has shown that students are able to make clear distinctions between their subjective task values and competence-related beliefs (Eccles et al., 1993). McPherson (2000-2001) found that many of the children (aged 7 to 9) in his study gave clear views of their competence in relation to the other children, and were able to

discriminate between the various components of expectancies and values without having a great deal of previous experience. They were able to distinguish between their interest in learning a musical instrument, the perceived importance of being good at a musical instrument, the usefulness of learning an instrument to their short- and long-term goals, and the cost of participation in terms of the amount of effort needed for continued improvement.

Some researchers have also found that competence beliefs and values are positively related. Eccles et al. (1983) state that children will value the activities in which they believe they are competent. This more recent view contradicts the earlier assumptions of Atkinson (1957), who proposed that children would place more value on the subjects in which they do not feel competent or have low expectations for success. In support of Eccles et al.'s (1983) statement, Wigfield et al. (1997) found that the relationships between children's competence beliefs and values for various activities (for example, mathematics, reading, instrumental music, and sports) were all found to be positive, particularly among older children. This study showed that children tend to value tasks in which they think they will be successful. However, Wigfield et al. (1997) question the direction of causality between these beliefs and propose that further research should address this issue.

Components of Achievement-related Beliefs

The following sections outline the various components of students' achievement-related beliefs as they are conceived within theories of achievement motivation. These components include expectancies for success, competence beliefs, and task values.

Expectancies for success

Individuals' expectations for success have been widely acknowledged by achievement theorists and researchers as an important factor in determining and influencing achievement behaviours (Eccles, 1983). McPherson and McCormick (2000) state that

expectancies are essential to continuing motivation. Expectancies were originally defined by Atkinson (1957) as the expectations that individuals held about their performance being followed by a certain consequence (for example, success or failure).

Wigfield (1994) states that numerous researchers have incorporated expectations for future outcomes as integral constructs in their models of achievement motivation. Within the context of more recent theories of achievement motivation (for example, expectancy-value theory), expectancies for success are defined as individuals' beliefs regarding how well they think they will do on a task in the immediate or long-term future (Eccles et al., 1998; Wigfield, 1994). Attribution theory states that students' expectations for success are influenced by the reasons they cite for their successes and failures (Weiner, 1974). Bandura (1977) outlined two kinds of expectancy beliefs in his model of self-efficacy. For example, when individuals believe that a given behaviour can produce a certain outcome they are described as holding outcome expectations. On the other hand, efficacy expectations relate to individuals' beliefs concerning their ability to produce that particular outcome.

Some also propose that expectancies for success may be specific or general (Pintrich, 1989). For example, if students believe they will do well on an upcoming music performance assessment, then they hold short-term expectancy beliefs. In contrast, if students think they will do well overall in a particular music course they hold long-term expectancy beliefs.

Competence beliefs

Self-perceptions of ability or competence beliefs play an important part in numerous models of achievement motivation. Students' beliefs about ability, commonly referred to as competence beliefs, relate to the evaluations they make of their competence in different tasks (Wigfield, 1994). The perceptions that students form of their ability will relate to the choices that they make in school, their levels of involvement and achievement in various tasks, their ability to seek out and enjoy challenges, and their

capacity to persist in the face of difficulties (Dweck, 2002). Students' perceptions of ability appear to vary with age and across different domains (Eccles et al., 1993; Wigfield et al., 1997).

There is much discussion regarding the best way to conceptualise individuals' beliefs about ability (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). Wigfield and Eccles state that various definitions differ in terms of the level of specificity at which constructs are both defined and measured, and that there are differences in terms of whether constructs focus upon a student's own sense of competence or the student's competence relative to others. Wigfield and Eccles measure competence beliefs at a domain-specific level, and incorporate both students' own beliefs regarding their ability and beliefs about their ability in relation to others.

Competence beliefs are also related to students' achievement goals or goal orientations. The two primary goal orientations of students are generally referred to as learning goals and performance goals (Maehr et al., 2002). Dweck (1985) states that students who have learning goals endeavour to increase their competence by developing new skills and mastering new tasks. In contrast, students who have performance goals attempt to validate their competence by seeking to obtain favourable judgements of their ability. Elliot and Dweck (1988) propose that students' goal orientations interact with their confidence and in turn influence their choices, performance, and persistence.

Students' perceptions of ability and choice of goals can also predict their motivational patterns of behaviour (Dweck, 1986; Elliot & Dweck, 1988). Elliot and Dweck (1988) state that students who engage in helpless patterns of behaviour pursue performance goals in which they endeavour to prove their competence and avoid failure and negative evaluations. These students display less persistence when confronted with obstacles, tend to avoid challenges, and are less able to establish reasonable and valued goals (Dweck, 1986). In contrast, students who engage in mastery-oriented patterns of behaviour tend to pursue learning goals in which they attempt to improve their competence (Elliot & Dweck, 1988). These students are more inclined to pursue goals

that are both personally valued and challenging, and interpret failure and difficulty as part of the learning process (Dweck, 1986; Elliot & Dweck, 1988).

Task values

Task values, that is the value that students assign to a task or activity, appear to have the strongest direct influence upon students' achievement choices (Meece et al., 1990; Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). Eccles (1983) suggests that students' choices to engage in and continue instruction in various activities are mainly influenced by the values they hold for an activity. In support of this suggestion, Hurley (1995) found that value considerations were possibly more important than expectations of current and future success in the achievement choices that students made in relation to learning a musical instrument.

The relative value of various activities has also been identified by research. These studies have shown that students make distinctions between the value they assign to various activities and do not perceive all activities as equally important or useful (Eccles et al., 1993; Wigfield et al., 1997). For example, the elementary school students in Wigfield et al.'s study considered reading, mathematics, and sports to be more useful than music. Similarly, Hurley (1995) found that the importance of the 'core' subjects (for example, mathematics, science, and English) was recognised by all of the students and music courses were perceived to be of secondary importance and value for their future career goals.

Wigfield (1994) comments that values have been defined in both broad and specific terms. In his expectancy-value model Atkinson (1957) defined values as the relative attractiveness or unattractiveness of the consequences or goals in relation to a situation or event. Values were broadly defined by Rockeach (1979) as beliefs about desired end states:

. . . values are core conceptions of the desirable within every individual and society. They serve as standards or criteria to guide not only action but also

judgement, choice, attitude, evaluation, argument, exhortation, rationalisation, and, one might add, attribution of causality. (p.2)

Rokeach maintained that the set of values he had identified were fundamental to the human experience. However, Wigfield and Eccles (1992) argue that Rokeach's (1979) assertion that the same values apply across cultures is somewhat naive. Wigfield and Eccles maintain that cultures differ in the degree of importance they attach to various values and may also have quite different values from each other. However, Wigfield and Eccles also state that Rokeach's work has provided important ideas for identifying the general role that values play in motivating behaviour.

In the context of achievement motivation, subjective task values are defined more specifically in terms of the way in which a task meets the various needs of an individual (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992, Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). Within this context values are proposed to consist of four main components: attainment value, intrinsic value, utility value, and cost of participation (Eccles et al., 1983). Attainment value and intrinsic value are generally perceived as intrinsic motivations, whereas utility and cost are viewed as extrinsic motivations (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992).

Attainment value refers to the importance to an individual of doing well on a given task or being good at an activity (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles et al., 1998). In addition, attainment value is more broadly defined in terms of its relationship to an individual's identity. For example, students will be more inclined to view tasks as important when these tasks are essential to their sense of themselves (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992). Intrinsic value relates to the inherent enjoyment or subjective interest that an individual derives from participating in a task (Eccles et al., 1998).

Utility value refers to the perceived usefulness of an activity to students' future short and/or long-term goals (Eccles et al., 1998). Goals are defined as the broad purposes that students have for their learning or engagement in activities (Eccles et al., 1983). Students' achievement behaviour may be guided by their broad goals, such as their plans for a career and their desire to act in accordance with particular behavioural standards

(Wigfield, 1994). Therefore, if a task facilitates future goals for an individual it will have positive value, even if the individual may not be intrinsically interested in the task itself.

Cost of participation is related to the relative cost and negative aspects of engaging in an activity (Eccles et al., 1998). There may be emotional costs associated with an activity such as performance anxiety and/or fear of failure or success. Students may also experience lost opportunities to do other things and may be required to spend a lot of time and effort in order to succeed in the chosen activity.

Influences upon Students' Achievement-related Beliefs

The following sections address some of the various influences upon students' achievement-related beliefs that have been identified by previous research. These influences include age and grade-related differences, and the influence of other people (for example, parents and teachers).

Age and grade level differences in students' achievement-related beliefs

Studies exploring the development of achievement-related beliefs have examined how these beliefs are differentiated both between and within different domains, and how they change with increasing grade level (Eccles et al., 1993; Wigfield et al., 1997). Numerous researchers have identified a decline in the achievement-related beliefs of students as they become older. Furthermore, the transition from primary to secondary school appears to have a significant influence upon these beliefs. The results from previous research reflect an overall pattern of decline in both students' competence beliefs and their valuing of various activities from elementary school through to middle adolescence (Austin & Vispoel, 1998).

Both Eccles et al. (1993) and Wigfield et al. (1997) investigated the development of students' achievement-related beliefs, and how and when these beliefs become differentiated across elementary school years. Eccles et al. employed a cross-sectional

design. In contrast, Wigfield et al. utilised a longitudinal design. Both studies administered questionnaires assessing children's achievement-related beliefs in various domains (for example, mathematics, reading, sports, and instrumental music) to 865 elementary school children (grades 1, 2, and 4) in four semi-urban school districts in South-Eastern Michigan.

Eccles et al. (1993) found that children as young as first grade were able to distinguish between their perceptions of competence for a task and its value to them across various domains. Eccles et al. also found that younger children, particularly the first graders, held higher perceptions of their competence than the fourth graders across numerous domains. Correspondingly, in Wigfield et al.'s (1997) study the younger students' evaluations of their ability tended to be more optimistic and positive, whereas older students held more realistic beliefs. Some suggest that this is due to the increased feedback which children receive as they grow older (Wigfield, 1994). These results are similar to research conducted with music students which showed younger children evaluated their success on a performance in a music test more highly than did the older children (O'Neill & Sloboda, 1997).

Eccles et al. (1993) and Wigfield et al. (1997) found that in contrast to their competence beliefs, students' task values in various domains revealed fewer and smaller differences across grade levels. Students' levels of interest varied more by domain, indicating that it is important to consider the different components of children's subjective task values (Wigfield et al., 1997). However, a grade-related decline was found in the value students assigned to instrumental music and reading. Furthermore, generally the younger children tended to value all activities, except for sport, more highly than did the older children. Research conducted with older children and adolescents has also identified patterns of change in their values and competence beliefs that are dependent upon the domain (Eccles, Wigfield, Flanagan, Miller, Reuman, & Yee, 1989; Wigfield, Eccles, Mac Iver, Reuman, & Midgely, 1991).

In Wigfield et al.'s (1997) study, the strongest decline in children's competence beliefs and values was observed in the domain of instrumental music, which they suggest has important implications for children's choices in this domain. They found that the students in their study had formed competence beliefs and values for instrumental music which had already started to decline, even before most of them had begun formal instruction.

The results of Wigfield et al.'s (1997) study support the view that children's achievement-related beliefs become established during middle childhood and become more stable with increasing age. This was particularly true for children's competence beliefs and their perceptions of the usefulness and importance of various activities. However, Wigfield et al. contend that stability in competence beliefs may not necessarily be a good thing as it may be difficult to change the beliefs of children who hold negative perceptions of their competence. Wigfield et al.'s results also indicated that even though values appear to become more stable with increasing age, they are not as stable as competence beliefs. They suggest that this may be due in part to the influence of different teaching styles, in which different levels of interest and importance are displayed between teachers of various domains.

A study conducted with music students in three different schools in Portugal (Mota, 1999), obtained similar results to those of Wigfield et al. (1997). Mota employed interviews to investigate the determinants of musical development of 100 children (grades 1 to 3) enrolled in classroom music over a three-year period. The results of this study showed that even though students all expressed high expectations for success before they began music instruction, their motivation to learn an instrument and musical self-competence declined during the three-year period. Mota concluded that the decline in the children's intrinsic motivation to learn a musical instrument may have been a result of poor teaching techniques. Therefore, Mota suggested that future research needs to examine how students come to value music, and explore the influence of teaching style and music content upon students' expectations for future success. Similarly, studies conducted in other subject areas have found that students become less intrinsically

motivated as they grow older (Eccles, Midgely, & Adler, 1984; Harter, 1981). In her study with students in grades three to nine, Harter (1981) found that the grade nine students appeared to be motivated by the desire to achieve grades and meet teacher expectations. In contrast, the grade three students were more intrinsically motivated.

Some suggest that children may encounter greater and more frequent difficulties much earlier in music than in other domains. Results from O'Neill and Sloboda's (1997) study indicate that helpless patterns of behaviour may be affecting children much earlier in the music domain than in other domains. They suggest that this could be due to the many difficulties that music students encounter in the initial stages of learning (for example, posture, rhythm, tone, and intonation). As a result of these difficulties, children may experience many situations of failure which have important consequences for their future achievement behaviours. Similarly, Mota (1999) suggests that the decline in children's self-perceptions of musical competence may be due in part to an increasing awareness of the inherent difficulties in the process of learning music.

The transition from primary school to secondary school appears to be a critical stage for the decline in students' achievement-related beliefs. Studies conducted with young adolescents (Eccles et al., 1983; Wigfield et al., 1991) have shown that their competence beliefs for various subjects (for example, mathematics and English) decline during the transition from elementary school (Grade 6) to junior high school (Grade 7). Similarly, studies conducted with music students show a significant change in students' self-perceptions of their musical ability which also seems to occur in the transition from primary to secondary school (Asmus, 1986; Frakes, as cited in Radocy, 1986). Wragg (1974) also found a decline in students' interest in music, indicated by a 96% fall-out of students participating in school based musical activities moving from primary to secondary school.

Wragg (1974) proposes that the explanation for the decline of students' interest in music during the transition from primary to secondary school may lie in society itself. She suggests that children are attracted to an alternative music culture which is propelled and

encouraged by commercial forces that may have few links to school music. However, she also asserts that the reasons which contribute to a decline in students' interest in music are difficult to isolate and may lie to some extent in the maturation process of the child and so are inevitable. Some also propose that the school environment is an important influence upon the decline in students' achievement-related beliefs. This factor will be discussed in the section entitled *The Influence of the Secondary School Environment*.

The influence of other people upon students' achievement-related beliefs

Parents' and teachers' expectations have been found to have an important influence upon students' achievement-related beliefs (Eccles, 1983; Eccles et al., 1983). Wigfield et al. (1997) found that during middle childhood, children's achievement-related beliefs corresponded more closely with those of their adult evaluators. Wigfield et al. suggest that this indicates an integration of information received by children regarding their performance. Furthermore, in contrast to the children's own competence beliefs, Wigfield et al. found that the evaluations parents and teachers made of the children's competence did not decline during middle childhood.

Eccles et al. (1983) state that students who have high expectations and do well in their learning also tend to have parents and teachers who have high expectations for them. In their study of the determinants of students' decisions to enroll in advanced mathematics courses, Eccles et al. found that students' expectancies and plans were related to their parents' and teachers' beliefs regarding their aptitude and potential in mathematics. Furthermore, the results showed that students' parents, particularly their mothers, were more influential upon their achievement-related beliefs than their teachers. Similarly, Wigfield et al. (1997) found that the correlation between mothers' beliefs regarding their children's competence and those of their children's was stronger than teachers' beliefs and those of their students.

Research conducted with music students has found that parents' musical values and attitudes are important in developing their children's own attitudes to musical involvement (Achilles, 1992; Brand, 1986; Chadwick, 1999b, 2001; Olszewski, Kulieke, & Buescher, 1987). In addition, some propose that because parents are typically their children's first teachers, they can help to encourage positive attitudes toward learning and influence the musical achievement of their children (Achilles, 1992; Zdzinski, 1996). Olszewski et al. (1987) state that parents have a tendency to express values which relate to the importance of academic achievement and actively influence their children's pursuit of various domains and disciplines.

Similarly, Eccles et al. (1998) suggest that parents' own beliefs regarding the value of various activities and their encouragement of their children to pursue these activities have an important influence upon their children's motivation. Addison (1990) found that parents who were interested in music or whose children were interested in music placed a higher value on the importance of music and musical activities. However, he also found that parents who expressed no interest in music were keen for their children to participate in various musical experiences at school. The parents in Addison's study perceived the value and importance of music as related to its therapeutic value, ability to reduce stress, and usefulness. Achilles (1992) found that the parents of preschool aged children placed importance on the intrinsic value (for example, enjoyment) of musical involvement.

Research has also identified the important influence of teachers' and parents' attitudes, expectations, and behaviours upon students' self-concept, achievement, and continued interest in music (Hedden, 1982; Hurley, 1995; Klinedinst, 1991; Temmerman, 1993). Hurley found that students' decisions for initial and continued musical involvement had been influenced by the attitudes, expectations, and behaviours of their teachers. Research has also shown that music teachers can increase students' achievement in music by emphasising the development of positive attitudes toward music and positive self-concepts in music (Hedden, 1982; Klinedinst, 1991).

Parents and teachers can have both positive and negative influence upon students' achievement-related beliefs. Mota (1999) suggests that the decline in children's self-perceptions of competence and intrinsic interest in her study may have been due to poor teaching strategies in which there was an extensive emphasis upon aural skills and conventional music notation. Furthermore, only eight children in Mota's study cited the positive feedback of parents when indicating reasons for their ratings in musical self-competence. Similarly, Temmerman (1993) found that music teachers play a significant role in the development of long-term positive or negative attitudes toward music.

The results from Boyack's (1999) study also revealed that individuals' beliefs regarding their musical capability are particularly sensitive to the negative comments of teachers, family, and peers. Boyack states that very young children tend not to be aware of the judgements of others. However, over time they develop an increased awareness of these judgements. She suggests that if children are encouraged and appreciated then they are more likely to experience enjoyment and positive associations with their musical activities. However, if children receive negative feedback they will be more inclined to associate their musical experiences with unpleasant feelings and uncomfortable psychological responses which are not conducive to improved performance.

This part of the chapter has highlighted some of the complexities surrounding both the influence of students' achievement-related beliefs upon their various achievement behaviours and the influences upon these beliefs. The following part of this chapter explores in greater detail the influence of students' achievement-related beliefs upon their motivations for musical involvement.

The Influence of Achievement-related Beliefs upon Students' Motivations for their Initial, Continued, and Discontinued Musical Involvement

Studies conducted with instrumental music students have shown that students have initial expectations and values that have the potential to shape their subsequent musical development (McPherson, 2000-2001). The research reviewed in this part of the chapter

relates to the influence of students' achievement-related beliefs on their decisions for musical involvement.

While many studies have explored the influence of students' achievement-related beliefs upon their levels of performance in music, fewer studies have investigated the influence of these beliefs upon students' reasons for beginning musical instruction and their continued persistence in learning. Numerous studies have found that students' decisions for musical involvement are made mainly from personal choice (Elkan, 1996; Hayes, 1996; Hurley, 1995; MacKenzie, 1991). These studies also show that students' achievement-related beliefs play an important influential role upon their decisions. McPherson (2000-2001) states that it is important to recognise and understand these motivational forces by exploring the perceptions and expectations of students before they commence learning.

Choices are thought to be influenced by task characteristics which are both positive and negative (Eccles et al., 1998). In addition, the act of making a choice often negates other possible choices. Therefore, the relative value and probability of success are essential influences upon students' achievement-related choices. These achievement-related choices can include the choice of which course to study, which career to pursue, and the pursuit of recreational activities. The following sections review the literature that relates to students' choices for initial, continued, and discontinued involvement in music.

Students' Decisions for their Initial Musical Involvement

O'Neill (1999) contends that even though the motivation of students has been inextricably linked to their educational, social, and cultural environments an intrinsic interest in music is necessary for the commitment to achieve even modest levels of musical competence. Research has found that the intrinsic value of music is a particularly important determinant of students' decisions for musical involvement.

MacKenzie (1991) administered a questionnaire to 48 students (aged 7 to 11) in order to explore their initial choices for learning a musical instrument. The eight choice categories in the questionnaire were designed to explore four potential determinants of students' choices: social, school, home, and personal. MacKenzie found that the intrinsic value of learning a musical instrument was the most commonly cited determinant of students' choices. These students indicated that their decisions were mainly influenced by their interest in playing an instrument and their enjoyment of music.

In using an adaptation of MacKenzie's questionnaire, Pettengell (1997) obtained similar results in her study with older instrumental music students in Sydney metropolitan secondary schools. She found that the majority of students cited the intrinsic value of learning a string instrument as the main influence upon their decisions to learn an instrument. Students indicated that they were interested in learning a string instrument, wanted to play in an ensemble, and liked the sound of the string instrument.

Studies using interviews that have been conducted with instrumental student have also produced similar results. McPherson (2000-2001) interviewed children (grades 3 to 4, aged 7 to 9) who were enrolled in school band programmes within the Sydney metropolitan region in order to examine their values in relation to how long they perceived they would learn their instrument. McPherson found that many of the children were intrinsically interested in learning a musical instrument. Similarly, Hurley (1995) interviewed students (grades 4 and 6) in order to ascertain their self-perceived motivations for their initial enrollment and continued musical involvement in string study. Hurley states that specific reasons common to every student were not identified. However, his results correspond with the studies of Mackenzie (1991), Pettengell (1997), and McPherson (2000-2001) in that the majority of students overwhelmingly cited personal interest factors which focused on an intrinsic interest in music or in the musical instrument itself. In addition, a number of students in Hurley's study stated that they were interested in learning a string instrument because they thought it would be fun.

Few studies have investigated the factors that influence students' decisions to study elective classroom music in secondary school. Hayes (1996) used a questionnaire to investigate the influence of teacher behaviour upon Year 9 students' decisions to study the Additional Study Course of classroom music in Years 9 and 10 in a selected sample of Sydney metropolitan secondary schools. Similarly to the studies conducted with instrumental music students, most of the Year 9 students cited intrinsic value considerations for their choice to study elective music. The majority of students referred to the enjoyment of listening to music as an important reason for choosing to study elective music. These students stated that they were influenced by the enjoyment of listening to music outside of school, which provided them with the incentive to choose music at school. Furthermore, the students cited the enjoyment of their previous Year 8 Mandatory Course music classes as an influence upon their decisions to study elective music.

Eccles (1983) suggests that students who have confidence in their musical abilities will be more motivated to study music. In support of this suggestion research has also identified the importance of students' competence beliefs upon their decisions for musical involvement. Most of the students in Hayes's (1996) study perceived themselves as being good at music and indicated that their high musical abilities were an important influence upon their decisions to study elective music. Similarly, Kehrberg (as cited in Krueger, 1989) found that students' self-appraisal of their musical ability and skills influenced their levels of participation in school musical activities. Students who held high competence beliefs were more inclined to participate in musical activities. Eccles (1983) also proposes that students will be more motivated to study music in preference to other subjects if they perceive musical ability as one of their strengths.

In addition, research has shown that students' perceptions regarding the usefulness of music have important consequences for their musical involvement. McPherson (2000-2001) found that some of the students in his study recognised the utility value of learning an instrument in terms of their overall music education. Students acknowledged the usefulness of learning an instrument in order to improve their musical abilities.

Similarly, the students in Hayes' (1996) study stated that they had chosen to study elective music in order to further their musical abilities.

Eccles (1983) maintains that the usefulness of an activity will be increased if it relates to the future goals of the student. McPherson (2000-2001) found that even though the majority of students in his study recognised the short-term utility of learning an instrument while they were in school they perceived it to be of far less value later in life. Only a few students thought that their involvement in music may possibly lead to a future career in music.

Hurley (1995) also found that several students cited extrinsic factors as value considerations for beginning a string instrument. These extrinsic factors included participating in the string class in order to miss a less desirable class and choosing to play a string instrument because the instrument they wanted to play was not offered by the school. However, Hurley suggests that these initial extrinsic value considerations for learning a musical instrument may need to be altered if students are to sustain their intrinsic interest in music.

Students' Decisions for their Continued Musical Involvement

Similarly to students' initial decisions for musical involvement, their choices to continue musical involvement appear to be influenced by their competence beliefs. Frakes (as cited in Radocy, 1986) suggests that students' choices to continue with their musical studies are related to positive self-perceptions of their musical skills. In support of this suggestion, Hurley (1995) found that students who were continuing with their music studies expressed positive self-concepts and perceived themselves as successful in learning a string instrument. Similarly, in a study conducted with tertiary-age students, those students who had continued with their musical involvement beyond high school were found to hold relatively high opinions of their musical ability (Covington, 1983). Likewise, in a study conducted with grade five instrumental students, Klinedinst (1991) found that the retention of these students could be predicted by their self-concept in

music. Klinedinst suggests that students' motivation to succeed in music may be influenced by their self-concept in music and attitudes toward music. Wragg (1974) also found that instrumental ability in primary school was significantly associated with expressed enjoyment in secondary school.

Eccles (1983) suggests that students' choices to continue instruction are mostly influenced by their task values. It is evident from the findings of previous research that intrinsic value considerations appear to influence the continued musical involvement of students. Hurley (1995) found that students' initial values for joining the string class were maintained and encouraged during their continued involvement. Continuing music students indicated that they enjoyed music, liked the challenge of learning a string instrument, and expressed a personal satisfaction with the choice of their instrument. They also expressed a growing personal commitment to performing on a string instrument and personal satisfaction with the classroom situation. Similarly, Chandler, Chiarella, and Auria (1988) found that students were more likely to continue playing their instrument and expend more effort when they were both satisfied with their instrument and expected to continue playing. Furthermore, it was apparent that the perceived importance and value of playing an instrument were linked with students' success, enjoyment, and internal attributions.

The utility value or usefulness of studying music also appears to influence the continued musical involvement of students. Hurley (1995) found that students who were continuing their music studies also expressed goals for their future involvement. Some were contemplating a career while others planned to continue playing their instruments after they left school. Hurley suggested that the expression of these goals indicated the degree of value that the students assigned to their musical involvement.

For continuing students, cost of participation factors would appear to be outweighed by the value they assign to their musical involvement. Elkan (1996) found that almost half of the respondents in her study stated they had to make sacrifices in order to continue with music studies at the tertiary level. However, these cost of participation factors

appeared to be offset by students' intrinsic motivation to pursue their musical studies. Similarly, continuing students in Hurley's (1995) study also valued the learning of their instrument to the degree where cost of participation conflicts were not experienced or if they were acknowledged, the value of participation outweighed these costs.

Students' Decisions for their Discontinued Musical Involvement

The perceived difficulty of a task is proposed to influence students' achievement-related beliefs (Eccles et al., 1998; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992). Eccles et al. (1983) suggest that the perceived difficulty of an activity may influence students' competence beliefs such that over time their competence beliefs will decline for the activity. Students in Hurley's (1995) study who had discontinued their musical involvement cited the increased difficulty of the class. Furthermore, some students indicated that they had become dissatisfied with the class itself stating that they experienced boredom and felt unchallenged. These factors all appeared to detract from the value of the string class.

Students' competence beliefs and expectancies for success have also been found to influence their decisions to discontinue musical involvement. Frakes (as cited in Radocy, 1986) found that students who had discontinued their music studies during secondary school perceived themselves as less musically competent than other students. Likewise, Covington (1983) found that adults who had previously studied music in high school but had not pursued their musical involvement, held relatively low opinions of their musical ability compared with students who had chosen to continue their musical involvement. Similarly, the students in Chandler et al.'s (1988) study who appeared to be in danger of discontinuing their musical involvement held low expectations for their future success.

Eccles (1983) suggests that cost of participation is a factor that can also affect the subjective task value of the activity. Continuing students in Hurley's (1995) study indicated that eventually, certain cost of participation factors, such as homework responsibilities, may influence their future musical involvement. Furthermore, the students in Hurley's study who had discontinued their string instruction cited cost of

participation factors such as the time away from other valued activities, time away from study halls, and having to take their instrument home. In addition, they indicated that they had opportunities to participate in other activities which they perceived as having higher value than their music lessons. Similarly, Klinedinst (1991) found that beginning instrumental students cited cost of participation factors, such as conflicts with other activities, as reasons for not continuing with their instrumental instruction.

In addition, research has shown that a decline in the intrinsic value of music can influence students' decisions to discontinue their musical involvement. Wragg (1974) sought to identify and assess some of the factors influencing the decisions of 36 students whom she had taught in primary school, regarding their musical involvement in the transition from primary to secondary school. Wragg administered a questionnaire and various tests to these students (aged 13 to 14) when they were in their third year of secondary school. Wragg (1974) found that students who had not maintained their musical involvement in secondary school cited a lack of interest. These students — displayed a decrease in their enjoyment of musical activity from primary to secondary school. Correspondingly, the discontinuing students in Hurley's (1995) study displayed a decline in their intrinsic interest stating that they did not find their music classes fun anymore. Likewise, Chandler et al. (1988) found that students who were in danger of discontinuing their musical involvement expressed dissatisfaction with their instrument.

Students also appear to cite numerous other reasons for their discontinued musical involvement. Klinedinst (1991) found that beginning instrumental students' reasons for not continuing with their instrumental instruction were influenced by external social factors such as peer pressure, student teacher relationships, and family considerations. Students in Hurley's (1995) study felt that they were not maintaining their practice which had influenced their ability to sustain an acceptable standard of performance and in turn their valuing of the class. These students perceived that the amount of effort required to reach their goals was outweighed by their desire to participate in other more highly valued activities.

It would appear that students' achievement-related beliefs and the influences upon these beliefs have important consequences for decisions relating to their musical involvement. However, other factors such as influences within students' environments have also been found to affect students' motivations for musical involvement. The following part of the chapter will review these additional factors.

The Influence of Environmental Factors upon Students' Motivations for Musical Involvement

In exploring the factors that influence students' motivations for musical involvement, previous research has identified the importance of various environmental factors. These factors include other people (for example, family, music teachers, and friends), the home and school environment, and previous musical experiences. Some research has also identified other additional influences. For example, Addison (1990) found that students derive a substantial proportion of their musical interests from the media as well as from their parents. The following part of the literature review will outline the influence of these various factors upon students' motivations for musical involvement.

The Influence of Parents and the Home Environment

Research has identified the home environment as an important influence upon students' musical involvement. The home environment has been found to be important in the initial stimulation of children's musical interest and their continued musical interest and involvement (Bowles, 1991; Chadwick, 1999b, 2001; Olszewski et al., 1987; Strom, 2001; Wragg, 1974).

Research conducted with musically talented students has highlighted the particularly important role of students' home environments upon their early musical involvement (Chadwick, 2001; Manturzevska, 1990; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sosniak, 1985). The findings from these studies indicate that parents are largely responsible for their

children's initial musical involvement. Strom (2001) found that the influence of family members was essential in helping students to progress in their music studies. The students in her study were more inclined to practise if they thought that their parents were interested in their learning, which Strom suggests emphasises the importance of parental involvement.

Various studies have also found that the home environment is an important influence upon students' continued musical involvement in secondary school (Stewart, 1991; Wragg, 1974). Stewart (1991) investigated the influence of different schools on the involvement of students in various music courses throughout American high schools. She found that the average student enrolled in a music class had support from home for his or her musical involvement. Furthermore, she found that students were at a disadvantage if they did not have this support from home. Stewart suggests that parents who do not encourage their children to be involved in music lessons during elementary school may inadvertently discourage their children's musical involvement in high school.

However, some research has found that parents are not particularly influential upon their children's choices for musical involvement. MacKenzie (1991) found that parental influence upon students' decisions to play a musical instrument was not a dominant factor. He proposed that the influence of their parents was possibly more subtle than children were aware. Similarly, Hurley (1995) found that most of the students in his study did not cite the influence of parents in their decisions to learn a string instrument. However, he suggests that the significant number of students who had a parent involved in musical activity indicated that parents were exerting an influence on their children's initial expectations and values. In addition, Hurley contends that the students were likely to have been influenced by their parents' own enjoyment of playing an instrument, even though there was rarely an obvious parental expectation that the child would learn an instrument. Likewise, Pettengell (1997) found that students were not overtly aware of the influence of their family upon their decisions to play a string instrument and perceived the influence of their family upon their achievement to be minimal.

Correspondingly, research conducted with secondary school elective music students found that less than half of the students indicated that their decisions to study elective music in Year 9 had been influenced by their parents (Hayes, 1996). However, Hayes found that the influence of parents upon the decisions of students to study elective music in secondary school was enhanced when students perceived themselves as musically competent.

Some research has shown that music students and musicians tend to come from homes in which other members of the family are involved in music (Hurley, 1995; Manturzevska, 1990; Pettengell, 1997; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Strom, 2001). Both Pettengell and Strom found that the music students in their studies came from families in which one or more members were musically active. Similarly, a study conducted with adult professional musicians showed that most had come from families that had some musical tradition (Manturzevska, 1990). Pettengell (1997) suggests that the high rates of students in her study who had family members who were musically active indicates that students came from families in which music was considered to be an important activity. Hurley (1995) also proposes that musical families are indicative of a strong cultural influence that may predispose students to musical involvement.

Klinedinst (1991) found that beginning instrumental students who came from musical homes tended to display positive attitudes toward music and had a good self-concept in music. However, Boyack (1999) suggests that the identification of individuals with family members who are musical can contribute to both high and low self-efficacy beliefs. She suggests that the comparisons which children make with other family members and other children are only helpful when they believe they are able to achieve success. Some argue that the greater involvement of adults in music performance, concert attendance, and study may influence the involvement as adults of their own children in these activities (Bowles, 1991).

However, conflicting views exist as to the importance of parents' own musical involvement upon their children's musical involvement. Zdzinski (1996) states that

parental involvement is a concern of many researchers and educators, and that a significant proportion of research literature suggests that the success of students in music is related to the involvement of their parents. Some of this research has shown that successful music students have parents who are also involved in music (Chadwick, 1999b, 2001; Davidson, Howe, Moore, & Sloboda, 1996; Kehrberg, as cited in Krueger, 1989). Chadwick (2001) found that parents who are involved in music have a positive influence upon their children's initial and continued musical involvement. Kehrberg (as cited in Krueger, 1989) identified students' home musical environment as an important determinant of their levels of participation in school music activities. Kehrberg suggests that students who come from rich home musical environments are more likely to be involved in school music activities than students who do not come from similar environments.

In contrast, research has also shown that individuals can achieve success in music without necessarily coming from families with musical backgrounds (Brand, 1986; Davidson et al., 1996; Manturzewska, 1990; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sosniak, 1985; Wragg, 1974). The authors of this research concluded that parental interest, attitudes toward music, support, and encouragement were greater influences than parents' own musical involvement upon their children's continued involvement in music. The lack of family encouragement and support can potentially have negative consequences for students' musical involvement. Austin and Vispoel (1998) maintain that students who perceive themselves as having low musical ability and lack family musical involvement may have detrimentally low expectations of their chance for success in music. Frakes (as cited in Radocy, 1986) found that students who had discontinued their music studies during high school had received less family encouragement than those who had continued with their studies.

The Influence of Music Teachers

There is some evidence that in addition to parents, teachers have a direct influence upon students' musical involvement (Sloboda & Davidson, 1996). Wragg (1974) suggests that

teachers can play an important role in offsetting unfavourable background influences by providing opportunities and experiences which allow students to pursue their musical interests. Furthermore, teachers may act as role models for students and can both positively and negatively influence the motivation of their students (Gembris & Davidson, 2002).

Hurley (1995) found that the motivational decisions of music students, such as their choices for initial, continued, and discontinued involvement were influenced by their general music teachers and string teachers. Similarly, MacKenzie (1991) found that the opinions of students' teachers were a significant influence upon their musical involvement. Twenty percent of students stated that their decision to learn a musical instrument had been influenced by the encouragement of their teachers. Furthermore, this was the most influential motivational factor after students' own interest in learning an instrument.

However, research conducted with older students has found that their musical involvement is not particularly influenced by classroom music teachers. Hayes (1996) found that most of the students in her study indicated that they were either unsure as to the influence of their previous classroom music teachers, or that their previous classroom music teacher had little or no influence upon their decision to study elective music in secondary school. These students mostly commented that they were taking music for their own development and Hayes suggested that music teachers were providing few incentives for students to pursue their music studies. Similarly, Elkan (1996) found that only a minority of students acknowledged the influence of their secondary school classroom music teacher upon their decisions to pursue music studies at a tertiary level.

Students' private music teachers have been shown to play a significant role in the early stages of musical involvement. Sosniak (1985) found that, the majority of adult concert pianists in her study perceived their first piano teacher as an important influence in both encouraging and motivating their early musical involvement. The secondary school

students in Pettengell's (1997) study perceived their string teacher to be more of an influence in their instrumental achievements than their school ensemble teacher.

Research has also shown that students' musical involvement is influenced by the personalities and behaviours of their music teachers. Klinedinst (1991) found that the retention of beginning instrumental students was dependent in part upon the personality and teaching style of their music teachers. In the early stages of musical involvement, teachers' personalities would appear to be more important than their level of musical ability in motivating and encouraging young students (Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sosniak, 1985). The results of these studies revealed that having a music teacher who was warm, friendly, and encouraging was extremely beneficial if not essential for the young learner. However, Howe and Sloboda (1991b) found that as students grew older, they considered the musical abilities of their teachers to be more important than the personal qualities of teachers.

Similar results have been found with older participants. The adult participants in Temmerman's (1993) study spoke about the qualities that teachers needed to have in order to facilitate positive attitudes toward music. These qualities included possessing a sound knowledge of music, being able to communicate this knowledge in a variety of enjoyable ways, being sensitive to the needs of students, and encouraging student involvement. Hayes (1996) found that some students who chose to study elective music in secondary school were influenced by the personalities of their classroom music teachers. Students liked music teachers who were friendly, helpful, fair, and approachable. Hayes suggests it is possible that the perceived approachability of the music teacher contributes to students experiencing a positive class environment and that teacher personality is exerting an increasing influence on music students' interest, motivation, and learning.

Asmus (1989) maintains that music educators within schools play a significant role in affecting their students' motivation and need to be aware of strategies to optimise students' motivation. Asmus suggests that music educators need to possess strong

musical skills and knowledge. Others propose that music educators should strive to motivate students for both the short-term and long-term involvement in music (McPherson & McCormick, 2000). In addition, McPherson and McCormick state that in order to increase students' motivation, music educators should endeavour to be enthusiastic, and establish positive and supportive relationships with their students.

Klinedinst (1991) recommends that in order to increase the performance achievement and retention of students music educators need to adopt teaching strategies which meet the individual needs of their students. Others suggest that the effective development of students can be achieved by developing an understanding of their self-beliefs regarding their music making (Boyack, 1999). Several parents in Addison's (1990) study also commented that if teachers made the learning of music interesting then this would lead to increased enjoyment and continued interest.

Strom (2001) suggests that music teachers can encourage the intrinsic motivation of their students by cultivating a greater understanding of their musical learning which will lead to the development of more effective teaching strategies. Similarly, Wragg (1974) maintains that a teacher's understanding and enthusiasm will in turn facilitate students' interest in music. Furthermore, Wragg suggests that music teachers may need to be selected on the basis of their ability to communicate their love of music and to inspire students rather than on the basis of their musical competence.

Teacher feedback also appears to be an important influence upon students' motivations for musical involvement. Chandler et al. (1988) suggest that in order for students to experience more enjoyment and success in their playing they need to receive constructive feedback along with their practice. Mota (1999) argues that the lack of positive teacher feedback, apparent in the minimal number of references made by the students in her study, may have influenced their self-evaluations of their capacity to achieve success in music and the extent to which they valued music at school. Similarly, Austin (1991) found that the motivation of the students in his study may have decreased

due to the teaching approach of their teacher, who was observed to provide students with very little positive or constructive feedback.

The Influence of Siblings, Friends, and Others

In addition to parents and teachers, numerous researchers have identified the important influence of siblings and friends upon students' musical involvement. Older siblings in particular would appear to influence the musical involvement of their younger siblings. Sloboda and Howe (1991) found that the initial musical involvement of approximately one third of the students in their study had been influenced by older siblings. In contrast, they found that only 10% of students in their study had been influenced by older children outside of the family. Both Pettengell (1997) and Strom (2001) also found that a significant proportion of the students in their studies had siblings who also played musical instruments. Strom maintains that the influence of siblings upon the students in her study was greater than had been identified in previous research.

The influence of siblings would appear to be important in creating an environment in which musical involvement is considered to be normal. Sloboda and Howe (1991) found that in many cases younger siblings were motivated to play an instrument in order to be like their older siblings. Strom (2001) observed that older and younger siblings played an important role in increasing one another's motivation to practise. Strom suggests that by familiarising their younger siblings with the learning process, older siblings create an easier process for their younger siblings when they begin to learn. Howe and Sloboda (1991a) also found that older siblings who played a musical instrument served to increase their younger siblings' awareness of music and the possibility of learning to play an instrument. Furthermore, Howe and Sloboda suggest that older siblings create an environment in which practising and playing are perceived as normal, everyday events. However, in their study it was evident that there were more complicated family dynamics involved. For example, numerous students mentioned being jealous of their older siblings.

Both Hurley (1995) and MacKenzie (1991) found that several students in their studies were influenced by their friends to start learning a string instrument. Hurley states that the students in his study were influenced by affiliation needs. These students indicated that their decisions to learn a musical instrument were influenced by the wish to be with their friends who were also joining the string programme, or to be able to play their instrument for friends. In contrast, Hayes (1996) found that most of the students in her study stated that their decisions to study elective music in Year 9 had not been influenced by a desire to be with friends. Strom (2001) observed in her study that the influence of students' friends was more important than had been found in previous studies.

The Influence of the Secondary School Environment

The school environment in which students find themselves can have important consequences for their musical involvement. The following section focuses on the influences within the secondary school environment. Adolescence would appear to be a crucial phase in which students develop their motivation to learn (Austin & Vispoel, 1998). Austin and Vispoel state that during their early secondary school years students are required to make various decisions relating to their participation and levels of investment in both curricular and co-curricular courses. The consequences of these decisions can potentially influence students' long-term academic achievement, career opportunities, and pursuit of activities during adulthood.

Research has identified the transition from primary to secondary school as an important period in which students make decisions regarding their continued musical involvement (Frakes, as cited in Radocy, 1986; Wragg, 1974). Frakes (as cited in Radocy, 1986) suggests that the first year of secondary school is a particularly important period in which children make decisions to continue or not continue with their musical involvement.

In addition, research has shown that students' motivations to pursue various activities and their achievement-related beliefs tend to decline during secondary school (Eccles et al., 1983; Wigfield et al., 1991; Wragg, 1974). Austin and Vispoel (1998) indicate that in the past, researchers have supposed that motivation problems during adolescence are the result of psychological and physical disturbances experienced during puberty. However, Wigfield et al. (1997) contend that there may be external influences operating upon students' achievement beliefs.

Wigfield et al. (1991) suggest that the decline in students' competence beliefs may be due to the different classroom environments which students encounter between primary and secondary school. Asmus (1986) proposes that the decline in students' competence beliefs during the transition from primary to secondary school is a result of students becoming more concerned with their relative ability and grades, and less concerned with their effort and improvement. Some suggest that this change is a result of the changing school environment which places more emphasis on students' ability in relation to others (Eccles et al., 1984). Eccles et al. found that as students progress through school their classrooms are characterised by an increase in social comparisons and competitive goal structures. Harter (1981) suggests that school environments may be gradually stifling the intrinsic interest of students in relation to their learning (for example, challenge, curiosity and mastery). In addition, Harter proposes that the extrinsic orientation of school environments, such as the emphasis upon achieving grades, may influence students' intrinsic motivation to learn.

Some school environments have been found to be particularly competitive. Marsh and Craven (1994) state that many selective schools intentionally create competitive environments. Some suggest that school environments which emphasise the importance of demonstrating high ability in relation to others undermine the motivation of students who have low perceptions of their ability (Austin & Vispoel, 1998). Consequently, students think that being smarter than other students means achieving higher grades, that teachers care more about these 'smarter students', and that the school has given up on its other students (Anderman, Austin, & Johnson, 2002). Anderman et al. (2002) suggest

that these perceptions can be offset by adopting an environment in which students are encouraged to believe in their capabilities and view errors as an acceptable part of learning. Austin and Vispoel (1998) recommend that students be encouraged to perceive the performance of others as an opportunity to learn and that group learning and peer tutoring can aid students in viewing their classmates as partners in learning rather than as competitors.

Wragg (1974) suggests that changes in school culture may contribute to the decline in musical interest of students moving from primary to high school. For example, a wide range of provisions was evident between the schools she studied and the status of music also varied considerably between different schools. Furthermore, she suggests that changes in the ethos of the school and educational climate were apparent. Similarly, Stewart (1991) found that differences in the various cultures of schools influenced students' musical involvement. In schools with large populations of highly academically inclined students, the study of music was not encouraged and these schools tended to offer fewer opportunities for students to study music courses. Stewart suggests this may be result of music not being a necessary prerequisite course required for admission to college.

Austin and Vispoel (1998) contend that secondary music classes may present motivational difficulties for teachers because students generally feel less competent and convey more negative attitudes toward music instruction than in other subjects. They maintain that too much emphasis on musical ability as the key to success in music may undermine the efforts of struggling music students. Furthermore, Austin and Vispoel suggest that students may infer they have low musical ability because teachers are setting tasks which are too difficult. Therefore, music educators should strive to design activities which are commensurate with students' musical ability so that all students can experience success and thus feel confident to pursue their musical involvement further.

Hayes (1996) suggests that music teachers can encourage students to pursue their musical involvement by facilitating a class environment which is enjoyable, positive,

and caters for their needs and interests. She proposes that students will want to continue their involvement in music if they are interested in learning. The students in Hayes' study, suggested that music classes could be made more interesting by increasing the amount of practical work and by studying more popular music.

Some propose that the decline of students' interest in music could be offset by greater connections between primary and secondary schools (Wragg, 1974). Similarly, Stewart (1991) maintains that in order to make music opportunities more accessible in high school there needs to be greater cooperation among K-12 (Kindergarten to Year 12) teachers. Others recommend increased communication between the school and the home in order to facilitate optimal conditions for students' musical involvement (Brand, 1986; Zdzinski, 1996).

It is apparent that various people and environments have an important influence upon students' motivations for musical involvement. In addition to these influences, the previous musical experiences of students, as discussed in the following section, have also been shown to have important consequences for their musical involvement.

The Influence of Previous Musical Experiences

Research has identified the important influence of previous successful and positive musical experiences upon adults' and students' musical involvement (Bowles, 1991; Boyack, 1999; Elkan, 1996; Hayes, 1996; Stewart, 1991; Walker & Haman, 1995). Sloboda (1990) suggests that children who engage in a variety of positive music making experiences throughout childhood may be more motivated for long-term musical involvement. Others maintain that the more experience students acquire within a domain the more likely it is that they will develop a general sense of their competence within that domain (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002).

In support of Sloboda's (1990) suggestion, research conducted with adults has shown that early musical experiences have a significant influence on their musical involvement

later in life (Bowles, 1991). Bowles found that the course choice of potential participants in adult music education was closely related to their previous musical experience and that their active participation in these previous activities was an effective predictor of positive attitudes toward further participation in music education. The participants in Bowles' study had engaged in some form of music lessons for a period of two years or more and had been involved in a music ensemble at high school. Furthermore, these adults had participated in school music from an early age and had continued their involvement as general music students in high school.

Boyack (1999) also found that adult students who displayed high self-efficacy in relation to their singing had engaged in previous successful singing experiences which appeared to be important in the formation of their efficacy beliefs. In addition, several students remarked on the value of a broad musical education and instrumental lessons, and one student indicated that her enjoyment of singing at school had contributed to her continued musical involvement.

Research conducted with music students who continue their musical involvement in secondary school has shown that generally they have high rates of involvement in music examinations and lessons (Hayes, 1996; Pettengell, 1997; Stewart, 1991). Most of the music students in Hayes' study had been involved in instrumental lessons outside of school for some time before they chose to study elective music in Year 9. Some studies have shown the strongest determinant of students' decisions for involvement in high school music classes is the previous participation of students in music lessons (Stewart, 1991). Kehrberg (as cited in Krueger, 1989) also found that instrumental music experience, particularly piano, and music reading skills gained in musical activities outside of school, was a strong predictor of secondary school students' general music achievement. Most of the secondary music students in Pettengell's (1997) study had completed examinations on their instruments. Similarly, the previous participation of tertiary music students in external music examinations was found to be influential upon their decisions to continue the study of music at the tertiary level (Elkan, 1996). Pettengell (1997) suggests that the participation of students in external music

examinations is viewed by society and students as a way of measuring achievement. Students who are successful in these examinations are more inclined to perceive themselves as musically competent and in turn will be more likely to pursue their musical involvement.

School based music experiences have also been found to influence the long-term musical involvement of students. In a survey conducted with generalist primary teacher trainees, Temmerman (1993) found that their school music experiences had both positively and negatively influenced their long-term musical interest and involvement. Furthermore, significantly more respondents held unfavourable rather than favourable perceptions of their school based music experiences, particularly primary school musical experiences. Dissatisfaction with school based music experiences seemed to be related to teacher attitude and/or perceived ability, lessons content and/or activities, and performance pressure.

Primary school musical experiences would also appear to have an important influence upon students' musical involvement. Some suggest that primary school music education should endeavour to foster students' interest and commitment to music (Wragg, 1974). Frakes (as cited in Radocy, 1986) states that elementary school music programmes need to be strong in order to provide the general population with a basic musical background. Others maintain that in order to foster students' continued involvement in music it is important for primary schools to provide music programmes in which children are given the opportunity to participate in a range of musical activities that enable them to experience success (Boyack, 1999). However, the parents in Chadwick's (2002b) study commented that the limited musical experience of regular primary school classroom teachers often led to the inappropriate and unsuccessful implementation of musical activities within the classroom. Russell-Bowie (1993) found that generalist primary school teachers cited a lack of time during the school day and a lack of personal musical experience for not teaching music more effectively.

Secondary school music experiences (for example, classroom music and co-curricular music activities) have been found to influence the continued musical involvement of students both within secondary school and after they leave secondary school. Hayes (1996) found that the decisions of students to elect music in Year 9 were influenced by the enjoyment they had experienced in their previous Year 8 Mandatory Course music classes. However, few students in Hayes' study had participated in secondary school co-curricular musical activities. In contrast, the majority of successful music students in Chadwick's (1999a) study were regularly involved in co-curricular music activities at their secondary schools. Wragg (1974) found that students' non-participation in any secondary school musical activities other than their class music lesson had influenced a decline in their interest for music during secondary school.

Elkan (1996) identified a strong correlation for most of the students in her study, between their decisions to study music at a tertiary level and having successfully studied classroom music in high school. Walker and Haman (1995) found that high school music students rated effective teaching and quality music programmes as the most important factors influencing their decisions to participate in music at the college level. The decisions of these students to continue their music experiences in college were further influenced by the number of years they had participated in a high school music ensemble.

Musical involvement during secondary school would also appear to be important for adults' attitudes toward music later in life. Recent secondary school graduates who had participated in music throughout high school were more inclined to express a desire to continue with their musical activities beyond high school (Frakes, as cited in Radocy, 1986). Similarly in an assessment of attitudes to music of Wyoming adults, Noble (1976) found a significant relationship between the amount of music education these adults had engaged in during secondary school and their attitudes toward music. However, it was evident that adults who had participated in instrumental or vocal activities in secondary school displayed higher attitudes toward music than adults who had studied general music. The adults with the highest levels of attitudinal response

were those who had been involved in music at the college level, particularly as either majors or minors in music.

The participation of students in community based musical activities has also been found to have an influence upon students' musical involvement in other areas. Sloboda and Howe (1991) found that the majority of students in their study were involved in at least one musical activity, apart from music lessons and examinations, outside of school. Similarly a significant proportion of students in Chadwick's (1999a) study were regularly involved in musical activities outside of school in addition to formal music tuition. In contrast, Hayes (1996) found that only a small percentage of the Year 9 elective music students in her study were involved in musical activities within the community.

It would appear that the lack of previous musical experience can have potentially important consequences for students' future musical involvement. Stewart (1991) found that students who had not participated previously in music lessons had limited access to music courses offered in high school. Even when these students did enrol in music courses, they tended to enrol in fewer courses than those students with previous musical experience. Stewart also found that students who did not take music lessons by the end of grade eight were in danger of missing out on musical opportunities throughout their remaining years of high school. She suggests that not having previous music lessons may lead to students not possessing the necessary skills to participate in high school music courses and activities.

Similarly, negative previous musical experiences can have important consequences for the future involvement of individuals in musical activities. One of the parents in Achilles' (1992) study was reticent to bring her son to music classes because of negative childhood musical experiences which had left her feeling musically incompetent. Boyack (1999) found that students who reported low self-efficacy in singing commented on previous failure experiences which they interpreted as indicating that they had low singing ability.

In summary, it is evident that the motivation for musical involvement of students is influenced by various factors within their environment. Parents and teachers would appear to exert a significant influence upon students' involvement in music, and to a lesser extent siblings and friends. Apart from the people in students' lives and their home environments, the school environments in which students find themselves and their previous musical experiences also seem to influence their motivations for musical involvement. The participation in a range of musical experiences would appear to be particularly important in facilitating students' access to future opportunities for musical involvement.

Conclusion

In reviewing the literature relevant to this study this chapter has presented an overview of the research which relates to the various factors that influence individuals' motivational choices for musical involvement. It is evident that the motivational decisions of individuals are influenced by an elaborate network of various factors. Furthermore, socio-cognitive theories of motivation outlined in this chapter emphasise the importance of individuals' perceptions or interpretations as mediators of the influence of these various factors.

While individual differences in motivation between various students need to be recognised, certain trends or themes have been highlighted by this review. Students' achievement-related beliefs (for example, their expectancies for success, competence beliefs, and task values) appear to have an important influence upon their various achievement behaviours. These behaviours can include their choices, levels of performance, and the degree of persistence and intensity with which they approach various tasks.

However, various relationships are apparent between the different components of students' achievement-related beliefs. Students' competence-related beliefs, rather than their task values, seem to have a more direct effect upon students' performance levels

and are more predictive of their performance levels. In contrast, students' task values appear to have a greater influence upon their choices. Achievement-related beliefs seem to be influenced by various factors, including students' age, grade level, parents, and teachers. The differences identified by research between students of various age groups highlight the importance of research which explores the achievement-related beliefs of students in different years of school. Studies which compare students at different stages of schooling may potentially provide important information regarding the differences and similarities in the nature of their motivation.

It would appear that students' achievement-related beliefs and the influences upon these beliefs have important consequences for their decisions relating to musical involvement. The review of studies relating to the motivational decisions of music students for their initial, continued, and discontinued musical involvement suggests that students' expectancies for success, competence beliefs, and values all play an influential role in their choices for musical involvement. However, it is also evident that students' motivations for musical involvement are significantly influenced by various factors within their environment, including the people in their lives (for example, their families, teachers, and friends), their school environments, and their previous musical experiences. Therefore, research which addresses the motivations of students for musical involvement needs to consider the influence of these various environmental factors.

Even though motivational research in educational settings has extensively explored students' motivation in the context of various academic subjects some suggest that less research has investigated the motivation of students within music settings (Austin & Vispoel, 1992). Motivational research in music education would appear to be in the early stages of addressing the factors that influence students' motivations for musical involvement. Some researchers within the field maintain that our understanding is still very limited and there is a lot of work yet to be done (Austin & Vispoel, 1992; McPherson, 1989; Thomas, 1999). Further research within the context of music education is potentially valuable in contributing to the existing body of knowledge. Research conducted within music settings tends to focus on the motivation of students

involved in the study of instrumental music and very little of this research has been conducted with Australian students. In addition, this research is predominantly conducted with primary school students. Few studies have addressed the motivation of students within the general music classroom and even fewer studies have explored the factors that influence students' decisions to elect to study classroom music in Australian secondary schools.

Furthermore, most of the motivational research conducted with music students employs quantitative designs. Given that motivational research acknowledges the importance of students' perceptions in relation to their motivational behaviours, research which utilises qualitative designs could facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of students' motivations for musical involvement. In addition, the influence of various factors upon students' musical involvement within their environments emphasises the importance of conducting research in various educational settings.

In conclusion, this review of literature highlights the importance of continued research which considers the factors influencing students' motivations for musical involvement. In order to provide a more comprehensive picture of students' motivations for musical involvement this research needs to be conducted within a variety of educational settings and with students of various ages who are involved in different musical activities. Results from this research are important in contributing to our understanding of the complex issues which surround students' decisions for musical involvement.

CHAPTER 3

CONTEXT

Throughout this chapter and subsequent chapters pseudonyms have been used to maintain the anonymity of the school in which the study was conducted and the students and classroom music teacher who participated in the study. This chapter describes the setting in which the study took place. The information presented in this chapter is intended to provide the reader with an understanding of the school context in which Year 8 and Year 11 students made their decisions to study elective music. 'Bayview' Girls' High School was chosen as the research site because it holds personal interest for myself as a music teacher at the school. I have taught at the school for approximately ten years in the capacity of a classroom music teacher (Years 7 to 12) and as a conductor of various ensembles within the school.

The school is a selective girls' secondary school of approximately 1000 students incorporating Years 7 to 12, which is situated within the Sydney metropolitan area. The school population is comprised of students whose intellectual capacity lies above the norm. The students at the school are described as academically gifted and talented, and also manifest as gifted and talented in other areas of study. The school offers learning opportunities and experiences that are intended to meet the unique intellectual, emotional, and social needs of its gifted and talented students.

However, while the school is a selective school not all students show or possess a remarkable degree of ability in the terms that are defined in the gifted and talented policy of the New South Wales Department of Education and Training (Bayview Girls' High School Policy on the education of gifted and talented students, n.d.). The New South Wales Department of Education and Training's policy for the education of gifted and talented students (The NSW Department of School Education, 1991) adopts the following definitions of gifted and talented students:

Gifted students are those with the potential to exhibit superior performance across a range of different areas of endeavour. (p.2)

Talented students are those with the potential to exhibit superior performance in one area of endeavour. (p.2)

Students are selected for entry to the school based on their success in the selective schools entrance test which they sit for in their final year (Year 6) of primary school. This test is based on explicit selection criteria which require students to compete for selection based on their academic performance (Marsh & Craven, 1994). The test is voluntary and successful selection is dependent upon advanced performance in numeracy and literacy skills, and general ability (Bayview Girls' High School Policy on the education of gifted and talented students, n.d.).

The student population of the school covers a wide range of socio-economic situations and consists of approximately 73% 'non-English speaking background' (NESB) students (Bayview Girls' High School Policy on the education of gifted and talented students, n.d.). These students represent approximately 48 language groups of which Cantonese and Mandarin are predominant. Students are drawn from the wider Sydney metropolitan area and more than half the students live outside of the school's local area.

The music faculty at the school consists of two full-time music teachers and one temporary-casual music teacher. The temporary-casual teacher position is occupied by myself. At the time the study was conducted there were 150 students (five classes) studying the Mandatory Course. In addition, there were 96 students studying elective classroom music courses. Four classes in Years 8 to 10 were studying the Additional Study Course. These classes consisted of two Year 8 elective music classes with a total of 35 students, one Year 9 class containing 15 Year 9 students, and one Year 10 elective music class consisting of 16 students. Ten Year 11 and 11 Year 12 students were studying the Music 2 course. Nine Year 12 students were studying the Music Extension course. The school does not offer the Music 1 course to senior students.

The Mandatory Course is completed by students at the school when they are in Year 7. The Additional Study Course is offered in Years 8 to 10. Students studying the Mandatory Course in Year 7 and the Additional Study Course in Years 8 and 10 attend four periods of music per week. Year 9 students who are studying the Additional Study Course attend five periods of music per week. Students electing to study the Music 2 course in Year 11 attend six periods of music per week. Music Extension students have three periods of music per week. The school operates on a weekly timetable with eight-period days. The periods are approximately 40 minutes in duration.

Year 8 students at the school study three elective subjects which they choose toward the end of Year 7. One of these subjects must be a language. Students list their choice of subjects in terms of their preferences. During Year 8 students are required make a decision to discontinue one of their elective subjects as they are only able to study two elective subjects in Year 9. Toward the end of Year 10 students elect all of the subjects they wish to study in Year 11 except for English which is compulsory for all students in New South Wales secondary schools.

There is no guarantee that students will be able to study all of the subjects they choose due to various restrictions at the school level such as subject timetabling and class sizes. For example, some subjects may be offered at the same time in the timetable forcing students to make a decision between them. In addition, if there are not enough students to make a class then the subject may not be offered or in the case of senior students the subject may be offered outside of regular school hours (for example, lunchtime, before and after school).

Students at the school acquire information regarding the subjects they wish to study in various ways. Year 10 students attend an open day toward the end of the year which allows them to obtain information about senior school subjects. At this open day they receive handouts relating to subject selection and can also speak with teachers of various subjects. In addition, there are numerous school publications available to Year 10 students which provide them with information relating to subject selection. In contrast,

there is no organised open day for Year 7 students who are choosing their elective subjects. Year 7 students acquire information about the subjects they wish to study based on their classroom experiences in Year 7, material in various school publications, and by speaking with their teachers. Additionally, all students have the opportunity to speak with their teachers on parent-teacher night.

In addition to various classroom music courses, the school's music faculty offers a broad range of co-curricular activities in which students are encouraged to participate. These activities include concert band, intermediate concert band, stage band, orchestra, vocal ensembles, string quartet, rock bands, and numerous small instrumental ensembles. In addition to these activities, there is an extensive tutorial programme offering tuition in the following instruments: flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, tuba, French horn, violin, viola, 'cello, voice, percussion, drums, and bass guitar. The tutorial programme is funded by the students and allows them to learn their first, second, and in some cases third instrument. All of these co-curricular activities occur outside of regular school hours for example, before and after school, and during lunchtimes.

Approximately 150 students in Years 7 to 12 participate in these co-curricular activities. The music faculty provides numerous opportunities throughout the year for students to present their work, both classroom and co-curricular, at various concerts and festivals both within and outside of the school setting. In addition, during the year in which this study was conducted the music faculty undertook its first overseas tour with students in the stage band.

The teacher of the Year 8 and Year 11 music students in this study is the head teacher of music and administration at the school. He has taught at the school for approximately 15 years and has had around 30 years of experience teaching music in secondary schools throughout Sydney. He also conducts the school orchestra and supervises the string quartet. In addition, he has had many years of experience as an HSC (Higher School Certificate) examiner.

This description of the school in which the study was conducted has provided a brief overview of the context of the research. The following chapter outlines the manner in which the study proceeded within this context.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHOD

This study explored the perceptions of students regarding the influence of selected factors upon their decisions to study elective classroom music in Year 8 and Year 11 of secondary school. In addition, this study has sought the viewpoint of the students' classroom music teacher. The study was conducted within a specific secondary school, the context of which is discussed in Chapter 3.

Burns (2000) states that in deciding upon the research design the researcher needs to choose specific methodologies that will facilitate the emergence of a clear understanding of the research topic. In order to construct as full a picture as possible of students' perceptions in relation to the factors that influence their decisions to study elective music within the context of a specific school this study has utilised a predominantly qualitative design for the collection and analysis of data. The collection of data has involved a combination of methods involving the use of semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire. This chapter discusses the selection of the method of research, the role of the researcher in the study, the process of data collection, the selection of participants, and the methods of data analysis.

Selection of Research Method

Qualitative methodology is characterised by the study of contexts in which the researcher seeks to understand the activities of individuals who are situated within a specific context from their perspectives (Bresler, 1992; Burns, 2000). Achilles (1992) states that qualitative research enables a description of a particular situation in the language of the participants and facilitates a greater understanding of the situation from their point of view. Burns (2000) maintains that the social reality in which a person lives is best understood by that person. Furthermore, qualitative methodologies facilitate insights into participants' perceptions and the discovery of personal meanings and

complexities that may lie beneath deceptively simple quantitative abstractions (Howe & Sloboda, 1991a). This study has sought to explore the factors that influence students' decisions to study elective music from their own perspectives. A predominantly qualitative design has enabled greater insights into their perceptions and has facilitated a greater understanding of their reasons for studying elective music. This design has also provided a complexity and richness of data that may not have been possible with other designs (Sloboda & Howe, 1991).

Denscombe (1998) states that in adopting an holistic perspective, qualitative research aims to view things in context and focuses on how these things are both related and interdependent. According to Bresler (1996) the intention of qualitative research is "... not to discover reality, but to explore different interpretations of that reality by constructing a clearer experiential memory which helps us to obtain a more sophisticated account of things" (p.6). Furthermore, Bresler (1992) argues that because much of the important information relating to education is situational, qualitative researchers are interested in the uniqueness of an individual situation and the various perceptions and intentions of actors within that situation. In adopting a predominantly qualitative design, it has been possible for this study to achieve a greater understanding and more sophisticated account of why students at the specific school in which this study was conducted elect to study classroom music in Year 8 and Year 11.

Due to the subjective nature of qualitative data it is difficult to apply the conventional standards of validity and reliability (Burns, 2000). Burns maintains that the richness of data which is obtained from an individual's perspective and understanding is not conducive to the usual scientific criteria of validity and reliability. Additionally, Burns states that qualitative research emphasises the validity of multiple meanings and acknowledges the subjective, experiential existence of individuals. In exploring the perceptions of numerous individuals this study acknowledges the validity of the multiple reasons they have for choosing to study elective music. In addition, a questionnaire was also utilised as a method of data collection in order to provide a point of triangulation

between methods of data collection. Issues relating to validity will be discussed further in subsequent sections of this chapter.

Burns (2000) also states that the results of qualitative studies are not necessarily generalisable or able to be replicated to other situations. Bresler (1992) maintains that while qualitative researchers are interested in generalisation it is not their primary concern. Therefore, the results of this study are applicable to the individual participants within the context in which this study took place and are not intended to be generalisable to students in other educational settings. It is not the intention of this study to draw generalisations but rather to explore the perceptions of a selected group of individuals. However, while the results of this study will have particular significance to the individuals involved in the specific context of this study, it is anticipated that the results will have possible significance for music educators and students in other educational settings.

The Role of the Researcher

Qualitative research is characterised by the emphasis placed upon the role of the researcher in constructing the data (Delamont, 1992). In qualitative studies it is generally acknowledged that the background, values, beliefs, and identity of the researcher will have considerable bearing on the nature of the data collected and the interpretations that are made of that data. Miles and Huberman (1994) state that, essentially, the researcher is the primary measurement device in the study. Throughout the period in which this study was conducted, I assumed the role of both researcher and teacher at the school in which the study took place. I have taught at the school for approximately ten years and while I do not currently teach any of the students in this study I have taught them in previous years.

Burns (2000) maintains that the proximity of the qualitative researcher to the field allows him or her to gain an insider's perspective of the field. This perspective enables the researcher to discover complexities and subtleties of the field that are often missed

by standardised scientific inquiries. The previous relationship I have had with the students, their teacher and school in conjunction with ongoing contact throughout the study has facilitated important insights throughout the period of research. Furthermore, the choice to conduct this study in the school at which I teach has given me the advantage of working with participants with whom I already have an established rapport. Therefore, the participants have felt comfortable expressing their thoughts, feelings, and opinions to me. However, it is also possible that there may have been information that they did not feel free to share with me due to the pre-existing relationships. Furthermore, there are potential issues related to bias and subjectivity on my part.

Freed-Garrod (2001) states that as a researcher and teacher ones strives to be impartial, while at the same time realising that to wholly disengage would make interpretation disembodied and thus highly flawed. Therefore, it is important that researchers who are also teachers within the research context, endeavour to be immersed in the social context of the phenomena with their students/participants while at the same time being sensitive to the significance that their viewpoints have for the judgments they may make (Freed-Garrod, 2001). However, Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) maintain that while the influence of the researcher on the production of data is an important consideration, it is misleading to perceive this influence as a source of bias that must be, or even can be eliminated. They suggest that an understanding and awareness of how our presence as researchers may have shaped the data is a more important consideration so that we are able to interpret the data accordingly. Hammersley and Atkinson state that this awareness and understanding may provide important insights which can allow the development of themes in the emerging analysis.

In assuming the stances of both teacher and researcher, it has been possible to enhance the richness and complexity of data collection and analysis. In addition, I have been able to gain important insights into the situation that may not have been possible otherwise. During the process I have endeavoured to be constantly aware of the influence of my own subjectivity, bias, and presence upon the responses of the participants. Furthermore, I have been careful not to allow my own subjectivity and bias affect the process of data

analysis. Issues relating to my influence upon the participants will be discussed further in the following sections of this chapter.

Data Collection

The collection of data involved three phases. The first phase consisted of a series of semi-structured group interviews conducted with the students from the Year 8 and Year 11 elective music classes. The second phase involved the administration of a questionnaire to the students in the Year 8 and Year 11 elective music classes. The third phase consisted of a semi-structured interview that was conducted with the teacher of both the Year 8 and Year 11 classes. Even though at the time which this study was conducted there were two Year 8 elective music classes at the school, only one of these classes was chosen to participate in this study. This was because I was teaching the other Year 8 class. Therefore, the students in this class were not asked to participate in order to minimise possible conflicts of interest.

Interviews

Interviews constituted the primary form of data collection in this study. Burns (2000) defines the interview as a verbal interchange in which the interviewer tries to elicit information, beliefs, or opinions from another person. A semi-structured interview format was chosen in order to enable a focus upon the participant's own perceptions while concurrently allowing the researcher to maintain the focus on the purpose of the study (Burns, 2000). According to Burns, the semi-structured format of an interview enables greater flexibility and the possibility of a more valid response from the participant's perception of reality. In using semi-structured interviews it was possible to obtain a more detailed account of the students' perceptions and highlight some of the complex relationships between the various factors that influenced their decisions to study elective music. The flexibility of the semi-structured interview format also enabled important issues to be pursued further when they arose.

The interviews were based on an interview guide (Appendix 2) containing questions that were informed by the review of literature and the research questions of the study. Even though the interview guide contained numerous specific questions, most of the questions were designed to allow participants to give open-ended responses. Burns (2000) states that the interview guide, while not having fixed wording or fixed ordering of questions, gives a direction to the interview so that a focus upon the central issues of the study can be maintained. The interviews in this study did not use a fixed wording or ordering of questions so that a conversational atmosphere would be facilitated while still maintaining the focus of the interviews upon the purpose of the study. The participants were encouraged to talk freely about the factors which had influenced their decisions to study elective music and to highlight any issues that had not been raised by the interview questions. The interview guide was piloted with the second Year 8 elective music class within the same school during the beginning of term two, 2003. In utilising an analytic induction method (Burns, 2000) the questions in the interview guide were revised after each interview and the data obtained from each interview informed subsequent interviews.

Group interviews were conducted with students from both the Year 8 and Year 11 classes over a period of five weeks during term two, 2003. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) state that group interviews can enable the interview context to seem less strange for the participants, thus encouraging them to be more forthcoming in their responses. It was anticipated that by utilising a group interview format the students would feel more comfortable expressing their ideas and thoughts, and that a lively discussion would be more likely to occur between them (Oppenheim, 1992). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) maintain that the success of group interviews depends largely upon the composition of the group. For this reason, students were asked to form their own interview groups of between two and four students. It was anticipated that by forming their own groups they would be with friends around whom they would comfortably express their beliefs, feelings, and opinions. Five interview groups were formed by the students in the Year 8 class and four interview groups by the students in the Year 11

class. The numbers of students in each interview group ranged from two to four students.

At the beginning of each interview the participants were briefed as to the purpose of the interview, were reminded that the information they provided would be confidential, and that pseudonyms would be used in the final results. In addition, they were told not to feel obliged to answer any questions that they did not want to answer. At the end of each interview the students were thanked for their valuable contribution to the study. There is potential danger with group interviews in that the participants may not be inclined to fully reveal their beliefs and feelings around other people who are present (Burns, 2000). In addition, there is a potential for bias in the use of group interviews if one person dominates the discussion or if there is a split within the group into separate camps (Oppenheim, 1992). For these reasons the students were encouraged to speak one at a time and not to speak over each other. They were also told that the study was interested in their own individual perceptions and so they should not feel obliged to agree with other students in their group. The interviews were conducted outside of regular class hours on the school's premises and times were negotiated between the students and myself. The approximate duration of each interview was between 45 minutes and one hour.

The interviews were recorded on both audio-tape and video-tape to enable subsequent data transcription and analysis. Initially, the students were very aware of the video recorder and seemed somewhat nervous about its presence. For this reason at the beginning of the interviews I distracted their attention by engaging them in light conversation that was not related to the study. Within a short period of time they appeared to relax and be unaffected by the presence of the video recorder and I was then able to redirect the focus of the interview upon the purpose of the study.

The insights of the classroom teacher of both the Year 8 and Year 11 classes were also sought by this study. The teacher interview was conducted during term four (10/12/03) after the student interviews and questionnaire had been completed. The analysis of the

student interviews and the questionnaire informed both the direction of this interview and the questions which were asked during the interview. The purpose of this interview was to further discuss and clarify some of the issues which had arisen during the student interviews and questionnaire. The structure of this interview also followed a semi-structured format and used an interview guide (Appendix 3). The interview was conducted during school hours and the time of the interview was negotiated between the teacher and myself. The interview was recorded on both audio-tape and video-tape and lasted for approximately one hour.

Interviews are potentially prone to both the subjectivity and bias of interviewers and participants (Burns, 2000; Cohen & Manion, 1994). Cohen and Manion (1994) state that issues of subjectivity and bias need to be controlled by the researcher. The researcher must also be constantly aware of how her or his presence may have shaped the data (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This involves examining the influence of the researcher and other potential audiences such as other participants within the context of group interviews.

In order to minimise my own personal bias and subjectivity I endeavoured to be constantly aware of the effect that my presence and behaviour had upon the participants during the interview and encouraged them to freely express their opinions. I was also aware of not letting my own preconceived notions influence the direction of the interviews. For this reason I tried not to use leading questions and endeavoured to assess the likely direction of bias that may be evoked by the questions (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). In addition, I was also aware of not letting my own preconceived notions influence the analysis of the final data. In order to avoid misunderstandings, the interview questions were formulated to avoid confusion. Furthermore, I encouraged the participants to clarify any questions with me that they did not understand. Likewise, if I was not sure of the meaning of participants' responses I would clarify these with them during the interview. Being a teacher at the school I was also able to approach the participants after the interviews in order to clarify issues that had arisen during the analysis of the data.

There are also issues associated with the validity of accounts obtained in the interviews. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) state that there is no reason to deny or affirm the validity of individual accounts on the grounds that they are subjective. The specific purpose of this study was to seek the subjective accounts of the participants and for this reason they were encouraged to express their own personal opinions. Furthermore, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) maintain that data in itself cannot be valid or invalid. Instead, they suggest that the researcher must be aware of making valid interpretations of the data. In employing a questionnaire as a point of triangulation, which was administered after the interviews had been completed it was possible to verify the responses students had given during the interviews. Furthermore, the data from the questionnaire made it possible to ascertain the validity of the inferences drawn from the interview data in the process of data analysis. In addition, the questionnaire allowed a forum for students to express their ideas more freely without the effect of audience.

Student Questionnaire

The data collected in the series of semi-structured interviews with Year 8 and Year 11 students in combination with the research questions of this study and issues arising from the literature review led to the formulation of a student questionnaire (Appendix 4). The questionnaire was designed as a descriptive survey the purpose of which was to provide simple descriptive information relating to the students in the study (Burns, 2000). Burns states that the purpose of the descriptive survey is to make estimates in relation to the nature of existing conditions or the attributes of a population. The descriptive information relating to the students that was produced by the questionnaire was used to complement the data from the student interviews. While some parts of the questionnaire were designed to collect quantitative data, other sections were designed to provide additional qualitative data.

The questionnaire was also intended to provide a point of triangulation. The questionnaire was used to verify individual responses between the interview data and questionnaire data and to verify general themes that were occurring between the two sets

of data during the process of data analysis. Cohen and Manion (1994) state that a questionnaire can encourage greater honesty from the participants. It was also anticipated that the questionnaire would provide a more confidential forum for participants to offer information that they may have felt ill at ease to relate during the group interviews.

The questionnaire administered to both groups was identical except for question 14 in both questionnaires. Questions 1 to 8 sought information relating to the musical involvement of students' families and their own history of musical involvement (for example, their age of initial involvement in music, and their participation in various musical activities). All of these questions were closed questions which allowed the students to choose from one or more fixed alternatives (Burns, 2000). In some of these questions students were also given the alternative response of 'other' in which they could provide their own answers. Some questions were dichotomous which offered two alternatives for example, yes/no (Burns, 2000). All of these questions were designed to produce data which are displayed in the form of tables. In addition, the questions provided data that were used to complement and verify data obtained in the student interviews.

Questions 9 and 10 utilised Likert scales which required students to indicate their agreement or disagreement in response to a specific statement (Burns, 2000). In question 9 students indicated their level of agreement or disagreement on a five-point scale (strongly disagree-strongly agree) in response to the influence of other people in their lives upon their decisions to study elective music. In question 10 students indicated their level of agreement or disagreement on a five-point scale (strongly disagree-strongly agree) in response to the influence of various musical experiences upon their decisions to study elective music. These questions were designed to produce data which are displayed in the form of tables. In addition, the questions provided data that were used to complement and verify data obtained in the student interviews.

Questions 11 to 14 utilised open-ended response formats. Open-ended questions allow the participants to express their answers with minimal restraint within a frame of reference (Burns, 2000). These questions provided further qualitative data which were used to complement and verify data obtained in the student interviews. The data from these questions are presented in combination with the interview data within the results chapters. In questions 11 to 13, students were asked to respond to questions relating to their reasons for choosing to study elective music, their perceived goals for studying elective music, and the aspects of classroom elective music which they enjoy. Question 14 of the Year 11 questionnaire required students to comment on how their reasons for studying elective music had changed, if at all, since they were in junior school. Question 14 of the Year 8 questionnaire was presented in two parts. Part 'a' asked students to select one alternative (for example, yes, no, or unsure) in relation to their intentions to continue or discontinue their elective music studies in Year 9. Part 'b' was an open-ended question which asked students who had selected 'no' in part 'a' to state their reasons for why they would not be continuing to study elective music in Year 9.

The questionnaire was piloted with the second Year 8 elective music class at the same school during term three, 2003, after the student interviews had been completed. The Year 8 class was the same class with which the interview guide had been piloted. The questionnaire was administered to both classes participating in the study after the pilot had been completed, under the supervision of myself, toward the middle of term three during regular class hours. The time of the questionnaire was negotiated between the classroom music teacher of both classes and myself. Prior to beginning the questionnaire the participants were informed that the information they gave in the questionnaire would remain confidential and that pseudonyms would be used in the final results. In addition, I spoke to the students about the requirements of each question and encouraged them to ask me for help if they experienced difficulty understanding any of the questions. The questionnaire took approximately 25 minutes to complete.

Selection of Participants

Participants in this study (N=25) were drawn from a selective girls' high school in the Sydney metropolitan region. The sampling procedure that was used in the selection of participants was 'purposive sampling' (Cohen & Manion, 1994). This procedure involves the nomination of participants on the basis of their typicality (Cohen & Manion, 1994). The Year 8 students (N=15) from one of the two Year 8 music classes at the school were chosen as participants because Year 8 is the first year at the school in which students elect to study the Additional Study Course. The reason for selecting the students from only one of the two Year 8 music classes has been outlined in the introduction to the previous section. Students in Year 11 (N=10) were chosen as participants because this is the first year at the school in which students elect to study the senior course of music study, Music 2. The teacher participating in this study was selected as he is both the teacher of the Year 8 and Year 11 elective music classes. He is also the head teacher of administration and music at the school.

In selecting two groups of students at different stages of secondary school, this study utilised a cross-sectional design. In adopting this design it has been possible to make comparisons between the two year groups in order to identify differences and similarities in their perceptions of the factors that influenced their decisions to study elective music.

The principal of the school was approached by myself at the beginning of term 1, 2003 in order to request permission for the study to be conducted and to explain the purpose of the study. A letter requesting permission to conduct the study (Appendix 5) was given to her at this time. I received a letter of permission to conduct the study from her January 30th, 2003. The classroom music teacher was approached by myself after I had received the letter of permission from the principal and was given a subject information statement (Appendix 6) and the classroom music teacher participant consent form (Appendix 7).

Students in both the Year 8 and Year 11 elective music classes were approached by myself in term 1, 2003, during their regular music class and were given subject information statements (Appendix 6) and the parental and participant consent forms (Appendix 8). Participants were given the opportunity at this time to ask me any questions they may have had regarding the study. They were also encouraged to approach me at any time after the class if they had any further questions relating to the study. Out of 19 students in the Year 8 music class 15 students agreed to participate in the study. All of the 10 students in the Year 11 class agreed to participate in the study.

Data Analysis

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) state that qualitative research is concerned with 'discovery' and not 'proof'. Bresler (1996) maintains that rather than seeking causality and predictions, the qualitative researcher aims at an interpretive understanding of the situation. Strauss and Corbin (1998) state that interpretation is a form of deduction based on the researcher's reading of the data in association with his or her assumptions regarding the nature of life, the associated literature, and discussions with colleagues. However, Strauss and Corbin propose that the human element involved in the process of data analysis means that the researcher needs to maintain an awareness of the potential possibility of distorting the meaning of the data. Therefore, they suggest that by constantly comparing pieces of data the researcher is in a better position to validate her or his interpretations. In analysing the data from this study I have sought to discover and establish an understanding of the reasons that students in the specific context of this study have for choosing to study elective music in Years 8 and 11 of secondary school. Throughout the process I have been aware of the possibility of my own subjectivity and bias influencing the meanings inferred from the data. In comparing data from the interviews with data from the questionnaire, I was better able to validate the interpretations that were made.

Denscombe (1998) states that the difference between qualitative research and quantitative research exists in the treatment of data. Qualitative research is typically

associated with small-scale studies and focuses upon words as the unit of analysis by transforming information from various sources into the form of the written word (Denscombe, 1998). The words from qualitative data are segmented and organised so as to enable the researcher to compare, contrast, analyse and confer patterns upon them (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The presentation of the analysis of qualitative data is written in a descriptive and narrative style (Burns, 2000). It is concerned with the description of events or people (Denscombe, 1998). The presentation of data in this study utilises a predominantly descriptive and narrative style in order to discuss students' perceptions of the factors which influenced their decisions to study elective music. The presentation of data is further supplemented by quantitative data from the questionnaire that is presented in the form of tables.

The analysis of qualitative data is a process which continues throughout the period of research (Delamont, 1992). Therefore, the analysis of data does not occupy a distinct and separate phase in the qualitative study. In analysing data the main analytic tasks involve the establishment of patterns or regularities in the data (Delamont, 1992). These patterns and regularities can then be cross-checked to make sure that the data are valid and reliable. Similarly, the process of analysis in this study continued throughout the period of research and involved the cross-checking of themes and patterns that occurred between the methods of data collection.

Miles and Huberman (1994) state that qualitative research seeks to explain the way people come to understand, account for, take action, and manage situations in particular settings. The process of data analysis in this study has sought to explain students' perceptions of the factors that influence their decisions to study elective music in Years 8 and 11 of secondary school. In addition, the process of analysis has sought to identify the differences and similarities between Year 8 and Year 11 students in relation to their perceptions of the factors that influenced their decisions.

Howe and Sloboda (1999a) suggest that in exploring the lives of individuals it is important to remember that individual people are quite different from one another. Even

though individual differences are acknowledged by this study the overall intention of the analysis was to identify general themes both within the individual year groups and between the two year groups. The research questions of the study, which were informed by the review of literature, have provided the framework in which the data from interviews and the questionnaire were analysed. The following sections will outline the process that was undertaken for the analysis of data obtained in the interviews and the questionnaire.

Interviews

The process of analysing interview data involved the organisation of data through systematic arrangement and presentation of the information (Burns, 2000). While the analysis of the student and teacher interviews followed similar procedures to each other, the analysis of student interviews was completed first so that the analyses from these interviews could inform the construction of the student questionnaire and the direction of the teacher interview.

The first stage in the data analysis process occurred during the data collection phase of the study and involved the transcription of student interviews. The interviews were transcribed using the video data and were filed according to the date of the interview, the students who participated in the interview, and the year level of these students. Each student interview was transcribed as soon as possible in order to enable the process of 'analytic induction' (Burns, 2000). The process of analytic induction involves the continual refinement, expansion, and modification of the initial propositions throughout the process of data collection. In utilising a process of analytic induction, data collection and data analysis become a dialectical interaction (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). The process of analytic induction in this study involved the reading and re-reading of transcriptions of student interviews in order to refine the list of questions for subsequent interviews. In order to facilitate this process memos were made in the margins of the interview transcripts. Strauss and Corbin (1998) describe memos as a running log of

analytic sessions in which the researcher maintains a record of analysis, thoughts, interpretations, questions, and directions for the further collection of data.

The process of reading and re-reading the student interview transcripts enabled a greater familiarisation with the data which led to the second stage of analysis (Delamont, 1992; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). The second stage of analysis involved the coding of the data contained in the interview transcripts (Burns, 2000; Delamont, 1992). In coding the interview transcripts a process of open coding was used to analyse entire sentences and paragraphs in relation to categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Strauss and Corbin state that the aim of the open coding process is to identify and generate categories, and their associated properties and dimensions. Categories represent phenomena which are the central ideas represented in the data. Phenomena may describe recurring patterns of events, happenings, or action/interactions in relation to what people say or do as individuals, in groups, and in response to the positions and situations in which they find themselves (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Each interview transcript was coded according to 'coding categories' by placing the names of the coding categories in the margin of each transcript (Burns, 2000). The coding categories were constructed by myself and were informed by the research questions of the study and the review of literature (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Coding categories related to students' achievement-related beliefs, their history of musical involvement, and the influence of other people (Appendix 11). Code names were assigned to each category and numbers were assigned to the associated sub-categories (Burns, 2000). Subcategories refer to concepts relating to a specific category and enable the further clarification and specification of the category (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In many cases the data from the interview transcripts were coded into more than one category and multiple codings were applied to the data (Delamont, 1992). In these cases a slash (/) was used to distinguish between the different coding categories.

The third stage of data analysis involved the 'interrogation' of the coded data from the student interview transcripts (Delamont, 1992). During this stage of analysis the coding of the interview transcripts was systematically explored to find out what the data were

saying. Burns (2000) refer to this process as 'content analysis' in which the researcher endeavours to identify themes, concepts, and meanings. Strauss and Corbin (1998) describe this process of data analysis as axial coding in which the researcher seeks to systematically develop and discover relationships between the categories and subcategories that were found during the process of coding. The coded data from the interview transcripts were analysed for themes and topics relating to the research questions of the study. Themes and topics that were common to all interviews were noted. In addition, variations between individual students were also noted. A file was formed for each year group which was organised in terms of the themes and topics that had been identified in relation to the research questions of the study. Further memos were made in relation to the themes and topics that had been identified.

During the final stage of analysis a process similar to that of selective coding was used to integrate and refine the themes and topics (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Strauss and Corbin state that selective coding is a continual process that begins with the initial stages of analysis and is often not completed until the final writing. The themes, topics and related memos in the files for the Year 8 and Year 11 students were compared and contrasted in order to establish the differences and similarities within the two year groups and between the two year groups. Themes relating to each year group and themes existing between the two year groups were identified during this process. The results from these various stages of analysis are presented in a descriptive and narrative style in relation to the research questions of the study.

The analysis of the teacher interview followed a similar procedure to that of the student interviews. The analysis derived from this interview was used to further discuss and clarify some of the themes and topics that had arisen during the analysis of the student interviews and questionnaire.

Student Questionnaire

The quantitative and qualitative data from the student questionnaire have been analysed in order to provide data which supplements the themes and topics that were identified in

the analysis of student interviews. In adopting a predominantly qualitative design the intention of this study has been to represent the data primarily in the form of the written word and not in the form of numbers (Denscombe, 1998). Quantitative data from the questionnaire are represented in the form of tables in order to supplement the qualitative data from both the interviews and questionnaire. Tables were considered to be an appropriate medium for the presentation of quantitative data because they allowed the information to be presented in a succinct manner (Denscombe, 1998). Furthermore, they enabled data for Year 8 and Year 11 students to be presented within the same table which made the comparison of data between the two year groups possible.

The small-scale, descriptive nature of this study meant that the quantitative data in the questionnaire did not lend themselves well to complex statistical analysis. For this reason the analysis of quantitative data involved the use of elementary descriptive statistics (Denscombe, 1998). The first stage of analysis of quantitative data involved grouping the variables that were measured by the questionnaire and determining their frequencies (Burns, 2000; Denscombe, 1998). The variables to be measured were determined from the analysis of the student interviews. The second stage of analysis involved a tally of the frequencies of the variables so that they could be presented in the form of tables (Denscombe, 1998). The process of analysis will be described in further detail in relation to the various questions in the questionnaire.

Data from questions 1 to 8 took the form of nominal data. Nominal data are obtained by counting things and putting them into categories (Denscombe, 1998). The variables which these questions measured related to the musical involvement of students' families and their own history of musical involvement (for example, their age of initial involvement in music, and their participation in various primary school, secondary school, and outside of school musical activities). The tables formed from the analysis of the results in questions 1 to 8 present information for both Year 8 and Year 11 students within the same table for the purposes of comparison.

The data from questions 9 and 10 took the form of ordinal data. Ordinal data are based on counting things in specific categories which have a clear, ordered, ranked relationship (Denscombe, 1998). Therefore, the data in each category can be compared with data in other categories in terms of whether they are higher, lower, or the same as those in other categories. The data from question 9 are presented in tables which show Year 8 and Year 11 students' level of agreement or disagreement on a five-point scale (strongly disagree-strongly agree) in response to the influence of other people upon their decisions to study elective music. These other people include students' mothers, fathers, siblings, friends, private music teachers, previous classroom music teachers, and others. The data from question 10 are also presented in tables which show Year 8 and Year 11 students' level of agreement or disagreement on a five-point scale (strongly disagree-strongly agree) in response to the influence of their involvement in various musical experiences upon their decisions to study elective music. These experiences include students' primary school musical experiences, secondary school classroom music experiences, secondary school co-curricular experiences, and outside of school musical experiences. Data for the Year 8 and Year 11 students from questions 9 and 10 are presented in two separate tables.

Data from questions 11 to 14 of the questionnaire took the form of qualitative data. The data from these questions were analysed according to the same procedure as the interview data. The analysis of this data was interpolated within the files containing the analysis of themes and topics from the student interview data. However, the data from the questionnaire were labeled as 'questionnaire data' so that they could be referred to as such in the final presentation of results. In addition, this allowed for triangulation between the two methods of data collection in order to verify both students' responses and themes that arose in the two sets of data during the process of analysis. Qualitative data from the questionnaire are presented in combination with the interview data in the results chapters.

In adopting a predominantly qualitative methodology it was possible for this study to provide a detailed account of students' perceptions regarding the various factors that

influenced their decisions to study elective music in secondary school. The methods of data collection and analysis enabled a comprehensive exploration of students' perceptions and facilitated an extensive understanding of their perceptions through the use of their own language. The following three chapters present the findings from the analysis of results.

CHAPTER 5

STUDENTS' HISTORY OF MUSICAL INVOLVEMENT

The following chapter presents and discusses the results in relation to the first research question of this study: *What is the history of musical involvement for Year 8 and Year 11 students?* Sloboda (1990) states that children who engage in various positive musical experiences during childhood may be more inclined to pursue high levels of musical involvement later in life. It would appear that most students' decisions to study elective music were preceded by their involvement in a variety of positive musical experiences. Therefore, the intention of this chapter is to outline the musical involvement of Year 8 and Year 11 students before they decided to study elective music in secondary school.

The first part of this chapter presents and discusses the findings in relation to Year 8 and Year 11 students' initial involvement in formal musical activities, including the nature of this initial involvement and the influence of others upon their initial involvement. The subsequent part of the chapter presents and discusses the findings in relation to Year 8 and Year 11 students' perceptions of the influence of various musical experiences upon their decisions to study elective music.

Formal musical activities are defined in this study as organised musical activities either individual or group, that were taught by a music teacher and which students attended on a regular basis. Musical experiences are defined as various musical activities in which students had participated previously or were currently participating at the time they decided to study elective music. These activities include their previous primary school musical activities (for example, activities within the regular classroom and co-curricular activities); secondary school musical activities (for example, previous classroom music activities and co-curricular activities); and their musical activities outside of school (for example, private music lessons, external music examinations, music competitions/eisteddfods, and community based activities such as choirs and bands). Co-curricular activities are defined as those musical activities which take place in

addition to the musical activities that occur within the context of the normal school classroom. These activities are usually voluntary and generally take place outside of regular school hours. Furthermore, co-curricular activities are additional to syllabus requirements. Therefore, there are no stipulations within syllabuses for schools and teachers to provide these activities for students.

In each section within this chapter and the subsequent chapters of results (Chapters 6 and 7) the data are first presented and then discussed in relation to the literature. Each chapter of results concludes with a summary of the findings in relation to the research question discussed in the chapter. Due to the intricate relationships between the various factors considered by this study it has been necessary for some issues to be revisited in a different form within the three chapters of results. However, in order to keep the repetition of these issues to a minimum there are various references made throughout the chapters of results that direct the reader to further discussion of issues in other chapters.

The focus of the analysis in the chapters of results is mainly descriptive. Unless otherwise stated the qualitative data presented in the chapters are derived from the student interviews. Further qualitative data from the student questionnaire are identified as such. Data from the teacher interview are identified as such and are used to illuminate issues arising from the student data. In Chapters 5 and 7 quantitative data from the student questionnaire are presented in tables. For the purposes of comparison all tables, except for Tables 4 and 5 and Tables 16 and 17, present data for Year 8 and Year 11 students within the same table. Percentages appearing within the tables are approximated to whole numbers. Within each table the total sample of Year 8 students is fifteen ($N=15$) and the total sample of Year 11 students is ten ($N=10$). In order to protect the anonymity of the participants, comments made by the students and their classroom music teacher are identified by pseudonyms. The year level of the student who made the comment is indicated in the brackets after the pseudonym.

Students' Initial Involvement in Formal Musical Activities

Howe and Sloboda (1991a) state that information relating to the musical backgrounds of individuals is important for determining their potential success in music and can be useful to educational planning. Research exploring the backgrounds of individuals who have achieved high levels of musical proficiency, has found that the vast majority of these individuals are involved in musical activities from an early age (Manturzewska, 1990; Sloboda & Howe, 1991). Studies conducted with musicians of varying ages highlight the important influence of the early home environment and parents' attitudes, values, and support upon students' musical involvement (Achilles, 1992; Brand, 1986; Chadwick, 1999b, 2001; Olszewski et al., 1987; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sosniak, 1985). In exploring students' history of musical involvement, the results of this current study showed that most of the Year 8 and Year 11 students who chose to study elective music had been actively involved in music making since they were quite young. In addition, their initial involvement in musical activities was mostly encouraged and supported by their families.

Table 1 shows the age of students' initial involvement in formal musical activities.

Table 1.

Age of Students' Initial Involvement in Formal Musical Activities (brackets show number of students)

Student Year Group	Age of Students' Initial Involvement (age is expressed in years)				Total
	4 - 5	6 - 7	8 - 9	10 - 11	
Year 8	13% (2)	40% (6)	40% (6)	7% (1)	100% (15)
Year 11	50% (5)	40% (4)	0%	10% (1)	100% (10)

Table 1 shows that the majority of Year 8 students (80%) were between the ages of six and nine when they first became involved in some type of formal musical activity. In contrast, the majority of Year 11 students (90%) were slightly younger than the Year 8

students when they first became involved in some type of formal musical activity, and were between the ages of four and seven.

Interview data indicate that the nature of this initial involvement in formal musical activities for most students in each year group consisted of participation in private or group instrumental music lessons. The majority of students who participated in instrumental lessons had attended private instrumental lessons, with most students learning the piano:

Sarah (Yr 8): My mum started learning piano when I was six so she put me on lessons for a while . . .

Several students from each year group also started to learn an instrument through involvement in their primary school's instrumental tutorial programme:

Polly (Yr 8): In primary school we started having a band and these tutoring systems and I started playing saxophone.

Millie (Yr 11): In Year 3 everybody picked up an instrument and that was the thing and in Year 4 I was like 'Hey I missed out' so I picked up the flute, partially because I wanted to and my mum wanted me to play the saxophone . . .

Julia (Yr 11): I started learning the violin in Year 1 because it was compulsory in Year 1 at school . . .

Only two students, one from each year group, did not initially become involved in formal musical activities by participating in instrumental lessons. These two students attended community based group music classes. However, these group music lessons appear to have acted as a precursor to learning an instrument:

Wendy (Yr 8): . . . I was sent off to kindy music where we played on little drums and stuff and then I decided I wanted to play the piano . . .

Jo (Yr 11): . . . I did music groups at a little hall where I lived, and it was with a whole bunch of people around the same age [approximately four], and we'd sit down on keyboards one week and xylophones another week and we'd get to play all different instruments and then I did piano. . .

The initial involvement in formal music activities for the majority of Year 8 and Year 11 students appears to have been influenced and supported by their families, particularly their parents. Furthermore, the majority of students had family members who were also musically active.

Table 2 shows the percentages of students who have musically active family members.

Table 2

Percentages of Students who have Musically Active Family Members (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Musically active family members
Year 8	87% (13)
Year 11	60% (6)

As shown in Table 2 the majority of both year 8 students (87%) and Year 11 students (60%) have musically active family members. However, it is evident that a greater proportion of Year 8 students than Year 11 students have musically active family members.

Table 3 shows students' family members who are musically active.

Table 3

Students' Family Members who are Musically Active (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Mother	Father	Siblings	Other
Year 8	33% (5)	27% (4)	60% (9)	0%
Year 11	10% (1)	10% (1)	50% (5)	20% (2)

The most commonly cited family member for both year groups, as shown in Table 3, was a sibling. Nine Year 8 students (60%) and five Year 11 students (50%) have siblings who also play a musical instrument. Furthermore, fewer Year 11 students than Year 8 students, as shown in Table 3, have parents who are musically active. Two Year 11 students also cited 'Other' family members who are musically active. These family members included a cousin, grandfather, aunts, and uncles. Even though the Year 8 students did not cite 'Other' musically active family members in the questionnaire, several students spoke about other musically active family members during the interviews. Interview data illustrated that the nature of musical activities for students' family members included playing an instrument, playing in bands, singing in church choirs, and participating in amateur musical societies. In addition, the mother of one Year 11 student is a violin teacher.

Most students indicated that their initial involvement was encouraged and facilitated by their parents, particularly their mothers:

Jane (Yr 8): I sort of started playing piano first. I sort of wanted to do it but my parents made me get into it and it was fun . . .

Jo (Yr 11): . . . My mum was pretty keen on getting me involved in music. . .

One Year 8 student commented on the influence of her musically active father:

Jenny (Yr 8): My dad performs in musicals. It was kind of the whole show that swept me up and I'm still obsessed with music now and stuff and I used to go out and see his musicals and stuff . . .

Several Year 8 students also mentioned the influence of older siblings who were also learning a musical instrument:

Marie (Yr 8): . . . My sister was always into playing guitar and stuff and she got me started and then I used to see her playing guitar and I wanted to play like that.

Kathy (Yr 8): My brother started music and then one day my mum asked if I wanted to do music and piano and I said 'Yes' and so one day I just started music . . .

Gillian (Yr 8): My mum suggested that 'Do you want to play the piano?' and I just started going along with my sister . . .

Only one student in Year 11 commented on the influence of family members other than parents and siblings. Both of these family members were also involved in the field of music:

Kim (Yr 11): Well my grandfather played the piano when I was little and my cousin who is the same age as me started playing the piano when he was six. So then I got an interest and I got a piano teacher.

In addition to family members, a few students also mentioned the influence of other people. These people included friends of family members and a neighbour:

Susan (Yr 8): We had a band at school and some of my sister's friends were in it and Veronica [her older sister] was in the year above me and so I tried out in Year 4.

Carrie (Yr 11): I think I started in Year 2 because my neighbour played piano and my parents made me go.

As discussed earlier in this part of the chapter several students were introduced to formal music activities through their primary school's instrumental tutorial programme. The nature of these programmes often requires parents to pay for their children's lessons and the hire or purchase of a musical instrument. Therefore, it would appear that even though the initial involvement in formal musical activities for these students was facilitated by their primary schools it is likely that they also received support from their parents.

Chadwick (2002a) states that musical behaviours often appear at a very young age. The results of this current study show that most of the students were involved in musical activities from a young age. All students had started formal music lessons between four and eleven years of age, with the majority aged between four and nine. This result is consistent with the findings of previous research which explored the backgrounds of musicians and music students (Manturzewska, 1990; Sloboda & Howe; 1991). The authors of this research found that the majority of participants in their studies had become involved in formal musical activities before the age of ten.

For the majority of students in both year groups their initial musical encounters involved participation in private or group instrumental lessons. Most of the students attended private instrumental lessons with the majority of students participating in piano lessons. This finding is similar to previous research conducted with other elective music students in Year 9 of secondary school (Hayes, 1996) and students who attended a specialist music school (Sloboda & Howe, 1991). Hayes (1996) found that a significant proportion of the students in her study had learned the piano as their first instrument. Similarly, Sloboda and Howe (1991) found that the majority of students had learned the piano prior to attending the specialist music school and piano accounted for the most popular first instrument learned by the students. For several Year 8 and Year 11 students in this current study, their initial musical encounters involved participation in their primary school's instrumental tutorial programme. This result suggests that the primary school also plays an important role in providing opportunities for students' initial involvement in musical activities.

Previous research has identified the importance of an individual's home environment in developing musical interest and involvement (Bowles, 1991; Chadwick, 1999b, 2001; Klinedinst, 1991; Olszewski et al., 1987; Wragg, 1974). The home environment of the students in this current study appears to have played an important role in their initial musical involvement. For most students in this study their initial involvement in formal musical activities was influenced by family members, particularly their parents. This finding corroborates results from other research in which parents and relatives were found to be responsible for the initial introduction of their child to the field of music (Chadwick, 2001; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sosniak, 1985). However, it is noteworthy that most of the students in this study indicated that their mothers, in particular, were responsible for their initial involvement in formal musical activities. This result is similar to the findings of Chadwick (2000b) who found that the majority of parents in her study who spoke about giving musical assistance to their children were mothers.

Several students also cited the influence of siblings upon their initial involvement in formal musical activities. These Year 8 students mentioned older siblings who were

learning an instrument. The influence of older students upon Year 8 students is comparable to the findings of other research in which older siblings have been found to play an important role in influencing their younger siblings to learn a musical instrument (Howe & Sloboda, 1991a; Strom, 2001). Howe and Sloboda found that a significant proportion of the students in their study was influenced in their initial musical involvement by older siblings. Previous research suggests that older siblings create an awareness in their younger siblings of the possibility of learning a musical instrument and a familiarity with the learning process (Howe & Sloboda, 1991a; Strom, 2001). Furthermore, older siblings help to create an environment in which the process of learning a musical instrument is normalised (Howe & Sloboda, 1991a).

The finding that most of the students in this study have family members who are also musically active is consistent with the results of studies conducted with adult musicians and instrumental music students (Manturzevska, 1990; Pettengell, 1997; Strom, 2001). Both Pettengell and Strom found that the majority of students in their studies had one or more family members who were also musically active. Similarly, Manturzevska found that the vast majority of participants in her study came from families which had some musical tradition. In addition, siblings were the most commonly cited musically active family members by students in this current study. Most of the Year 8 students and half of the Year 11 students have siblings who also play a musical instrument. This finding is consistent with research conducted with instrumental music students (Pettengell, 1997; Strom, 2001) and students attending a specialist music school (Sloboda & Howe, 1991) which found that a significant number of students had siblings who played musical instruments.

Pettengell (1997) suggests that the high proportion of students in her study who had musically active family members indicated that these students came from families in which music was perceived to be an important activity. Similarly, the significant proportion of students in this current study who have musically active family members would also seem to suggest that most students come from families in which musical activity is valued. Klinedinst (1991) maintains that students who come from musical

homes are more inclined to display positive attitudes toward music and hold positive self-concepts in music. Hurley (1995) suggests that musical families may indicate a strong cultural influence that may incline students to involvement in music. It is possible that the musical members of most students' families in this current study have influenced their initial motivations for musical involvement.

However, previous research has produced conflicting results concerning the importance of parents' own musical involvement upon their children's musical development. Some research has shown that successful music students also had parents who were musically active (Chadwick, 1999b, 2001; Davidson et al., 1996). Chadwick (2001) found that musically active parents positively encourage their children's initial and continued interest in music. Hurley (1995) suggests that the musical involvement of parents may influence their child's initial expectations and values for musical involvement. Most of the Year 8 students in this study had parents who were musically active. However, only a few of these students perceived their parents' own involvement in musical activities as having an influence upon their initial involvement. Possibly these students take the musical involvement of their parents for granted and are not conscious of parental influence. In addition, the retrospective nature of this aspect of the current study may have made it difficult for students to accurately recall the influence of their parents upon their initial musical involvement.

However, the greater proportion of Year 11 students than Year 8 students who did not come from musically active families is an important finding. Furthermore, only two Year 11 students had parents who were musically active. These findings correspond with the results of previous research which concluded that students who continue their musical involvement and attain both general and high levels of musical competence do not necessarily come from families with musical backgrounds (Brand, 1986; Davidson et al., 1996; Manturzewska, 1990; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sosniak, 1985; Wragg, 1974). The authors of these previous studies concluded that the interests, attitudes toward music, support, and encouragement of parents were more significant influences upon their children's musical involvement than parents' own musical involvement.

Students' Perceptions Regarding the Influence of Various Musical Experiences upon their Decisions to Study Elective Music

This part of the chapter presents the findings in relation to Year 8 and Year 11 students' perceptions of the influence of their participation in various musical activities upon their decisions to study elective music. According to Sloboda and Howe (1991) the achievement of high competence as a musician is dependent in part on the access to opportunities for learning. Similarly, Chadwick (1999a) found that the musical development of students seemed to be facilitated by their deliberate pursuit of opportunities for learning, training, and practice through their engagement in various musical activities. Numerous researchers have also found that previous successful and positive musical experiences influence the intentions of students and adults to continue their musical studies (Bowles, 1991; Boyack, 1999; Elkan, 1996; Hayes, 1996; Stewart, 1991; Walker & Haman, 1995). As shown in the previous section of this chapter, it would appear that all of the Year 8 and Year 11 students had been involved in some form of musical activity before they decided to study elective music in secondary school. The results indicate that the participation of students in a variety of musical activities had influenced their decisions to study elective music.

The first section of this part of the chapter addresses the influence of students' primary school musical experiences. The following section explores the influence of their secondary school musical experiences. The final section considers the influence of students' outside of school musical experiences. Table 4 shows Year 8 students' rated responses in relation to the influence of various musical experiences upon their decisions to study elective music. Table 5 shows Year 11 students' rated responses in relation to the influence of various musical experiences upon their decisions to study elective music. Both tables indicate students' rated responses (for example, strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree, and strongly agree) to the following questionnaire statement: *The following experiences were influential in my decision to study elective music this year.* The data contained in Tables 4 and 5 will be discussed further in the following sections of this chapter.

Table 4

Year 8 Students' Rated Responses in Relation to the Influence of Various Musical Experiences upon their Decisions to Study Elective Music (brackets show number of students)

Type of musical experience	Student Ratings					Nil Response	Total
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree		
Primary school activities	7% (1)	26% (4)	7% (1)	40% (6)	20% (3)	0%	100% (15)
Secondary school classroom music activities	7% (1)	13% (2)	13% (2)	27% (4)	40% (6)	0%	100% (15)
Secondary school co-curricular activities	0%	7% (1)	13% (2)	13% (2)	47% (7)	20% (3)	100% (15)
Outside of school activities	0%	7% (1)	0%	40% (6)	46% (7)	7% (1)	100% (15)

Table 5

Year 11 Students' Rated Responses in Relation to the Influence of Various Musical Experiences upon their Decisions to Study Elective Music (brackets show number of students)

Type of musical experience	Student Ratings					Nil Response	Total
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree		
Primary school activities	30% (3)	30% (3)	10% (1)	30% (3)	0%	0%	100% (10)
Secondary school classroom music activities	10% (1)	20% (2)	20% (2)	50% (5)	0%	0%	100% (10)
Secondary school co-curricular activities	0%	0%	20% (2)	30% (3)	10% (1)	40% (4)	100% (10)
Outside of school activities	10% (1)	0%	20% (2)	40% (4)	20% (2)	10% (1)	100% (10)

Students' Musical Experiences during Primary School

All of the Year 8 and Year 11 students commented that they had participated in some form of musical activity during primary school. The activities cited by the students included various co-curricular musical activities, musical activities with their regular classroom teachers, and class music lessons with specialist music teachers. However, Year 8 students were more inclined than the Year 11 students to perceive these experiences as influential upon their decisions to study elective music.

A comparison of results shown in Tables 4 and 5 shows that differences occurred between the two Year groups regarding their perceptions of the influence of primary school musical activities. The majority of Year 8 students (60%) agreed or strongly agreed that their primary school musical experiences had been influential upon their decisions to study elective music (see Table 4). In contrast, the majority of Year 11 students (60%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that their primary school musical experiences had been influential upon their decisions to study elective music (see Table 5). However, interview data suggest that Year 8 students generally perceived their involvement in primary school co-curricular activities as more influential than their participation in primary school classroom music activities.

Table 6 shows the percentages of students who participated in primary school co-curricular musical activities.

Table 6

Percentages of Students who Participated in Primary School Co-Curricular Musical Activities (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Primary school co-curricular musical activities	Two or more primary school co- curricular musical activities
Year 8	93% (14)	67% (10)
Year 11	90% (9)	60% (6)

Table 6 shows that the majority of Year 8 students (93%) and Year 11 students (90%) had participated in some form of co-curricular musical activity during primary school. Furthermore, most of the Year 8 students (67%) and Year 11 students (60%) participated in two or more co-curricular activities.

Table 7 shows the percentages of students who participated in various types of primary school co-curricular musical activities.

Table 7
Percentages of Students who Participated in Various Types of Primary School Co-Curricular Musical Activities (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Choir	Concert band	String ensemble/ Orchestra	Recorder ensemble	Instrumental tutorials	Other
Year 8	80% (12)	47% (7)	13% (2)	40% (6)	47% (7)	20% (3)
Year 11	90% (9)	20% (2)	50% (5)	30% (3)	40% (4)	10% (1)

As shown in Table 7 the co-curricular activities cited by students included choir, concert band, string ensemble, orchestra, recorder group, and instrumental tutorials. ‘Other’ activities cited by the students included flute ensemble, performing as soloists on school assemblies, and performing as the school pianist for school assemblies. Students who occupied the role of school pianist were required to play the national anthem and school song for their school assemblies.

The co-curricular activity with the highest rate of participation for both year groups was the school choir (see Table 7). Most Year 8 students (80%) and Year 11 students (90%) had participated in the school choir. A significant proportion of students was also involved in instrumental tutorials. Seven Year 8 students (47%) and four Year 11 students (40%) had been involved in learning an instrument as part of their school’s

instrumental programme. Interview data indicate that several students had also started to learn their second instrument through their participation in instrumental tutorials.

Several Year 8 students commented that their involvement in these co-curricular activities during primary school had influenced their decisions to study elective music in secondary school. In particular, these students spoke about their participation in their school's tutorial programme and concert band. It would appear that the Year 8 students' involvement in these activities had increased their intrinsic interest in music, creating a desire to continue their music studies in order to broaden their musical knowledge:

Molly (Yr8): . . . I wanted to learn more about music than we did at Bangor [her primary school] 'cause they didn't really teach you about it they just said 'Okay here is your tutor. Play in the band and perform' and that was basically it, and so I wanted to expand on it and learn about the history and things.

In contrast to the high rates of participation for both year groups in co-curricular musical activities during primary school, the majority of students from both year groups indicated that they had participated in very few musical activities within the context of their regular classroom during primary school:

Polly (Yr 8): We didn't do that much, it was mostly if you choose to do band or choir or something like that. I don't think we did anything in class.

Diana (Yr 11): I think we did lots of art in class but not music.

However, some students from each year group mentioned participating in music classes that were scheduled as a regular part of their school's timetable. These classes appeared to have been taught by specialist music teachers. The students remembered participating in a range of activities including singing, percussion activities, aural activities, learning the recorder, and playing keyboard:

Molly (Yr 8): We had a music teacher who would come in twice a week and teach us recorder.

Kim (Yr 11): . . . in Year 3 we had a music class which we went off to once a week where we played the recorder and clapped to songs and that kind of thing and they had a keyboard we could muck around on.

Only one Year 8 student spoke about being influenced by these classes. It seems that this Year 8 student was inspired by her music teacher to continue with her music studies:

Jenny (Yr 8): . . . we had music classes in Year 6 which were led by the school music teacher. She was a wonderful woman. She kind of really inspired us to continue with music. . .

As shown in Tables 4 and 5 students from both year groups appeared to perceive their primary school musical experiences (co-curricular and musical activities with their regular classrooms) as one of the lesser influences upon their decisions to study elective music. However, Year 8 students seemed to perceive their primary school musical experiences, particularly their participation in co-curricular musical activities such as concert band and instrumental tutorials, as more influential than did the Year 11 students. Possibly this is due to the remoteness of these experiences for the Year 11 students. The Year 8 students commented that their participation in these activities had inspired a continuing interest in music. It would appear that as a result of their participation they were more motivated to engage in further musical activity in order to increase their musical knowledge and skills.

However, the high rates of participation for both groups of students in various co-curricular musical activities would seem to suggest that music was a valued activity for these students during primary school. Boyack (1999) states that primary schools which provide a range of performance opportunities for students are important in allowing students to experience success during their primary school years. It is possible that the participation of Year 8 and Year 11 students in co-curricular musical activities during primary school has enabled them to gain confidence in their musical abilities and in turn be more inclined to pursue their musical involvement. Furthermore, Wragg (1974) suggests that music education in primary school should aim to encourage students' interest in and commitment to music. The results of this current study would appear to indicate that most of the students in this study attended primary schools in which music making as a co-curricular activity was both valued and supported. These factors have possibly contributed to the students' increased interest and commitment to their music studies.

In contrast to their high rates of involvement in co-curricular musical activities, fewer students from each year group mentioned participating in musical activities on a regular basis within the context of their ordinary classroom. The only students who participated in regular classroom musical activities had been involved in these activities with a specialist music teacher. The majority of students indicated that their classroom music experiences had not influenced their decision to study elective music in high school.

Possibly this result is due to the irregular and possibly inadequate nature of these activities for most students. Research conducted with primary school teachers has shown that generalist classroom teachers tend not to teach music on a regular basis and when they do it is often unsatisfactory (Russell-Bowie, 1993). Russell-Bowie found that a lack of time during the school day and a lack of personal musical experience were cited by generalist primary school teachers as reasons for not teaching music more effectively. Similarly, Chadwick (2002b) found the parents in her study indicated that the inappropriate and unsuccessful implementation of musical activities within the classroom was due to the limited musical experience of regular primary school classroom teachers. The parents in Chadwick's study were concerned that primary classroom music activities were taught in a more procedural than motivated fashion. It is possible that the experiences students in this current study had acquired in a range of other musical activities (for example, co-curricular musical activities and outside of school musical activities) may have contributed to a perception of their primary school classroom musical activities as unchallenging and unmotivating in comparison to these other activities.

Students' Musical Experiences during Secondary School

As a group, Year 8 students appeared to perceive their secondary school musical activities (for example, classroom music activities and co-curricular activities) as more influential upon their decisions to study elective music than did the Year 11 students (see Tables 4 and 5). Ten Year 8 students (67%) agreed or strongly agreed that their previous secondary school music classroom activities were influential upon their

decisions to study elective music (see Table 4), whereas, only half of the Year 11 students (50%) agreed that their secondary school music classroom activities had been influential (see Table 5).

The majority of Year 8 students (60%), as shown in Table 4, also agreed or strongly agreed that their secondary school co-curricular activities had been influential. In contrast, Table 5 shows that less than half of the Year 11 students (40%) agreed or strongly agreed that their secondary school co-curricular activities had been influential. Furthermore, as shown in Tables 4 and 5, both groups of students appeared to perceive their secondary school classroom musical activities as more influential than their secondary school co-curricular musical activities. However, this difference was only marginal.

Table 8 shows the percentages of students who participate in secondary school co-curricular musical activities.

Table 8
Percentages of Students who Participate in Secondary School Co-Curricular Musical Activities (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Secondary school co-curricular musical activities	Two or more secondary school co-curricular musical activities
Year 8	80% (12)	20% (3)
Year 11	60% (6)	40% (4)

Even though the majority of students from each year group participated in co-curricular activities, it would appear that a greater proportion of Year 8 students than Year 11 students was involved in these activities (see Table 8). The majority of Year 8 students (80%) participated in secondary school co-curricular musical activities whereas, just over half of the Year 11 students (60%) were involved in these activities. Furthermore,

several students from each year group participated in two or more co-curricular activities.

Table 9 shows the percentages of students who participate in various types of secondary school co-curricular musical activities.

Table 9
Percentages of Students who Participate in Various Types of Secondary School Co-Curricular Musical Activities (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Concert band	Intermediate concert band	Orchestra	Rock band	Stage band	Vocal ensemble	Instrumental/ Vocal tutorials
Year 8	40% (6)	20% (3)	7% (2)	20% (3)	7% (2)	7% (2)	53% (8)
Year 11	40% (4)	30% (3)	60% (6)	0%	30% (3)	0%	0%

As shown in Table 9, the co-curricular musical activity with the highest participation rate for Year 8 students was the instrumental/vocal tutorial programme with the majority of students (53%) involved in this activity. Interview data also indicate that several Year 8 students learned their second or third instrument through their involvement in this programme. In contrast to the Year 8 students, the co-curricular musical activity with the highest participation rate for Year 11 students was the orchestra, with the majority of students (60%) involved in this activity.

During the interviews only a few Year 8 students commented on the influence of their participation in secondary school co-curricular musical activities. In contrast, the Year 11 students did not refer to the influence of these activities. The Year 8 students described how their secondary school co-curricular experiences differed from their primary school co-curricular experiences. They spoke about the greater variety of activities available in secondary school and the wider variety of instruments. Furthermore, they commented on the more advanced levels of the ensembles:

Gillian (Yr 8): Everybody is heaps more talented [in secondary school]. They're more advanced. They can play the instruments better and there is a wider variety of instruments. Like some people play instruments you've never heard of, and it just sounds heaps better because if you have a band there's actually ten flutes instead of one.

Lucy (Yr 8): . . . at my old school [her primary school] we just had a junior band and a performing band and so that's all there was. There wasn't any tutorials or anything but [at] this school they have tutorials and there are big bands and stuff.

In contrast to their secondary school co-curricular experiences, most of the students spoke about the influence of their previous classroom musical experiences. The majority of the Year 11 students had studied elective music since they were in Year 8. Seven students had studied elective music in Year 8, eight students had studied elective music in Year 9, and nine students had studied elective music in Year 10. Only one Year 11 student had not previously studied elective music in junior secondary school. All Year 8 students were required to study the Mandatory Course of music in Year 7. Interview data indicate that Year 8 and Year 11 students differed in their perceptions regarding the nature of the influence of their previous classroom music experiences. Several Year 8 students commented that their Year 7 classroom music experiences had been more enjoyable than they thought they would be:

Marie (Yr 8): . . . If last year was all theory and that boring stuff, then I probably would have thought it [Year 8 elective music] would have been the same and I wouldn't want to do it. But last year was heaps of fun 'cause we learned all this new stuff and we looked at all of these instruments and it was like 'Wow' and I wanted to be able to do that this year.

Gillian (Yr 8): We thought it was going to be all classical stuff but we did rock music and stuff and it was heaps fun.

However, several Year 8 students also spoke about how they found Year 7 classroom music to be more difficult and serious than their primary school musical experiences:

Kathy (Yr 8): [classroom music] is more serious because in primary school all we did was use maracas and triangles and that and in high school we use keyboards and that.

Cindy (Yr 8): In primary it was just fun 'cause you just clapped rhythms and things. But now in high school you think of the theoretical side of things more. You analyse it more, you don't just sit there and play it.

The majority of Year 8 students appeared to be significantly influenced by intrinsic value considerations derived from their previous Year 7 classroom music experiences. They commented that these experiences had been fun and interesting:

Susan (Yr 8): It was heaps of fun doing the guitars and pianos and stuff and we did a little bit of composing and performing and that was cool. It was fun.

Jenny (Yr 8): . . . I was really excited when I found out that we could do it [music] as an elective and I really like music 'cause it's really fun, mainly performance not theory since when we did piano and guitar last year I found the performance really fun . . .

However, there were exceptions. One Year 8 student commented that her previous Year 7 classroom music experiences had not been very influential. Nevertheless, these classroom experiences appear to have been offset by her previous intrinsic interest in music:

Cindy (Yr 8): . . . the teacher wasn't really there and if she was she put on a video or something. Like we played the keyboard and guitar and that was okay but I still liked music before that so I chose it anyway.

A few Year 8 students also spoke about the importance of their previous Year 7 classroom music experiences in determining their continued participation in music as a subject at secondary school:

Jane (Yr 8): . . . The first year determines how good you think it is and if you think it's good then you do it and you don't take something that's not good.

Jenny (Yr 8): . . . I was more interested in doing the bands [in primary school] than doing it any further like at high school or going on to a career. When I did music last year [Year 7] here I found it very interesting and I decided the music course here seemed pretty good and so I'd give it a try . . .

Linda (Yr 8): I thought that it [classroom music] was very interesting and it made me like music more. So that's why I chose it this year.

In contrast to the Year 8 students, Year 11 students appeared to be less influenced by intrinsic value considerations derived from their previous classroom music experiences. Some Year 11 students indicated that they had chosen to study elective music based on expectations from their previous elective classroom experiences:

Kim (Yr 11): The course looked interesting and it followed the same format as Year 10 so it was something we were familiar with, like going through the ages of music . . .

Julia (Yr 11): We did it [Year 10 elective music] in exactly the same format as this year except this year is harder. I pretty much expected it to be the same as last year.

A few Year 11 students also expressed a desire to continue their elective music studies based on their previous investment in studying music as a subject in school:

Liz (Yr 11): I had already done four years of music in high school already and it seemed appropriate (Questionnaire data).

Leigh (Yr 11): I have been doing music practically all my school life and I want to continue (Questionnaire data).

In general the Year 11 students viewed music more seriously and less enjoyable:

Julia (Yr 11): . . . it kind of changed [elective music in junior school compared with elective music in senior school] from being fun to being more serious.

Liz (Yr 11): Yeah well at the beginning of this year you realise it's more serious and stuff and you've got the goal to reach like the HSC [Higher School Certificate]. . . and you've got to be more focused and think of the serious side of what you're doing.

Both groups of students also appeared to be influenced by their perceptions of having done well in classroom music previously. This factor is discussed further in Chapter 6 under the section entitled *The Influence of Expectancies for Success and Competence Beliefs*.

The results of this study show that in contrast to their primary school musical experiences, the majority of students perceived their secondary school musical experiences as having a more direct influence upon their decisions to study elective

music (see Tables 4 and 5). However, Year 8 students appeared to perceive their secondary school experiences as more influential than did the Year 11 students. Furthermore, both year groups perceived their classroom music experiences as marginally more influential than their co-curricular musical activities. Students in both year groups were less inclined to talk about the influence of their co-curricular musical activities. Possibly the students perceive their previous classroom music experiences as being more closely related to their elective music classes.

Previous research has found that students' participation in secondary school musical activities beyond the music classroom is important in sustaining their continued participation, interest, and enjoyment in music during secondary school (Wragg, 1974). Furthermore, previous studies have shown that individuals who participate in secondary school music ensembles display more positive attitudes toward music education as adults (Noble, 1976) and are more likely to continue with their musical involvement after secondary school (Bowles, 1991; Walker & Haman, 1995). The results of this current study show that the majority of students from both year groups participated in co-curricular musical activities and that a greater proportion of Year 8 students than Year 11 students was involved in these activities. This result is possibly due to the time restraints placed upon Year 11 students by their busy subject commitments in senior years.

The finding that most students in this study participate in co-curricular musical activities differs from another Australian study conducted with Year 9 elective music students (Hayes, 1996). Hayes found that only a minority of students in her study was involved in co-curricular musical activities at their schools. The findings of this current study are more consistent with the results of larger scale research conducted with young Australian musicians (Chadwick, 1999a) whereby the majority of participated in co-curricular musical activities at their secondary school on a regular basis.

The discrepancy in results between Hayes' (1996) study and this current study could be due to effects at the individual school level. The students in this current study are

actively encouraged by their school music teachers to participate in co-curricular musical activities in order to increase their access to opportunities for performance. Wragg (1974) suggests that students who receive active encouragement to pursue their musical studies in high school may be more inclined to continue their musical involvement. Possibly the active encouragement that students in this study receive from their music teachers at the school contributes in part to their greater involvement in co-curricular activities. In addition, the normality of participation in primary school co-curricular musical activities for most students in this study had perhaps led to their interest in pursuing these activities during secondary school.

However, the results of this current study also show that there was a slight decrease in participation in co-curricular musical activities for both groups of students from primary school to secondary school. This could be due in part to the greater range of co-curricular activities in general that are available to students in secondary school forcing them to make choices between different activities. Even though the decrease was marginal, this result is consistent with the findings of previous research which has identified a decrease in students' involvement in musical activities when they move from primary to secondary school (Frakes, as cited in Radocy, 1986; Wragg, 1974).

The majority of students in Year 8 and half of the students in Year 11 perceived their previous classroom music experiences in secondary school as having an influence upon their decisions to study elective music. This finding is similar to the results from Hayes' (1996) study. She found that the majority of students in her study had been influenced to study elective music by their previous experiences in classroom music.

The greatest influence upon Year 8 students' decisions to study elective music seems to have been the enjoyment and fun they had experienced in the Year 7 Mandatory Course of music. This finding corroborates the results of Hayes' (1996) study. She found that the Year 9 elective music students in her study were influenced by intrinsic interest considerations and had rated their previous experiences in the Mandatory Course of music as mostly or always enjoyable. The results of this current study are also consistent

with previous research which has shown that students are more likely to pursue their musical involvement if they derive enjoyment from their participation (Chandler et al., 1988; Hurley, 1995). Students' perceptions of the aspects of classroom music they enjoyed are discussed further in Chapter 6 under the section entitled *Intrinsic Value*. The Year 8 students also mentioned the importance of their previous Year 7 classroom experiences in determining their interest to continue with music as an elective subject in secondary school. This result is consistent with the findings of Frakes (as cited in Radocy, 1986) who found that the first year of junior high school was an important period in which students made decisions regarding their future involvement in music.

In contrast to the Year 8 students, Year 11 students' decisions did not appear to be significantly influenced by the previous enjoyment or fun they had experienced in their previous elective music classes in junior secondary school. Furthermore, Year 11 students spoke about how elective music in senior secondary school was less enjoyable and more serious than elective music in junior secondary school due to the HSC. Year 11 students were more influenced by the expectations they held for the Music 2 course that were based on their previous elective classroom music experiences in junior secondary school. Possibly their expectations enabled them to feel more secure about pursuing elective music studies in senior secondary school. Additionally, most of the Year 11 students had previously studied elective music in junior secondary school. Studying elective music in Year 11 music appears to have been a natural progression from their previous involvement and years of investment in elective music.

Students' Outside of School Musical Experiences

The vast majority of students from both year groups were involved in some type of musical activity outside of school. These activities include private music lessons (instrumental/vocal and theory/musicianship), external music examinations (instrumental and theory/musicianship), and community based musical activities. The majority of Year 8 and Year 11 students perceived their involvement in these various musical activities as influential upon their decisions to study elective music (see Tables

4 and 5). However, as a group Year 8 students appeared to perceive these activities as more influential than did Year 11 students. Thirteen Year 8 students (86%) agreed or strongly agreed that outside of school musical activities had been influential upon their decisions to study elective music. In contrast, fewer Year 11 students (60%) agreed or strongly agreed that outside of school musical activities were influential upon their decisions to study elective music.

Private music lessons and external music examinations had the highest rates of participation for both groups of students. Table 10 shows the percentages of students who participate in private music lessons outside of school.

Table 10
Percentages of Students who Participate in Private Music Lessons Outside of School (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Private music lessons
Year 8	73% (11)
Year 11	80% (8)

Table 11 shows the percentages of students who participate in external music examinations.

Table 11
Percentages of Students who Participate in External Music Examinations (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	External music examinations
Year 8	67% (10)
Year 11	100% (10)

As shown in Table 10 the majority of Year 8 students (73%) and Year 11 students (80%) participated in private music lessons. The majority of Year 8 students (67%) and all of the Year 11 students (100%) also participated in external music examinations (see Table 11). However, it was evident that a higher proportion of Year 11 students than Year 8 students participated in music lessons and external music examinations.

Table 12 shows the percentages of students who participate in various types of private music lessons outside of school.

Table 12
Percentages of Students who Participate in Various Types of Private Music Lessons Outside of School (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Instrumental/Vocal lessons	Theory/Musicianship lessons
Year 8	73% (11)	53% (8)
Year 11	80% (8)	40% (4)

As shown in Table 12, of the eleven Year 8 students (73%) who participated in private instrumental/vocal lessons eight students (53%) also participated in theory/musicianship lessons. Of the eight Year 11 students (80%) who participated in private instrumental/vocal lessons four students (40%) also participated in theory/musicianship lessons. It was also apparent that a greater proportion of both Year 8 students and Year 11 students was involved in instrumental/vocal lessons than in theory/musicianship lessons.

Table 13 shows the percentages of students who participate in various types of external music examinations.

Table 13
Percentages of Students who Participate in Various Types of External Music Examinations (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Instrumental examinations	Theory/Musicianship examinations
Year 8	67% (10)	40% (6)
Year 11	100% (10)	50% (5)

Of the ten Year 8 students (67%) who participated in instrumental examinations six students (40%) also participated in theory/musicianship examinations (see Table 13). Of the ten Year 11 students (100%) who participated in instrumental examinations five students (50%) also participated in theory/musicianship lessons. However, a greater proportion of both Year 8 students and Year 11 students was involved in instrumental examinations than in theory/musicianship examinations. Furthermore, a greater proportion of Year 11 students than Year 8 students participated in both of these activities.

Table 14 shows the percentages of students who participate in community based musical activities.

Table 14
Percentages of Students who Participate in Community Based Musical Activities (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Community based musical activities	Two or more community based musical activities
Year 8	53% (8)	7% (1)
Year 11	70% (7)	20% (2)

When compared with private music lessons and external music examinations (see Tables 10 and 11), community based activities had the lowest rates of participation for both year groups. Nevertheless, the majority of Year 8 students (53%) and Year 11 students (70%) was involved in at least one of these activities. However, a greater proportion of Year 11 students (70%) than Year 8 students (53%) was involved in these activities.

Table 15 shows the percentages of students who participate in various types of community based musical activities.

Table 15

Percentages of Students who Participate in Various Types of Community Based Musical Activities (brackets show number of students)

Student Year group	Musical societies	Church groups (choirs/bands)	Community band	Competitions/ Eisteddfods	Other
Year 8	7% (1)	20% (3)	7% (1)	20% (3)	7% (1)
Year 11	10% (1)	20% (2)	0%	20% (2)	50% (5)

As shown in Table 15, the activities with the highest rates of participation for both year groups were church groups (for example, bands and choirs) and music competitions/eisteddfods. Twenty percent of both Year 8 and Year 11 students participated in church groups and twenty percent of both Year 8 and Year 11 students participated in competitions and/or eisteddfods. The 'Other' community based musical activities cited by students included the SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) youth orchestra, vocal groups, New South Wales state schools symphonic wind ensemble, a rock band, and an accordion orchestra. However, strictly speaking the New South Wales state schools symphonic wind ensemble is not a community based musical activity as it is run by the Arts Unit of the New South Wales Department of Education and Training.

Several students from both year groups commented that their various musical experiences outside of school, in particular learning an instrument, were useful and in some cases necessary in assisting them to study elective music at school:

Jane (Yr 8): If you hadn't studied music outside of school you would have to catch up to everyone who's done something. You can probably join in Year 8 but you would probably need a bit still.

Cindy (Yr 8): Because if I didn't do piano outside of school then I probably wouldn't have chosen music. . . . I think the people who choose music would already be musical sort of.

Julia (Yr 11): Definitely learning our instrument [influenced her decision] 'cause if we didn't learn our instruments then the most we could have done would be singing and you need training for that as well. . . I do a lot of music outside of school so I might as well use that [in elective music].

Carrie (Yr 11): I agree with Julia. If you didn't have an instrument outside of school then it would be really hard to do music.

Meg (Yr 11): . . . because I practise and stuff at home I thought I would continue on at school because it was easier than doing something extra.

Kim (Yr 11): . . . and also if you're practising for an exam like 7th grade or something it's good to put it toward school so you're kind of getting two in one. . . . It was ideal to play the piano outside of school as well as use my efforts in a school subject (Questionnaire data).

Some Year 8 students indicated that they had chosen to study elective music because it would provide a greater opportunity to learn more about music than by just being involved in instrumental lessons or musical ensembles:

Wendy (Yr 8): . . . there are a lot of things you learn in school music that you don't learn in ordinary piano lessons (Questionnaire data).

Sarah (Yr 8): . . . because in elective music you sort of learn more about it than if you're in a band or choir . . .

Cindy (Yr 8): I want to have a better understanding of music. . . because although I do piano outside of school I don't think I have as much knowledge as I would like (Questionnaire data).

Several Year 8 students were also influenced by intrinsic value considerations. They indicated that the enjoyment they had experienced in these musical activities outside of school had inspired them to continue their music studies in school:

Molly (Yr 8): I do flute lessons and occasionally I used to go into the church band and perform at Christmas and stuff . . . these activities kind of influenced my decision to do elective music this year 'cause the lady who ran the church band was really encouraging and she just made music seem really fun.

Jenny (Yr 8): I think musicals have most definitely influenced my decision to do music this year because all the singing and acting and it's just so much fun to be involved in musicals and violin lessons. I've only been playing for two years and I sound pretty horrible but I definitely want to go further with that. So they have both influenced it.

Outside of school musical experiences appeared to have been an important influence upon the decisions of one Year 11 student who had not previously studied elective music in junior secondary school. She indicated that playing the flute and her flute lessons had encouraged her to pursue her music studies in senior secondary school:

Millie (Yr 11): Yeah playing the flute since Year 4 definitely [influenced her decision], and I really like playing the flute, and flute lessons really influenced my decision and she [her flute teacher] really encouraged me

The results of this study indicate a clear relationship between students' involvement in musical activities outside of school and their decisions to study elective music in secondary school. The vast majority of students in this study were involved in various organised musical activities outside of school. Furthermore, students perceived these activities to be among the most influential musical experiences upon their decisions to study elective music (see Tables 4 and 5). Students' high rates of participation in these activities appear to be indicative of a commitment and motivation to pursue musical involvement beyond their elective classroom music studies at school.

For both Year groups the activities with the highest rates of participation were music lessons and external music examinations. This finding corroborates the results of previous research in which secondary school music students were found to have high rates of previous involvement in music lessons and music examinations (Hayes, 1996;

Pettengell, 1997; Stewart, 1991). Stewart (1991) found that the strongest determinant of students' participation in high school music classes was their previous involvement in music lessons. Similarly, most of the Year 9 students in Hayes' (1996) study had received private instrumental tuition outside of school for an extended period of time. Pettengell (1997) also found that the majority of instrumental students in her study had completed instrumental examinations. Possibly the involvement of students in this current study in both music lessons and music examinations outside of school has facilitated a positive perception of their own musical competence which has increased their confidence and interest to pursue their music studies further in secondary school.

Apart from music lessons and external music examinations, most of the students also participated in various community based musical ensembles and/or music competitions/eisteddfods. This result is dissimilar to the results of Hayes' (1996) study which found that only a small percentage of the Year 9 elective music students in her study were involved in musical activities within the community. However, the results of this current study are more consistent with research conducted with musically talented students (Chadwick, 1999a; Sloboda & Howe, 1991). The majority of students in Sloboda and Howe's study had been involved in at least one musical activity outside of school apart from instrumental lessons and examinations. Similarly, Chadwick (1999a) found that a significant proportion of students in her study regularly participated in musical activities outside of school in addition to formal music tuition.

It is noteworthy that a greater proportion of Year 11 students than Year 8 students participated in most of these outside of school musical activities. Possibly this result suggests that Year 11 students are more motivated to pursue musical involvement beyond their activities at secondary school. However, the Year 8 students appeared to perceive these activities as more influential upon their decisions to study elective music than did the Year 11 students. In addition, Year 8 students were more inclined than Year 11 students to be influenced by their intrinsic interest in outside of school musical activities.

Nevertheless, it would appear that these outside of school musical activities had been an important influence upon the decisions of most students to study elective music in secondary school. Students from both year groups indicated that the knowledge and skills they had gained from their participation in these activities were useful and in some cases necessary for assisting them to study elective music. This finding is consistent with research which has found that previous musical experience is important in determining students' access to secondary school music classes and can also predict their general musical achievement (Kehrberg, as cited in Krueger, 1989; Stewart, 1991). Stewart (1991) found that students who had not been involved in previous music lessons had limited access to high school music classes. The results of Kehrberg's study (as cited in Krueger, 1989) showed that previous instrumental skills and music reading skills gained from students' involvement in outside of school musical activities were highly predictive of their general music achievement.

Summary

This chapter presented and discussed the results in relation to the first research question of this study: *What is the history of musical involvement for Year 8 and Year 11 students?* The final section of this chapter presents a summary of the findings in relation to this research question. The extensive history of musical involvement in various musical activities for most of the students in this study would appear to suggest that they had already made a commitment to the field of music before they made the decision to study elective music. All of the students had been involved in musical activity before they decided to study elective music and most students had been involved in musical activity from a young age. The decision to study elective music in secondary school seems to have been an extension of their previous musical involvement.

Students' initial involvement in music mostly involved participation in private or group music lessons, and piano lessons in particular. However, the results also highlighted the important role that primary school instrumental tutorial programmes played in providing opportunities for students' initial involvement in formal musical activities. It is also

evident from the findings of this study and the literature that students' family members, particularly their parents, play an important role in influencing and supporting their initial musical involvement. Most of the students in this study also come from families in which various members are musically active, with siblings being the most commonly cited musically active family member. Consistent with the literature, it is possible that students' motivation to pursue musical involvement may be influenced by the musical background of their families. However, it is evident from the findings of this study and the literature that the musical involvement of students' families is not a necessary prerequisite for students' own musical involvement.

Students' primary school musical experiences seem to have been one of the lesser influential experiences upon their decisions to study elective music. However, Year 8 students were more inclined than Year 11 students to perceive these experiences, particularly co-curricular activities, as influential. In contrast to their primary school musical experiences, most of the students perceived their secondary school musical experiences, particularly their previous classroom music experiences, as having a greater influence upon their decisions to study elective music. Once again, the Year 8 students were more inclined than the Year 11 students to perceive their secondary school musical experiences as influential. Even though the majority of students in this study participated in co-curricular activities in secondary school these experiences appeared to be less influential than their previous classroom music experiences.

It is evident from the findings of this study and the literature that the experiences students have during the Mandatory Course of music at the beginning of secondary school are an important influence upon their continued involvement in classroom music. It would also appear that for most Year 11 students, studying elective music in senior school is a natural progression from studying the Additional Study Course of elective music in junior school. In addition, most students in this study were involved in various musical activities (for example, music lessons, examinations, community based activities, and music competitions/eisteddfods) outside of school.

In conclusion, the history of musical involvement for students in this study appears to indicate that most students who elect to study music at the school in which the study was conducted have strong musical backgrounds. Even though most Year 11 students had studied elective music previously in secondary school it was evident that their participation in musical activities in secondary school was preceded by a history of musical involvement. Additionally, the presence of musically active members in the families of most students suggests that they come from families which value musical involvement. It is possible that the history of musical involvement for the students in this study has increased their interest and commitment to music and given them the confidence and motivation to pursue their musical studies further in secondary school.

CHAPTER 6

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS REGARDING THE INFLUENCE OF THEIR ACHIEVEMENT-RELATED BELIEFS UPON THEIR DECISIONS TO STUDY ELECTIVE MUSIC

The following chapter presents and discusses the findings in relation to the second research question of this study: *What are Year 8 and Year 11 students' perceptions of the influence of their achievement-related beliefs upon their decisions to study elective music?* Students' achievement-related beliefs are proposed to have an important influence upon their motivation to participate in various tasks or activities (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). Achievement-related beliefs are defined in this study as students' expectancies for success and competence beliefs in elective music, and the values they hold for studying elective music.

The beliefs students have regarding how well they will do on an upcoming task are commonly referred to as expectancies for success (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). In this study expectancies for success are defined in terms of students' beliefs regarding how well they will do in elective music. The evaluations that children make regarding their competence in different areas are generally referred to as competence beliefs (Wigfield, 1994; Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). In this study competence beliefs are defined in terms of students' perceptions regarding their musical competence. Task values refer to the way in which the various needs of individuals are met by a task or activity (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992; Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). According to Eccles et al. (1983) task values are comprised of four essential components: attainment value, intrinsic value, utility value, and cost of participation. In this study task values are defined in terms of the value that studying elective music has for Year 8 and Year 11 students. The components of these task values are further defined within the sections relating to each of these values.

The initial part of this chapter presents and discusses the findings in relation to whether students chose to study elective music because they expected to do well and/or perceived themselves to be musically competent, and the influences upon these beliefs. There would appear to be some overlap between students' expectancies for success and their competence beliefs and research has found that students do not tend to make clear distinctions between the two constructs (Eccles et al., 1993; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992). Furthermore, students' expectancies for success and competence beliefs would seem to be positively related although the direction of causality is yet to be established. For these reasons the results relating to these two constructs have been presented and discussed within the same section.

The subsequent part of this chapter presents and discusses the findings in relation to students' perceptions of the influence of their task values upon their decisions to study elective music. It is evident that there are overlaps between the attainment value component of students' task values and their expectancies for success and competence beliefs. In addition, the causal relationship between expectancies, competence beliefs, and attainment value seems unclear (Meece et al., 1990). However, because attainment value relates specifically to the importance that students assign to being good at or doing well in elective music this component of students' achievement-related beliefs is discussed separately in order to highlight the differences between the various constructs.

The Influence of Expectancies for Success and Competence Beliefs

During the interviews it became apparent that most students' decisions to study elective music were influenced by their expectancies for success. However, even though the majority of Year 8 students appeared to hold expectancies for success in elective music most of them indicated that these expectancies had not been a significant factor in their decisions to study elective music. For these students intrinsic value considerations (for example, their enjoyment and interest in music) appeared to be a more important factor in their decisions than the expectation that they would do well in music:

Wendy (Yr 8): I think I kind of expected to do well but I knew that I would enjoy it more and I would probably learn more new things than I knew before.

Susan (Yr 8): I don't really worry so much about the marks because I enjoy it and so it doesn't really matter about the marks.

Cindy (Yr 8): . . . Like I don't really care about marks it's just really fun to do, unlike maths where everyone is pressuring you to get good marks.

In contrast, all of the Year 11 students indicated that they had chosen to study music because they expected to do well and their expectations for success appear to have been a significant influence upon their decisions to study elective music. The Year 11 students commented that they had chosen to study elective music because it was a subject in which they thought they would be able to do well and achieve good marks in their Higher School Certificate (HSC):

Jo (Yr 11): I want to gain good marks in the HSC. . . I know that with school music I can get near the top so that's what I aim for. . . . This year the marks are a bit more important so I kind of went for the subjects which I could get good marks in, which I wouldn't have considered in Year 8.

Leslie (Yr 11): I know I am good at it [elective music] and can get a great mark for my HSC (Questionnaire data).

Furthermore, some of the Year 11 students indicated that the culture of their school is such that senior students are inclined to study subjects in which they expect to do well and receive good marks:

Jo (Yr 11): You only do music at this school if you think you can do well at it. You don't do it because you think it's something you enjoy . . . you don't get anybody who is just kind of okay at it because the marks are important and if they're not going to get good marks in it then they're going to do another subject . . .

Both Year 8 and Year 11 students' decisions to study elective music also appeared to be influenced by their competence beliefs. Most of the students in this study seemed to perceive themselves as musically competent. In addition, some Year 11 students also commented that being competent in music was more important in senior secondary school than in junior secondary school:

Kim (Yr 11): I think in Year 8 it was more it's going to be fun and it was really cool. But now it's more I enjoy it and I'm competent at it. In Year 8 you just did it because it was fun.

Leslie (Yr 11): Junior years was mostly I enjoy it so I will do it. If they [other students] find out they're not too good at it then they can just drop it and pick up another subject in Year 11. Because in Year 8 they are not worried about the HSC as much as now. They're not worried about the marks as much.

Students' competence beliefs and/or expectancies for success appear to have been influenced largely by their previous successful musical experiences. Most Year 8 and Year 11 students generally perceived themselves as doing well in classroom music previously and this factor appears to have influenced their decisions to study elective music:

Linda (Yr 8): It was an easy topic to choose because I liked it and I was good at it. In my reports I did pretty well and I understood everything in class.

Marie (Yr 8): I did alright last year and I enjoyed it and stuff and I thought I would probably do alright this year.

Kim (Yr 11): The fact that I was going well in it [Year 10 elective music] influenced my decision.

Diana (Yr 11): I didn't try 100% last year but my grades were still okay and it made me think that music is something that if I try my best I can almost guarantee myself an okay mark like a safety net . . .

However, several Year 8 students commented that their previous grades in Year 7 had not influenced their decisions to study elective music:

Molly (Yr 8): My grades didn't really influence my decision. I just like music so I'll continue with it.

Kathy (Yr 8): I didn't really think of it [her marks last year]. I just thought I would do music this year. I didn't really think about my marks.

Additionally, a few Year 8 students also indicated that grades had not received much emphasis in their previous Year 7 classes and reports:

Polly (Yr 8): Well Mr White wasn't really big on grades so we didn't get marked on a lot of stuff. But it was still fun and so grades didn't really affect my choice.

Susan (Yr 8): . . . everyone that was in our class got a six [in their reports] and stuff so that didn't really affect my choice 'cause everybody got that. We couldn't really compare ourselves to anyone else because everybody had the same.

The competence beliefs and expectancies for success of some students in each year group appeared to be influenced by their successful experiences in various musical activities outside of school (discussed in Chapter 5):

Cindy (Yr 8): Last year we did a little bit of theory but most of it I already knew because I did it outside of school and it was basically pretty easy for me.

Gillian (Yr 8): I kind of expected to do well because I do piano outside of school and other theory as well and knew that the theory would be incorporated into the course this year so I would know most of the stuff we were doing . . . I've been doing it [music] for a long time and I should get good marks.

Leslie (Yr 11): . . . my AMEB [Australian Music Examinations Board] practical and musicianship were pretty good as well [as her marks in elective music].

However, one Year 8 student indicated that she held low expectations for her success in elective music which were based on her unsuccessful musical experiences outside of school:

Jane (Yr 8): I didn't think I would go that well [in elective music] 'cause I didn't really know anything because when I did exams outside I didn't really go that well.

The competence beliefs of a few Year 11 students were also based on a perception of themselves as musically talented:

Leigh (Yr 11): It [elective music] is one of those subjects where I can show my inner musical talent (Questionnaire data).

Meg (Yr 11): Because if you have a talent to play an instrument or something you may as well keep going. That's why I chose music.

Students from each year group also appeared to hold relative-competence beliefs. They seemed to perceive themselves as having greater competence in music than in other subjects they had studied previously. These perceptions of their relative competence appeared to have influenced their greater expectations for success in music than in other subjects:

Sarah (Yr 8): I suck at every other subject . . I got all the highest columns in my report and I actually thought I would get good marks for once.

Cindy (Yr 8): I'm not that good in my other subjects and it's good to be good in one subject and music, that's mine.

Jo (Yr 11): Because it's one of the subjects I know I can get the marks and it will be easier marks than other subjects. . .

Leigh (Yr 11): I thought I had a better chance [of doing well] at music than any of the other subjects.

Several Year 11 and Year 8 students appeared to be influenced by the perceptions of others regarding their musical competence. The perceptions of these people (for example, music teachers and friends) seem to have increased their confidence in their ability to do well in elective music. This factor is discussed further in Chapter 7.

A few Year 8 students commented that they were not doing as well as they had expected. This change in their initial expectancies for success in elective music seems to have been influenced by their perceptions of the increasing difficulty of the course:

Marie (Yr 8): I thought I would do alright but then I got that wrong. It's hard and it's getting harder.

For other Year 8 students, the change in their initial expectancies for success appears to have been influenced by their perception of their competence in relation to other students. These students did not perceive themselves as competent as other students in the class who were already quite advanced:

Polly (Yr 8): I probably won't do as well as I had expected. Probably because a lot of people in my class are pretty far ahead of me 'cause they started when they were young and had a chance to play piano before when they were really little.

Several Year 8 students who indicated that they were not continuing to study elective music in Year 9 appeared to hold perceptions that the course would become too difficult. These students seemed to lack confidence in their ability to continue studying elective music:

Jane (Yr 8): It will be really difficult later on because you have to know all the instruments and not just the ones I want to focus on . . . I'm going to have to learn all these different things and it's a bit hard (Interview data). . . . I think that music will be really difficult and stressful and too hard to do (Questionnaire data).

Marie (Yr 8): I don't think I will continue elective music because it's getting really difficult, all that transposing (Interview data). . . . It's going to be hell difficult, and I'm not that good at music anyway (Questionnaire data).

The results of this study show that the majority of students had chosen to study elective music because they expected to do well. Expectancies for success have been widely acknowledged by researchers as an important factor in determining and influencing students' motivation to perform and engage in tasks (Eccles, 1983; Eccles et al., 1998; Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). However, the results of this current study are somewhat inconsistent with previous research which has shown that expectancies for success are more predictive of students' future performance in a subject than their enrollment decisions (Eccles et al., 1983; Meece et al., 1990). Possibly this inconsistency is due to the retrospective nature of this study in which expectancies for success were not explored in terms of their predictive capacity. In addition, this study limited its focus on students' perceptions of the influence of expectancies for success upon their decisions to study elective music and not upon their performance in elective music. Furthermore, it seems possible that students' competence-related beliefs (for example, expectancies for success) can indirectly influence their achievement behaviours, such as their choices (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002).

Expectancies for success appeared to be less significant in the decisions of Year 8 students than the decisions of Year 11 students. Even though most Year 8 students indicated that they had expected to do well in elective music, the intrinsic value of music seemed to have been a more important consideration in their decisions. This result is

consistent with the results of Hurley's (1995) study which showed that students' value considerations were potentially more important than their expectations of current and future success for their achievement choices. The vast majority of Year 8 students in this current study indicated that enjoying music was a more significant influence upon their decisions than their expectancies for success. Eccles (1983) suggests that students' values for an activity may influence their choices to participate in and continue instruction in the activity. In support of this suggestion, the Year 8 students' choices to study elective music were influenced predominantly by the intrinsic value they had for music. This factor is discussed further in the section entitled *Intrinsic Value* within the subsequent part of this chapter.

In contrast to the Year 8 students, Year 11 students' expectancies for success in elective music appeared to be a significant influence upon their decisions to study elective music. All of the Year 11 students indicated that they had chosen to study elective music because it was a subject in which they were confident that they would do well and achieve good marks for their HSC. Furthermore, some Year 11 students suggested that the culture of the school was such that senior students (Year 11 and 12) study subjects in which they expect to do well and receive good marks. The influence of school culture will be discussed further in the section entitled *Intrinsic Value* within the following part of this chapter.

Most of the students in this current study appeared to perceive themselves as musically competent, and some Year 11 students perceived themselves as musically talented. The finding that these perceptions seemed to have influenced students' decisions to study elective music corroborates results from research conducted with music students and adults (Covington, 1983; Frakes, as cited in Radocy, 1986; Hayes, 1996; Hurley, 1995; Kehrberg, as cited in Krueger, 1989; Klinedinst, 1991). These previous studies found that students and adults who perceived themselves as musically competent were more inclined to continue with their music studies. Additionally, Kehrberg found that students who held high perceptions of their musical abilities and skills were more inclined to participate in school music activities. Eccles (1983) suggests that children who display

confidence in their musical ability should have increased motivation to study music. Similarly, Klinedinst (1991) suggests that students who display a positive self-concept in music may be more motivated to succeed in music. The results of this current study would appear to lend support for these suggestions.

The Year 11 students also commented that being competent in a subject was a more important consideration in senior years than junior years when making decisions regarding which subjects to study. In addition, the classroom music teacher of the Year 11 students indicated that students are more aware of their marks in Year 11 which translates to concerns regarding the best subjects to study in order to achieve these marks (Mr White, teacher interview).

A noteworthy finding of this study is that the decision to study elective music for both Year 8 and Year 11 students also appears to have been influenced by their relative-competence beliefs. This finding is consistent with studies which have found that students hold relative-competence beliefs for their various subjects and activities (Eccles et al., 1993; Wigfield et al., 1997). The relative-competence beliefs of students in this current study also seem to have influenced their greater expectations for success in elective music than in other subjects. This result would appear to support Eccles' (1983) suggestion that children will be more motivated to study music in preference to other subjects if musical ability is perceived as one of their strengths.

Wigfield and Eccles (2002) suggest that children will potentially develop an overall sense of their competence in a particular domain as they gain experience within that domain. In support of this suggestion, this study showed that students' competence beliefs and expectancies for success were largely influenced by their previous successful experiences in various musical activities. Some students were influenced by their previous successful musical experiences in musical activities outside of school (for example, external music examinations and music lessons). However, most students appeared to be influenced by perceptions of having done well previously in classroom music. This finding is consistent with the results of research conducted with high school

mathematics students (Meece et al., 1990). Meece et al. found that students base judgements of their competence on past performances and that their competence beliefs were strongly related to the previous grades they had received.

However, several Year 8 students indicated that they were not influenced by the marks they had received in Year 7 classroom music. Possibly this is due to the lack of emphasis placed on marks when students are in Year 7 compared with other year levels at the school in which the study was conducted. Even though the Year 8 students would have received marks for various tasks throughout Year 7, their Year 7 reports would not have contained any marks. Their classroom music teacher stated that a decision had been made among the executive staff at the school to not include marks on Year 7 reports. The intention of this decision was to treat Year 7 as an experiential year and to discourage comparisons being made between subjects (Mr White, teacher interview). Possibly the lack of marks in Year 8 students' Year 7 reports made them less inclined to consider this factor in their decisions regarding which elective subjects to study.

The results of this study also showed that the initial expectancies for success of some Year 8 students appeared to have declined due to their perceptions of the increasing difficulty of the elective music course and perceptions of themselves as less competent in comparison to other students. Eccles et al. (1983) state that students' perceptions of an activity's difficulty may influence their competence beliefs. Therefore, students who over time perceive an activity or subject as increasingly difficult develop lower competence beliefs for that activity or subject. The perceived difficulty of activities and students' competence beliefs have been found to influence their expectancies for success and in turn choices for engaging in an activity (Eccles et al., 1998).

It appears that the perceived difficulty of the elective music course and the competence beliefs of some Year 8 students had influenced their intentions to discontinue studying elective music in Year 9. This result is consistent with the findings of previous research conducted with adults who had previously studied music during high school (Covington,

1983; Frakes as cited in Radocy, 1986) and school music students (Hurley, 1995). The music students in Hurley's study who had not continued their studies referred to the increased difficulty of the class. Covington (1983) and Frakes (as cited in Radocy, 1986) found that individuals who had discontinued their music studies perceived themselves as less musically competent in comparison with their peers.

The Influence of Subjective Task Values

While students' achievement-related beliefs have been shown to influence their achievement-related behaviours to differing degrees, students' task values would appear to have a more direct influence upon their achievement choices (for example, subject selection). Eccles et al. (1983) state that individuals are more inclined to engage in activities which they value positively and avoid those activities which they negatively value. The following sections of this chapter outline Year 8 and Year 11 students' perceptions of the influence of their values for music (for example, attainment value, intrinsic value, utility value, and cost of participation) upon their decisions to study elective music.

Attainment Value

Attainment value is defined as the value an individual assigns to the importance of being good at a task or doing well in an activity (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles et al., 1998). In this study attainment value is defined in terms of the importance students assign to being good at or doing well in elective music.

All of the Year 11 students and most of the Year 8 students indicated that doing well in elective music was important to them. However, it appears that intrinsic value considerations were of greater importance than doing well for Year 8 students. They spoke about how their enjoyment of music was a greater consideration in their decisions:

Linda (Yr 8): I enjoy it more than I think it is important [to do well] because usually after you do a stressful maths test you just do music and you feel more

relaxed so it is kind of important because it is enjoyable. . . It's good to do well in all of your subjects but enjoying it is the best part of music.

Kathy (Yr 8): It's not that important to do well. I don't mind getting a bad mark because I enjoy it, like the musical part.

The majority of Year 11 students considered that doing well in music was important for achieving a good mark in the HSC, and they appeared to perceive Year 11 as a way of gaining confidence in their ability to do well in the HSC:

Diana (Yr 11): I would love to do well in music, I would love to top music. . . I'd eventually like to finish Year 11 knowing that I did well so I want to get some confidence from this subject so I want to do well. I really want to come 1st, 2nd, or 3rd by the end of Year 12.

Leigh (Yr 11): Doing well this year is not as important as doing well next year. I'm taking it seriously right now. I know if I don't improve this year then it's going to be a struggle next year.

Meg (Yr 11): I think this year is the practice for next year. You can make your mistakes now but not next year.

Julia (Yr 11): This year it's not really important to do well, but it would give me the confidence for next year when it matters.

Similarly, some Year 8 students indicated that doing well was important for their confidence in their abilities and to continue with their music studies:

Wendy (Yr 8): I guess it [doing well] would encourage me to continue on with music and to know I am good at something. 'Cause I can't draw. I can't do a lot of things. To know that I'm good at something is a good feeling.

Linda (Yr 8): It [doing well] just makes you more confident about yourself 'cause you've reached something you wanted to. It gives you more confidence to learn about different things in music.

For other Year 8 students, the importance of doing well related to avoiding negative emotions associated with not doing well. Implicit in the comments of these students appeared to be the notion that doing well facilitated a sense of pride in their achievements and increased their self-esteem:

Helen (Yr 8): I kind of want to do well 'cause otherwise I feel crap and really dumb.

Gillian (Yr 8): You want to do well in all the things you do. If you don't do well you feel disappointed. You feel like you have failed someone, maybe not anyone in particular but yourself and you think you should have done good.

Jane (Yr 8): You want to do well in all the things you do. If you don't do well you feel disappointed. You feel like you have failed someone.

The importance of doing well for several Year 11 and Year 8 students was also influenced by other value considerations. For some students the importance of doing well was influenced by intrinsic value considerations. These students appeared to be motivated to do well because they liked music:

Cindy (Yr 8): I think it is important to do well because I like to do well in something I like and I like music. . .

Molly (Yr 8): Music is very important me 'cause it's something I enjoy and I like to do well.

Diana (Yr 11): I like music so I want to do well.

Students in both year groups indicated that enjoying or liking music made them more motivated to study:

Linda (Yr 8): I think that if you want to work harder and you want to do well in music it all depends on if you like it or not.

Jo (Yr 11): Enjoying it means that I will do more work for it because it's not as much of a chore to do the study and practise. The marks kind of come because I like doing it. I don't think you can be one of the best students in the class unless you enjoy it.

Leslie (Yr 11): . . . you practise more if you like doing it and stuff, so you get better marks. . .

The importance of doing well for several students in both year groups was also influenced by utility value considerations. They perceived doing well in music to be important for their future goals. Some Year 8 students indicated that doing well in music was important for their intentions to study elective music in subsequent school years:

Kathy (Yr 8): It's probably important to do well because I'm probably going to choose it [elective music] next year.

Linda (Yr 8): It is quite important [to do well] because if I want to do it later on [for the HSC] it would be good to keep a steady mark.

One Year 11 student considered that doing well in music was important for her future career plans:

Liz (Yr 11): With a future career or something like music teaching, it is pretty important to do well [in elective music]. If I'm going to do this as a career then I need to have passed music and understand it.

Both the Year 11 and Year 8 students also spoke about the relative importance of studying music. They commented on the importance of studying music compared to their other subjects. Several students considered music to be just as important as their other subjects and indicated that it was important for them to do well in all of their subjects:

Marie (Yr 8): For me it is just as important [compared to other subjects]. To me it's just the same amount of studying I do for other subjects.

Linda (Yr 8): I try to get everything from every subject in my head so I think it is around the same level of importance as other subjects. I actually think it is as important as my other subjects as well because it's good to do well in all of your subjects but enjoying it is the best part of music.

Molly (Yr 8): I think it is important to do well in all of your subjects.

Liz (Yr 11): . . . it's about the same as the other ones. I try to take it all equally and stuff and pay the same amount of attention to all of them.

However, several students did not appear to perceive music as equally important to their other subjects. They seemed to view subjects such as mathematics, science, and English as more important:

Meg (Yr 11): English is the most important I think, and maths comes third. I think that music is not that important compared to other subjects because it is not as general, it is more like its own little category rather than English or maths where everyone has to know it.

Some students also perceived their other subjects as more important because they considered them to be more useful:

Sarah (Yr 8): I'd say it's more important than some subjects but to me science, maths, and English I have to do well in for later on in life so that I can actually get somewhere and music will probably be behind those subjects.

Kathy (Yr 8): It is not as important as doing the main subjects like maths and science and that but it's pretty important . . . I don't think it is as important as maths because I think the rules in maths are more important 'cause I'd apply it more but in music I don't really.

Year 8 and Year 11 students also commented on their perceptions of the importance of studying music within their school. They indicated that music was not considered as important or treated as seriously as other subjects. These students suggested that because the school is academically selective there is more emphasis placed upon subjects such as mathematics, English, and science and there is greater pressure to do well in these subjects:

Sarah (Yr 8): Being a selective school it's academically selective so you don't really think of music in that. The school would probably like people to get good marks in everything but they probably stress more about science and English and maths and geography. They wouldn't stress too much about music.

Cindy (Yr 8): There is more pressure to get good marks in other subjects like maths. When people say selective schools they think of maths, science, and English. Music doesn't really come into their minds. They just think 'Oh you're good at maths don't worry about music or whatever'.

Kathy (Yr 8): . . . a selective high school expects you to do well academically and you have to do more well in academic subjects like maths and science but I don't think it's really important in music.

Liz (Yr 11): It's probably not treated as seriously as other subjects because it's not an academic kind of subject, it's more creative and stuff. And because it's a selective school everything is academically based . . .

Jo (Yr 11): I don't think the rest of the school sees it as being important as other subjects especially at this school. I don't think it is considered to be as academic as other subjects. . . I think a lot of emphasis is placed on sciences and maths at this school. There is not as much emphasis placed on other subjects and there is not much interest in those other subjects.

Diana (Yr 11): I think it's that we're an academic selective school. Music just doesn't seem academically challenging like science. I think most people think we take it because it is easier to do.

Previous research has found that children tend to value the task in which they think they will be successful (Eccles et al., 1983). The results of this current study show that all Year 11 students and most of the Year 8 students indicated that doing well in elective music was important for them. Meece et al. (1990) found a positive relationship between expectancies and the importance of doing well. It was evident that students in their study who valued the importance of mathematics also had high expectancies for success in mathematics. However, caution needs to be exercised when generalising the results of this American study conducted with mathematics students to Australian studies conducted with music students.

Possibly for the majority of students in this current study the value of doing well in elective music was related to their expectancies for success and competence beliefs. Therefore, if they chose to study music because they expected to do well and perceived themselves as musically competent, they would probably also assign more importance to doing well and being good at music. However, as Meece et al. (1990) indicated in their study the relationship of causality between students' competence beliefs, expectancies for success, and attainment value is not entirely clear.

Year 11 students appeared to assign a great deal of importance to doing well in elective music. They perceived that doing well was particularly important for achieving a good mark in their HSC. However, similarly to the results of students' expectancies for success, the Year 8 students generally appeared to place more importance upon the intrinsic value of studying elective music.

Students' beliefs regarding their abilities would appear to have important consequences for their choices and other achievement behaviours (Dweck, 2002). It seems that doing well in elective music or being good at elective music was an important influence upon the confidence of several students in this current study to continue with their music studies in subsequent school years.

For some Year 8 students doing well seems to have been important for avoiding negative emotions associated with not doing well. Doing well allowed them to feel proud of their achievements and enhanced their self-esteem. Covington (1983) suggests that the tendency of society to equate personal worth with achievement, particularly in competitive environments, may lead to a sense of shame and humiliation following failure. This sense of shame and failure is often attributed to increased suspicions of inability. Possibly some of the students in this current study are motivated to do well in order to avoid low self-perceptions of their musical competence and the negative emotions which tend to accompany such perceptions.

Wigfield and Eccles (1992) suggest that research needs to consider the interplay between the different aspects of students' values. Even though it was not the intention of this study to identify relationships between the different components of students' values, the results show that there were apparent relationships between the importance of doing well in elective music and other value considerations such as the intrinsic value and utility value of elective music. Some students indicated that doing well in elective music was important for their future goals. Several students in each year group spoke about being more motivated to study and do well in elective music because they liked and enjoyed music. This finding is similar to previous research which found that students' perceptions regarding the importance of playing an instrument were associated with their enjoyment and success (Chandler et al., 1988).

Eccles et al. (1989) state that minimal research has explored the relative importance students assign to their competence across various domains. However, research which has addressed this factor has shown that students differentiate between the levels of importance they assign to their various activities (Wigfield et al., 1997). Both groups of students in this current study spoke about the relative importance of studying music compared with their other subjects. Several students from each year group indicated that doing well in music was just as important as doing well in their other subjects. However, several students from each year group perceived their other subjects (for example, mathematics, English, and science) as more important and useful. Hurley (1995) also

found that the students in his study assigned more importance to the 'core' subjects (for example, mathematics, science, and English) and perceived music to be of secondary importance and value for future career goals. Possibly some of the students in this current study are being influenced by the perceived culture of their school, whereby greater emphasis is placed on subjects such as mathematics, science, and English and there is more pressure to do well in these subjects.

Intrinsic Value

The intrinsic value of a task or activity relates to the intrinsic reasons an individual has for participating in that task or activity. It is associated with the degree of enjoyment individuals derive from their involvement in a task or activity and can also relate to the subjective interest individuals have for the activity (Eccles et al., 1998). In this study intrinsic value is defined in terms of the degree of enjoyment and interest that students derive from studying classroom music.

Both Year 11 and Year 8 students perceived intrinsic value considerations as an important influence upon their decisions to study elective music. For Year 8 students, these considerations were based on a perception of music as enjoyable, fun, and interesting:

Molly (Yr 8): I chose to do music this year because music is something I enjoy, love, and am interested in (Questionnaire data).

Marie (Yr 8): I focus on the fun side of it and I thought it would be pretty fun.

Jane (Yr 8): I enjoy music and it is enjoyable to learn (Questionnaire data).

Julia (Yr 8): For me, I like music and I love music and that's why I'm taking it.

However, Year 11 students appeared to be less inclined than Year 8 students to perceive music as fun. They were more inclined to comment on the enjoyable and interesting aspects of studying music:

Leigh (Yr 11): I am interested in it (Questionnaire data).

Carrie (Yr 11): It sounded interesting (Questionnaire data).

Leslie (Yr 11): I chose to do it mostly because I enjoy it.

Furthermore, for Year 11 students, their enjoyment of music appeared to occupy a position of secondary importance compared to the value they assigned to being good at music and their desire to do well in the HSC. For a further discussion of these factors please refer to the previous sections in this chapter.

In contrast to the Year 11 students, all of the Year 8 students appeared to consider intrinsic value considerations to be the most influential factor upon their decisions to study elective music. They commented on having been greatly influenced by the fun and enjoyment they had experienced in their previous Year 7 Mandatory Course music classes. In addition, these previous classroom music experiences in Year 7 were particularly important for some Year 8 students in determining their continued participation in music classes at school and appeared to increase their interest in music. These factors are discussed further in Chapter 5 under the section entitled *Students' Musical Experiences during Secondary School*. Year 8 students also spoke about how their previous classroom music teachers had made music fun and interesting. This factor is discussed further in Chapter 7 under the section entitled *The Influence of Music Teachers*.

The majority of students in each year group also commented on the influence of relative-intrinsic value considerations upon their decisions to study elective music. Most Year 8 students indicated that they had chosen to study elective music in preference to other subjects because they found music more fun and enjoyable:

Marie (Yr 8): I wanted to do music more than any of the other subjects and so it was one of them two. I thought it would be more fun.

Jane (Yr 8): [I wanted to do music] mainly so I could relax and have fun. It was either music or art and I didn't really want to do art 'cause it wasn't fun . . .

Susan (Yr 8): Music was my first choice and I put visual arts third because I like music more than visual arts and it didn't really worry me if I didn't get visual arts but I really wanted to do music . . .

Polly (Yr 8): I enjoyed music last year and I didn't enjoy anything else last year.

Similarly, Year 11 students indicated that they had chosen to study elective music in preference to other subjects because it was more enjoyable. However, in contrast to Year 8 students they also spoke about music being more interesting than their other subjects and did not comment on music as being more fun than their other subjects:

Meg (Yr 11): I realised I liked music better than art . . . I enjoyed doing music more than my other subjects.

Leigh (Yr 11): I guess it's a more interesting subject to other subjects. I wanted to do music more than any other subjects.

Jo (Yr 11): I enjoy studying music a lot more than other subjects.

One of the Year 8 students who was considering not continuing to study elective music in Year 9 indicated that her decision would be based on relative-intrinsic value considerations:

Polly (Yr 8): It's probably more depending on how much I like my other electives. If it was just depending on how much I like music I'd keep it.

There also appeared to be a relationship between students' intrinsic interest in music and their competence beliefs. A few Year 11 students indicated that they liked aspects of the course in which they perceived themselves to be competent or able to do well:

Liz (Yr 11): The things I enjoy differ depending on how well I'm going and if I have the time to focus on the elements such as composition which I only enjoy if I have the time to do it well (Questionnaire data).

Leslie (Yr 11): I enjoy the practical part and aural because I am best at them (Questionnaire data).

Furthermore, one of these Year 11 students commented that musical competence was necessary in order to enjoy music:

Leslie (Yr 11): You can't really enjoy music if you're bad at it.

Several students in both year groups also appeared to have been influenced by other people who had encouraged them to study music based on intrinsic value considerations. These people (for example, parents, music teachers, and friends) had encouraged them to study subjects that they liked, enjoyed, and/or found interesting. The influence of these various people is discussed further in Chapter 7.

When asked what they liked and/or enjoyed about studying music the vast majority of students indicated that they enjoyed the practical component of the course:

Sarah (Yr 8): playing our instruments and stuff is enjoyable. . . . Playing percussion sort of stuff because I don't really get to do that often, it's different . . . I don't really care very much about the theory and what it has in it. I just enjoy more making it . . .

Jane (Yr 8): I enjoy the practical lessons more where we just do instruments and just try and play. Even if you can't it is still fun.

Leslie (Yr 11): I love the playing part. I love playing. I enjoy practising. I practise for about an hour on the piano accordion and an hour on the piano every day. I like practising the piano accordion more because I am better and I just take out my music and play which helps with my sight-reading.

Jo (Yr 11): Practical I prefer more, but even studying the other things that might be considered boring, I enjoy those too.

However, there were exceptions. One Year 8 student stated that she enjoyed the composition component of the course more than performance:

Susan (Yr 8): In music I enjoy composing pieces of music but I don't enjoy performing as much.

Students from both year groups also spoke about aspects of the music classroom environment that they liked. In addition, most students also commented on why they liked studying music more than their other subjects. Even though these factors appear not to have directly influenced their decisions it is possible that the choices of students to study elective music were indirectly influenced by these factors. Several students liked the degree of freedom, choice, and autonomy in relation to their learning in elective music:

Cindy (Yr 8): I like it when we have free time . . . I like doing things on my own with very few restrictions and limitations (Questionnaire data).

Carrie (Yr 11): I like it that there isn't anyone to tell you what to do (Interview data). . . I like being able to choose what to do (Questionnaire data).

Meg (Yr 11): I think it is more flexible, so it makes it feel like it's up to us. The class isn't as structured as other classes.

Kim (Yr 11): You get to choose which things you have to analyse. It's not set down what you have to do.

Several students also indicated that they enjoyed the variety of things to learn and do in music, and the interactive (for example, group work), 'hands on' nature of the class:

Sarah (Yr 8): It's not like maths or science, or English which are totally boring. Like you actually get to do something a lot of the time. . . . Getting into groups and working, that's normally enjoyable.

Polly (Yr 8): Probably unlike other subjects, you get to do different things and you actually make noise. You can experiment with different instruments and work in groups and learn how to cooperate and stuff like that.

Cindy (Yr 8): Music is more fun because if you compare it to maths, maths you just sit there and work out of a textbook but music you actually learn things and after you learn it you can do it on the instrument so it's more like getting your hands on it and doing it.

Kim (Yr 11): Music is much more hands on. It's more interactive. Whereas other subjects are more rote learning (Interview data). . . . I enjoy the performance, especially in groups (Questionnaire data).

Diana (Yr 11): It's a different way of studying a subject. Like maths you sit down and write. Everything else is basically sitting down and reading and I guess with music you can be more creative. . . We did lots of performance and I thought it was a different way of learning and it was really different in the music classroom than in other classrooms.

Liz (Yr 11): There's more interaction in music classes. You get up and move around and bang drums every now and then. It's a smaller class which is always good because then you get more attention and more teaching and it's more personal and stuff and you get to talk to everyone.

Several students also perceived music as a relaxing and less stressful subject to study:

Wendy (Yr 8): . . . if I get stressed or bored or something, I can go to the piano or saxophone and just play and I actually find it quite fun now [compared with when she had to do piano exams], and in my free time I will just go and play. . .

Cindy (Yr 8): I feel more comfortable in a musical environment than in a maths room where there are all these text books and stuff, 'cause in music you just stay calm and you don't freak out when there is a music test . . .

Jane (Yr 8): Music is fun and not as stressful like most other subjects at this school (Questionnaire data).

Kim (Yr 11): It's useful in de-stressing. I love to go to the piano and play. . . . If you've got yearlys [yearly examinations] and you're full on studying and stuff you can just go to the piano and play and even though it is working toward your assessment it is relaxing you and it feels like it's resting your brain for a while even though you're still thinking.

Furthermore, some of them perceived music as way of achieving a break from their other schoolwork:

Jo (Yr 11): It's kind of good to be able to do at school to get a break from other stuff.

Liz (Yr 11): It's kind of a break and distraction when you're studying.

The results of this study show that the majority of students perceived intrinsic value considerations as an important influence upon their decisions to study elective music. This result is consistent with the findings of previous research (Hayes, 1996; Hurley, 1995; MacKenzie, 1991; McPherson, 2000-2001; Pettengell, 1997). The authors of this research found that most of the students in their studies cited intrinsic value considerations as the main influence upon their decisions to engage in musical activities.

Researchers have identified task values as having the strongest direct influence upon students' choices in relation to their learning (Hurley, 1995; Meece et al., 1990; Wigfield & Eccles, 2002). Similarly, for the Year 8 students in this current study the intrinsic value of studying elective music appears to have been the most influential factor upon their decisions to study elective music. Students in this current study spoke

about choosing to study elective music because it was fun, enjoyable, and interesting. These intrinsic considerations appeared to be largely influenced by their previous classroom music experiences.

In contrast, even though most Year 11 students perceived intrinsic value considerations as influential upon their decisions, these considerations appeared to be less important in comparison to the value of being good at music and doing well in the HSC as discussed in the previous sections of this chapter. Year 11 students were more motivated to study elective music because they knew they could achieve a good mark in their HSC than because they enjoyed music. This would appear to suggest that Year 11 students were more motivated by extrinsic concerns than intrinsic concerns. These results are consistent with previous research which showed that students tend to become less intrinsically motivated as they grow older (Eccles et al., 1984; Harter, 1981). Harter found that the intrinsic motivation of older children was much lower than the intrinsic motivation of younger children and that the older students in her study were more extrinsically motivated to achieve grades than the younger students. The results of this current study would seem to support this finding in that Year 11 students appeared to be more extrinsically motivated than Year 8 students to study elective music in order to achieve grades.

Possibly this result is due to the culture of the school. Some suggest that changes in students' achievement-related beliefs may be influenced by factors within the school environment (Anderman et al., 2002; Eccles, 1984; Harter, 1981). Eccles et al. (1984) state that school environments which place more emphasis upon students' ability in relation to others may cause students to be more concerned with their grades. Harter (1981) suggests that school environments may be repressing the intrinsic motivation of students by adopting more extrinsic orientations which may place more emphasis upon the achievement of marks. As discussed in the initial part of this chapter entitled *The Influence of Students' Expectancies for Success and Competence Beliefs*, some of the Year 11 students suggested that the culture of their school was such that senior students

were more inclined to study subjects in which they were competent and expected to do well.

Many selective schools have been found to intentionally create competitive environments (Marsh & Craven, 1994). Berliner (1989) states that the influence of environments is mediated through students' perceptions. Therefore, possibly the culture of a selective school is such that students perceive themselves as involved in a competitive relationship with each other which makes them increasingly aware of their grades as they grow older. Students attending selective schools not only compete for initial selection to the school but there is implicit pressure within the school to achieve good marks, particularly in the HSC. Eccles et al. (1984) found that as students progress through school they engage in more social comparison and their classrooms become increasingly competitive. Therefore, it is possible that as students progress through the competitive environment of a selective school they may be more motivated to study subjects in which they can do well and less motivated by intrinsic concerns.

Eccles et al. (1983) state that in making a choice the possibility of other choices is often negated. Therefore, the relative value that tasks hold for students is an important influence upon their decisions. Previous research has found that students make distinctions between the value they assign to various subjects (Eccles et al., 1993; Wigfield et al., 1997). The results of this current study also revealed that students displayed different levels of interest between music and their other subjects. These relative-intrinsic value considerations appeared to have influenced their decisions to choose to study elective music in preference to other subjects. Additionally, one Year 8 student who was considering not continuing to study elective music in Year 9 commented that her decision would be based on relative-value considerations, that is whether or not she liked and enjoyed music more or less than her other subjects.

Eccles et al. (1993) found that students' self-perceptions of musical competence were related to their interest in instrumental music. The results of this study also revealed an apparent relationship between competence beliefs and intrinsic interest. A few Year 11

students commented that they liked the aspects of the course in which they perceived themselves to be competent. Furthermore, one of these students expressed a belief that being good at music was necessary in order to enjoy music. It would appear that for some of the older students in this study the amount of enjoyment they experience in music is related to their degree of musical competence. Similarly Wragg (1974) found that students' instrumental ability was associated with their future enjoyment of music.

When asked what they liked and/or enjoyed about studying elective music the vast majority of students commented that they enjoyed the practical component of the course. This result is consistent with previous research which has found that individuals tend to perceive their practical music experiences as favourable (Hayes, 1996; Temmerman, 1993). The Year 9 elective music students in Hayes' (1996) study suggested that elective music could be made more interesting by increasing the amount of practical work.

Both groups of students in this current study also spoke about aspects of the classroom environment which they liked. Some students commented that they found music to be a relaxing subject which relieved stress and provided a break from other schoolwork. They also appeared to like the degree of autonomy, freedom, and choice they could exercise in relation to their learning. The importance of choice and autonomy has been identified as a positive influence upon students' intrinsic motivation to learn (Asmus, 1994; Eccles, 1983; Maehr et al., 2002). The students' classroom music teacher stated that he encouraged students' freedom and independence within the classroom and their ability to make decisions in relation to their own learning (Mr White, teacher interview). Additionally, students liked the variety of things to do and learn in music. Temmerman (1993) also found that adults commented on the importance of diversity of content in school-based music classes in developing positive attitudes toward music.

Students from both year groups also liked the interactive/cooperative (for example, group work) and 'hands on' nature of the class. Additionally, several students commented that they preferred the style of music learning in comparison to the style of learning in their other subjects. The students' classroom music teacher suggested that

students probably liked studying music as a subject because it was different from most of the other subjects they studied. He stated that this difference involved a more 'hands on' approach and an emphasis on creativity rather than regurgitation of facts. Furthermore, he commented that music was a subject in which students were encouraged to work cooperatively with each other within groups. He suggested that being part of a team was exciting and important for their confidence in being able to achieve something musical (Mr White, teacher interview). These results are consistent with the findings of Temmerman (1993) who found that the respondents in her study commented on the importance of music classes that allow student involvement and creativity.

Autonomy and cooperative learning in the classroom would appear to be related to students' competence beliefs and the importance they assign to different subjects (Eccles et al., 1989). Eccles et al. state that classrooms which encourage students' autonomy and cooperative learning are more likely to have a positive influence on students' competence beliefs and valuing of the subject. In addition, Eccles et al. (1984) suggest that music classrooms present numerous opportunities for cooperative learning and teachers should utilise these opportunities to encourage the intrinsic motivation of their students.

Eccles (1983) maintains that the key to effective music teaching lies in designing programmes that acknowledge the interests of individual students. The results of this study give an important indication of what students like about studying elective classroom music. This information is potentially useful in assisting music educators to design programmes which facilitate students' interest in music and motivation to study elective music.

Utility Value

The utility value or usefulness of a task or activity is determined by the degree to which the task or activity relates to an individual's current and future goals (Eccles et al., 1998). If a task facilitates future goals then it will have positive value for the individual,

even if that person does not have any intrinsic interest in the task. This component of task value also relates to the more extrinsic reasons an individual may have for engaging in a task. In this study utility value is defined in terms of the degree to which studying elective music relates to students' goals and other aspects of their lives.

The vast majority of students in both year groups commented that they were studying elective music because it would be useful for improving their musical abilities, skills, and knowledge:

Gillian (Yr 8): I want to improve my aural hearing, find out more about different instruments, and further improve piano playing (Questionnaire data).

Molly (Yr 8): My goals for doing elective music this year are to gain a better understanding of the subject, to do the best I can, and to improve my musical ability (Questionnaire data).

Linda (Yr 8): . . . my goals are that I could improve my understanding of music, musically and theoretically. I also want to improve and expand on new skills involved in music (Questionnaire data).

Meg (Yr 11): My goals are to gain more insight into the music subject and to keep pursuing my musical ability (Questionnaire data).

Millie (Yr 11): I want to expand my pool of knowledge and be a better musician. I can see myself improving myself (Questionnaire data).

Leslie (Yr 11): My goal is to greatly increase my musical abilities and general knowledge. . . (Questionnaire data).

Students also indicated that studying elective music would be useful for their future involvement in music particularly their continued participation in elective music classes in subsequent years during secondary school. Several Year 8 students spoke about the usefulness of studying elective music in relation to their goals for studying music for the HSC:

Cindy (Yr 8): . . . I also thought that doing elective music this year would increase my chances of getting a higher mark for the HSC, seeing as I have more musical knowledge from learning music in Year 8 music (Questionnaire data).

Linda (Yr 8): I also want to take up elective music next year because I'm considering the HSC. . .

Kathy (Yr 8): I want to do it [elective music] next year. I was thinking about doing it for the HSC 'cause I don't want to do other subjects that involve writing.

Year 11 students considered studying elective music to be useful in facilitating their goal to achieve a good mark in the HSC:

Diana (Yr 11): My goal is to prepare for the HSC. I felt that if I made a reasonable effort I could do well in this subject (Questionnaire data).

Jo (Yr 11): My goal is to gain good marks in the HSC (Questionnaire data).

The majority of students also perceived studying elective music to be useful for their plans for musical involvement after they leave secondary school. Some students considered studying elective music to be useful for a possible career in music:

Sarah (Yr 8): . . . It makes me think that if I don't quit I could become a music teacher or something.

Marie (Yr 8): I just want to know how to play lead guitar and hopefully maybe something may happen in the future and I'll be really famous and stuff . . .

Jenny (Yr 8): I suppose I want a career in music, probably something to do with singing.

Leigh (Yr 11): I realise now that music can be my future (Questionnaire data).

Liz (Yr 11): [doing music as a career] is kind of like an open career and there are lots of things you can do. It's not like an office job where you are stuck somewhere. You can travel and stuff if you pick the right path.

However, one Year 11 student commented that she could not pursue music as a career because there would be too much uncertainty in it for her:

Kim (Yr 11): I couldn't do music as a career 'cause there is too much uncertainty for me not knowing where you are going.

Several students' plans for long-term musical involvement related to their intentions to become private music teachers when they leave school:

Susan (Yr 8): Well some people when they're not fully grown up they become a part-time tutor or something, so I kind of thought a bit about that.

Kim (Yr 11): I might want to teach the piano and theory and stuff when I am at uni. because it's something I enjoy and you may as well help other people gain the skills you have.

Jo (Yr 11): I don't know if it will have anything to do with my career, but I'd still like to play and teach privately.

Leslie (Yr 11): It [elective music] helps with my plans to be a teacher, learning more theory and things, and if you look at the classroom teacher his explanations sometimes help and you know how to explain stuff and teach people. . . I will still keep music up after the HSC [because] I want to teach privately.

Other students wanted to maintain their involvement in music after school but more as a hobby:

Molly (Yr 8): I'll still continue music [after school] but I don't want to have it as a career.

Jane (Yr 8): I want to be able to play with my friends and my little cousins and it would be really fun.

Diana (Yr 11): I want to be able to play the piano like when I am 50 or 60, like when you're sad and when you want something to do you can just sit at the piano and play, like just for myself and I want to be able to enjoy it like that.

A few Year 8 students also indicated that music would be potentially useful to include in their future resumes:

Sally (Yr 8): I suppose if you did music you could put it on your resume.

Lucy (Yr 8): I thought about if I wanted to put it on my CV [Curriculum Vitae] so if you're compared to someone else like if you got the same marks as someone else then they could look at what you've done musically and extra-curricular activities and so if that kind of thing happens I'll have music on it.

Several Year 8 students were also encouraged by other people to study music based on utility value considerations. People such as their parents and music teachers had suggested that music would be useful for possible future careers, and increasing their musical knowledge and skills. However, some Year 11 students commented that their

parents held concerns for their involvement in elective music, which were based on utility value considerations. These factors are discussed further in Chapter 7.

Students from both year groups also considered that studying elective music would be useful for their musical activities outside of school. Students spoke about how the knowledge and skills they gained as a result of studying elective music would be useful for these activities, particularly their instrumental and theory studies:

Cindy (Yr 8): I thought it would help me with my piano and theory studies outside of school (Questionnaire data). . . . If you learn things here [in elective music] it also piles on the knowledge you have outside of school so you have a better understanding of music (Interview data).

Gillian (Yr 8): I thought the theory side of it [elective music] would help my outside theory 'cause you learn about transposing different instruments and I think you need that in outside theory when you're at more advanced stages.

Jane (Yr 8): . . . this year I've started learning scales and key signatures [in elective music] and it will help me with my exams because I don't go that well in my exams. . . . we all [her other friends in her Year 7 music class] wanted to do music but there might have also been art or something but if we all did one thing it would be kind of cool especially because we're all doing stuff outside of school then music would help us.

Linda (Yr 8): It [elective music] makes me understand better about music outside of school and it improves my performance and theory as well. For doing examinations [AMEB] the class work actually helps.

Liz (Yr 11): I thought it [elective music] would assist my violin skills (Questionnaire data).

Some students also perceived that studying elective music would be useful in maintaining their interest in their musical activities outside of school:

Linda (Yr 8): I thought that I would get more involved in music if I did it at school.

Wendy (Yr 8): I was giving up lessons this year because I didn't like only working for exams. I thought I would like to consider working for some kind of music lessons so I can continue (Questionnaire data).

Meg (Yr 11): It [elective music] pushes you to do music 'cause if you didn't do music at school then you wouldn't do music at home. . .

Diana (Yr 11): . . . I knew that if I didn't do something formal enough then I would give up practising and I wanted to keep on going.

A few of the Year 8 students who indicated that they would not be continuing to study elective music in Year 9 cited utility value considerations, commenting that music would not be useful to their future:

Jane (Yr 8): I don't think it'll be that helpful in the future (Questionnaire data).

Research conducted with mathematics students has shown that their perceptions regarding the usefulness of the subject are significantly related to their intentions to continue or discontinue their studies (Sherman & Fennema, 1977). Similarly, the decisions of students in this current study to study elective music appear to have been influenced by the perceived usefulness of studying elective music. Additionally, some Year 8 students who were not continuing to study elective music in Year 9 stated that music would not be useful to their future lives. Eccles (1983) states that the value of a task is increased if it is perceived as useful in reaching related goals. It would seem that the expression of various goals related to studying elective music by the students in this study is indicative of the degree of value they assign to studying elective music.

The vast majority of students in this study considered studying elective music to be useful for improving their musical skills and knowledge. This result corroborates the findings of previous research (Hayes, 1996; McPherson, 2000-2001). Hayes found that many of the students in her study had chosen to study elective music in order to further their musical abilities. Similarly, students in McPherson's study acknowledged the usefulness of learning music in order to improve their musical abilities.

The desire of most students in this study to engage in learning in order to increase their musical skills and knowledge is indicative of students who hold learning goals. Learning goals relate to the purposes students have for engaging in an activity. Students who hold learning goals are motivated to engage in an activity in order to develop new skills, and increase their competence and understanding (Dweck, 1985, 1986). Furthermore, learning goals facilitate desirable learning patterns in which students are able to maintain

confidence in their abilities in the face of setback and pursue goals that are personally challenging and valued (Dweck, 1986). It is possible that the value students in this study assign to improving their musical abilities and knowledge has increased their confidence to pursue their music studies by studying elective music and will enable them to maintain their confidence in pursuing further musical studies.

Wigfield (1994) states that students' achievement behaviours (for example, their choices) may be guided by their goals. The students in this study expressed goals for their future musical involvement. Students from both year groups perceived studying music to be useful for their continued participation in elective music classes in secondary school. The majority of Year 11 students perceived studying elective music to be useful to their goal of achieving good marks in their HSC. Several Year 8 students perceived studying elective music in junior secondary school to be useful for their goal to study music for their HSC.

The majority of students also perceived studying elective music to be useful for plans for musical involvement after they leave secondary school. Similarly, Hurley (1995) found that continuing music students expressed goals for future involvement in music such as musical careers and continuing to play their instrument after they leave school. It would appear that that the students in this current study have considered the usefulness of studying elective music for their long-term musical involvement. Hurley (1995) suggested that the references to future goals made by students in his study was indicative of the value they placed upon their musical experiences. It would also appear that the expression of future goals by most of the students in this current study indicates the level of value they placed upon their elective music studies. In addition, both groups of students in this current study also considered studying elective music to be useful for their musical activities outside of school (for example, external music examinations and music lessons), and in maintaining their interest in musical activities outside of school.

Cost of Participation

The cost of participation of a task or activity can be viewed as the negative aspects an individual perceives to be associated with engaging in that task or activity (Eccles et al., 1998). These negative aspects can include emotional states such as performance anxiety and fear of failure and/or success; the amount of effort required to succeed in the activity; and other opportunities which may need to be sacrificed in order to pursue the activity (Eccles et al., 1998). Eccles (1983) suggests that cost of participation factors may influence the value of a task for an individual. In this study cost of participation is defined in terms of the negative aspects associated with studying elective music.

Students from both year groups perceived certain negative aspects to be associated with studying elective music. However, some students commented that because they enjoyed music they didn't perceive themselves having to make sacrifices in order to study elective music:

Polly (Yr 8): I haven't really had to give up anything because I enjoy doing it and so I haven't really had to give up anything at all.

Sarah (Yr 8): I don't think I have had to sacrifice anything because it's not one of those subjects where you really hate it. If you enjoy the subject you really don't think of it as something you do like that's really bad or anything. So I don't think I had to give up time or anything.

The students who did perceive certain negative aspects to be associated with studying elective music generally considered these aspects to be offset by intrinsic value considerations:

Millie (Yr 11): So many things could be negative, going to my tutoring, and flute lessons. I have to walk there and back in the dark and I am afraid of the dark and I ask why am I doing this and I think well it's fun sometimes and I learn stuff . . . it makes me realise I really want to do it . . .

Several Year 11 and Year 8 students spoke about having to sacrifice opportunities to do other things in their lives in order to pursue their music studies at school. Year 11 students spoke about having to forgo studying other subjects they were interested in so

that they could study elective music. These students spoke about clashes with other subjects which were timetabled simultaneously with music. This meant that they had to make a choice between music and other subjects they wanted to study. The decisions of these Year 11 students appeared to be based on relative-intrinsic value considerations, that is they liked music more compared to their other subjects:

Diana (Yr 11): I had 14 units at the beginning of the year and I liked modern history as well but my other subjects required the normal means of learning. I enjoyed them [music and modern history] both and I think I was doing similarly at both but I think I like music more.

Similarly, Year 8 students also spoke about having to sacrifice other subjects or make decisions between the subjects they had wanted to study:

Wendy (Yr 8): Not being able to do food technology or food textiles, so that was probably my sacrifice as well. . . but I'm glad I chose music because I really enjoy it.

Gillian (Yr 8): I was choosing between music and drama and I didn't know which one to put first. So in the end I think I just closed my eyes and picked one and so I think I put music second but drama and music were pretty much even.

Two Year 8 students and one Year 11 student commented that they had to sacrifice other activities outside of school:

Wendy (Yr 8): I've kind of had to give up things I want to be in like bands and stuff because my mum doesn't want me to do too much and not have time for anything else.

Molly (Yr 8): I have had to give up what I do on a Monday because of my violin lesson. . . I have had to give up television when practising.

Kim (Yr 11): I haven't been able to do that much sport . . .

Both groups of students also spoke about cost of participation factors relating to the extra time and effort that was required to study elective music. A few Year 11 students spoke about having to study some of their other subjects 'off-line' in order to study elective music. Senior students at the school who study 'off-line' subjects are required to

attend classes ('off-line' classes) outside of regular class times. This may involve attending early morning classes, lunchtime lessons, and classes after school:

Leslie (Yr 11): Maths and English were both on the same line as music and I had to decide if I wanted to do off-line subjects which would take up a lot of extra time. . . I had to decide whether I liked music enough to have these off-line subjects, but I wanted to do music no matter what.

Several students also spoke about the extra time and effort that was required to study elective music. This extra time and effort appears to have been spent on their practice and instrumental lessons:

Kathy (Yr 8): Sometimes I mind because I might have a lot of homework and I still have to practise and it just kind of gets in the way.

Sally (Yr 8): Well I get home at 6 o'clock on Wednesdays after clarinet lessons now, and then I have guitar at seven . . . and that's terrible.

Susan (Yr 8): I have to stay late on Tuesdays and I have to I have to come early on Wednesdays [for instrumental lessons]. . .

Diana (Yr 11): I think it is more tedious, like practising the same piece over and over is really tedious but the end result, I like it when I can be satisfied with the end result.

For some Year 8 students this extra time spent practising appears to have affected their intrinsic value for the subject:

Helen (Yr 8): I don't like it now because you have to practise too much.

However, one Year 8 student appeared not to mind spending this extra time and effort because it was preferable to studying for her other subjects:

Linda (Yr 8): It's more interesting and I would rather be practising something than doing maths homework.

A few students from each year group also spoke about cost of participation factors related to performance anxiety:

Lucy (Yr 8): I want to improve because when I sing sometimes I get really nervous. . . and my voice was shaking the first time we did it and I was really,

really scared and I want to try and get over that fear while it's not too hard and I think I should be able to do that.

Carrie (Yr 11): I've never been able to perform in front of people and that is not really a good thing for music.

In addition, a few Year 11 students commented that their parents held concerns for their participation in elective music based on cost of participation factors. This factor is discussed further in Chapter 7.

The results of this study show that both groups of students perceived cost of participation factors in terms of sacrifices they had to make, and the extra time and effort they have had to spend in order to pursue their study of elective music. However, these results indicate that generally the negative aspects perceived by students were offset by the intrinsic value of music. These results are consistent with the findings of previous research which found that students who chose to continue their music studies perceived cost of participation factors to be outweighed by their intrinsic value for music (Elkan, 1996; Hurley, 1995). Furthermore some students in this current study stated that because they enjoyed music they did not perceive themselves as having to make any sacrifices. Similarly, Hurley (1995) found that students who continue their music studies value learning to the extent where cost of participation factors are not experienced.

Nevertheless, for some students the extra time and effort they have had to spend practising appears to have decreased the intrinsic value of studying elective music. This finding supports Eccles' (1983) suggestion that cost of participation factors can influence the value of an activity for an individual. Previous research has also found that students who discontinue their music studies often cite cost of participation factors (Hurley, 1995; Klinedinst, 1991). Hurley found that cost of participation considerations negatively affected students' motivations for music study and influenced their decisions to pursue the study of music. Similarly, the beginning students in Klinedinst's study cited cost of participation factors for choosing not to continue learning an instrument. Therefore, it is also possible that some of the students in this current study may not

continue to study elective music if the cost of participation eventually outweighs their intrinsic value for music.

Summary

This chapter presented and discussed the results relating to the second research question of the study: *What are Year 8 and Year 11 students' perceptions of the influence of their achievement-related beliefs upon their decisions to study elective music?* The final section of this chapter presents a summary of findings in relation to this research question. The results of this study show that Year 8 and Year 11 students' expectancies for success, competence beliefs, and values all played an influential role upon their decisions to study elective music. However, it was apparent that various overlaps and relationships existed between the different components of students' achievement-related beliefs. In addition, these beliefs appeared to be influenced by other people (for example, family, music teachers, and friends).

Even though most students from both year groups indicated that they had chosen to study elective music because they expected to do well, this factor appeared to be more a important influence in the decisions of the Year 11 students than the decisions of the Year 8 students. Year 11 students indicated that senior students at the school were more inclined to study subjects in which they perceived themselves to be competent and could expect to do well for their HSC. Consistent with the findings from previous research, the decisions of most students also appeared to be influenced by perceptions of themselves as musically competent. In addition, Year 11 students considered their musical competence to have been a more important factor in their decisions to study elective music in senior school than in their decisions to study elective music in junior school. Students' competence beliefs and/or expectancies for success appeared to be influenced by their participation in previous successful music experiences, particularly their previous classroom music experiences.

It is evident from the results of this study and the literature that students are more inclined to participate in activities which they value positively. However, even though both groups of students valued doing well in elective music, this factor appeared to more important for the Year 11 students than the Year 8 students. Doing well appeared to be important in enabling students in both year groups to gain confidence in their abilities to pursue their elective music studies in subsequent school years. It is also apparent from the results of this study and the literature that students' intrinsic interest in music (for example, their enjoyment and interest) is an important influence upon their decisions for musical involvement. However, intrinsic value considerations seemed to be more influential in the decisions of the Year 8 students than the decisions of the Year 11 students. Consistent with the findings from previous research, utility value considerations were also perceived by both groups of students as influential upon their decisions to study elective music. Additionally, even though students from both year groups spoke about various negative aspects associated with studying elective music, these cost of participation factors appear to have been offset by students' intrinsic value for music.

While it was not the intention of this study to identify relationships between the different aspects of students' achievement-related beliefs, certain relationships became apparent. It is evident from the results of this study and the literature that student's expectancies for success appear to be related to their competence beliefs. The importance of doing well (attainment value) in elective music for some students was also influenced by intrinsic and utility value considerations. It was also apparent that some Year 11 students liked the aspects of the course in which they perceived themselves to be musically competent.

Similar to the findings from previous studies, the influence of relative-intrinsic value considerations and relative-competence beliefs upon students' decisions to study elective music was also evident in this study. Students from both year groups appeared to hold greater competence beliefs for music than other subjects and found music more enjoyable and interesting compared with other subjects. Additionally, achievement-

related beliefs appeared to have been influential in the decisions of some Year 8 students to not continue with their elective music studies in subsequent school years.

In conclusion, it would seem that while the Year 8 students were primarily intrinsically motivated to study elective music because of their interest in and enjoyment of the subject, the Year 11 students were primarily extrinsically motivated by their goals to achieve good marks in their HSC. It is evident from the results of this study and the literature that there is a complexity of issues in relation to the achievement-related beliefs of students and their perceptions of the influence of these beliefs upon their decisions to study elective music.

CHAPTER 7

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE INFLUENCE OF OTHER PEOPLE UPON THEIR DECISIONS TO STUDY ELECTIVE MUSIC

The following chapter presents and discusses the findings in relation to the third research question of this study: *What are Year 8 and Year 11 students' perceptions of the influence of other people upon their decisions to study elective music?* Sloboda and Howe (1991) state that there is considerable evidence to support the notion that the attainment of outstanding performance levels in music is significantly influenced by the cultural background and families of individuals. The results of this study showed that in addition to family members, a variety of people influenced students' decisions to study elective music. These people included music teachers, friends, friends of the family, older students from outside of their family, teachers from other subject areas at their school, rock and pop musicians, and people they had spoken to on the internet. The following parts of this chapter present and discuss the findings in relation to the influence of students' parents, other family members, music teachers, friends and others.

Table 16 shows Year 8 students' rated responses in relation to the influence of self and other people upon their decisions to study elective music. Table 17 shows Year 11 students' rated responses in relation to the influence of self and other people upon their decisions to study elective music. Both tables indicate students' rated responses (for example, strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree, and strongly agree) to the following questionnaire statement: *The following people were influential in my decision to study elective music this year.*

Table 16

Year 8 Students' Rated Responses in Relation to the Influence of Self and Other People upon their Decisions to Study Elective Music (brackets show number of students)

Person of influence	Student Ratings					Nil response	Total
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree		
Self	0%	0%	0%	47%	53%	0%	100%
				(7)	(8)		(15)
Father	0%	13%	34%	40%	13%	0%	100%
		(2)	(5)	(6)	(2)		(15)
Mother	0%	0%	13%	60%	27%	0%	100%
	(0)	(0)	(2)	(9)	(4)		(15)
Friends	7%	13%	20%	27%	33%	0%	100%
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)		(15)
Previous classroom music teacher	7%	7%	13%	53%	20%	0%	100%
	(1)	(1)	(2)	(8)	(3)		(15)
Siblings	20%	20%	27%	13%	7%	13%	100%
	(3)	(3)	(4)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(15)
Private music teacher	0%	7%	20%	40%	26%	7%	100%
		(1)	(3)	(6)	(4)	(1)	(15)
Other	0%	0%	0%	20%	0%	80%	27%
				(3)		(11)	(3)

Table 17

Year 11 Students' Rated Responses in Relation to the Influence of Self and Other People upon their Decisions to Study Elective Music (brackets show number of students)

Person of influence	Student Ratings					Nil response	Total
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree		
Self	0%	0%	10% (1)	10% (1)	80% (8)	0%	100% (10)
Father	20% (2)	0%	20% (2)	60% (6)	0%	0%	100% (10)
Mother	20% (2)	0%	10% (1)	50% (5)	20% (2)	0%	100% (10)
Friends	10% (1)	40% (4)	20% (2)	30% (3)	0%	0%	100% (10)
Previous classroom music teacher	0%	0%	30% (3)	60% (6)	10% (1)	0%	100% (10)
Siblings	20% (2)	30% (3)	20% (2)	0%	10% (1)	20% (2)	100% (10)
Private music teacher	10% (1)	0%	10% (1)	40% (4)	20% (2)	20% (2)	100% (10)
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	10% (1)	90% (9)	10% (1)

A comparison of the results between Tables 16 and 17 shows that all of the Year 8 students (100%) and the majority of Year 11 students (90%) perceived themselves as having the greatest influence upon their decisions to study elective music. Apart from parents, siblings, music teachers, and friends, several students also cited 'Other' people as influential upon their decisions to study elective music. One Year 11 student cited the influence of her grandfather (see Table 17). Two Year 8 students referred to other relatives (for example, grandparents and a cousin), and another Year 8 student cited her

older sister's friends (see Table 16). Data from Tables 16 and 17 will be discussed further throughout this chapter.

The Influence of Parents

The majority of Year 8 students and Year 11 students indicated that their parents had influenced their decisions to study elective music (see Tables 16 and 17). Table 16 shows that as a group, Year 8 students perceived their mothers as more influential than fathers. Thirteen Year 8 students (87%) agreed or strongly agreed that their mothers had been influential. Whereas, only eight Year 8 students (53%) agreed or strongly agreed that their fathers had been influential. While this same trend appeared to be evident for Year 11 students there was only a marginal difference between their perception of the influence of their mothers and fathers (see Table 17). Seven Year 11 students (70%) agreed or strongly agreed that their mothers had been influential and six Year 11 students (60%) agreed that their fathers had been influential.

After themselves, both groups of students appeared to rate their mothers as the next most important influence upon their decisions to study elective music (see Tables 16 and 17). However, Year 11 students also rated the influence of their mothers as equal to the influence of their previous classroom music teacher.

All of the Year 8 students and most of the Year 11 students indicated that their parents were supportive of their decisions to study elective music. Some students from each year group even commented that their parents had expected them to study elective music, although their parents did not appear to overtly express their expectations:

Sarah (Yr 8): My parents have always wanted me to do music and we have all these really old instruments in the cupboard.

Cindy (Yr 8): I think a quarter of it was under the influence of my parents 'cause I play piano outside of school and they sort of want me to take music in school. . . . My mum also chipped in a bit because I think she would have been disappointed if I didn't choose music.

Leigh (Yr 11): Because the fact that my mum is a music teacher. I didn't feel any pressure but I had a feeling that I should be doing music, I didn't hate it or anything . . .

Diana (Yr 11): I know they [her parents] expect me to do it and not to give up . . .

However, several Year 11 students commented that their parents held concerns for their involvement in elective music, although it would appear that the motivations of these students to study elective music were greater than the concerns of their parents. Some parents seemed to hold concerns based on utility value considerations. These parents thought that studying elective music would not be useful for a future career:

Millie (Yr 11): I guess my parents influenced me in a way, not a good way. They didn't like it because they thought it wouldn't get anywhere. They think there is no future career in it. My dad thinks that if you do music you have to be really good at it and if you're not good at it then you won't get any money. I thought that was pretty slack and narrow-minded and my mother said she wants me to do other stuff. I think it really stressed me out.

Diana (Yr 11): They don't really want me doing music as a future career. They think arts isn't a safe, secure career path and they just want me to stick to it as a hobby . . .

The concerns of other Year 11 parents appeared to be based on cost of participation factors. Students commented that their parents were concerned about the amount of time and effort needed for their music studies that may potentially detract from their study in other subjects:

Leslie (Yr 11): My dad was a bit worried about it. He worried that I spent too much time on my music . . . he was worried I might spend too much time practising, doing my practical work and not spend as much time on my other subjects, so I'd get worse marks for my other ones.

Most of the Year 8 students indicated that they had discussed their decision to study elective music with their parents and that their parents had wanted them to study music:

Marie (Yr 8): Well my dad he's like 'I want you to play something I don't care what it is. Get involved in music 'cause it's really good' and I went 'Okay'.

In contrast, most of the Year 11 students had not discussed their decisions with their parents. Several Year 11 students regarded their autonomy in decision making to be important:

Diana (Yr 11): I don't think that anyone influenced me. When I make a decision it is because I want to. I don't care what anyone says as long as I think I can do it.

Liz (Yr 11): Yeah, you do something you like. If your parents force you to do it then you're not going to enjoy it or have fun in class.

Year 8 students appeared to receive more active encouragement and advice from their parents in regard to making their elective choices than did Year 11 students. The parents of Year 8 students advised their daughters to choose their subjects based on intrinsic value considerations. Year 8 students commented that their parents had encouraged them to choose subjects which they liked and enjoyed:

Sarah (Yr 8): Mum and dad didn't really care what I chose because it was what I would be doing so I should do it and what I actually enjoy.

Jane (Yr 8): My parents don't want me to choose a subject where you get stressed out a lot and stuff, just something which you enjoy. 'Cause all the other subjects you've got to study for it but this you sort of learn as you go along and it's really fun. They thought it would be better than doing something hard. This is hard, but it's fun.

Linda (Yr 8): My mum and dad didn't really mind what I chose they just said 'Choose something that you like'. They were supportive of me doing music, but they didn't really mind what I chose.

Jenny (Yr 8): My mum when she was little, was forced to do all these subjects and so she said 'Go free with your choices. Do whatever you want to do and I will be happy'.

In contrast, only one Year 11 student indicated that her mother had actively encouraged her to study music:

Liz (Yr 11): She [her mother] wasn't like 'Do music and play this' and stuff. She was like 'Try music it's fun'.

Several Year 8 students were advised by their parents to study elective music on the basis of utility value considerations. The considerations of some parents related to the opportunity for their daughters to increase their musical knowledge and skills:

Kathy (Yr 8): They [her parents] wanted me to know more about music like theory work.

Molly (Yr 8): Everybody [parents, grandmother, and flute tutor] was saying 'Oh you can play the flute . . . it [elective music] would be a really good way to broaden your knowledge of music so you can have a better understanding of what you're talking about'.

Sarah (Yr 8): . . . my mum thinks it's a good idea that I should study elective music because then I can play musically and everything . . .

Linda (Yr 8): My parents think it is a good topic because I started it before and it would probably be good if I learn more.

The utility value considerations of other parents related to the usefulness of studying music for their daughters' long-term musical involvement after school, such as a possible career in music and becoming an instrumental music teacher:

Cindy (Yr 8): I guess my mum wants me to have a musical background when I grow up just in case I flunk out of uni. or whatever, I can still teach piano and get by.

Wendy (Yr 8): My parents thought it would be a really useful thing for me if I wanted to become a music teacher or something.

Several Year 8 parents also encouraged their daughters to study elective music based on their own feelings of regret. They were keen for their daughters to make the most of the opportunity to study elective music in school because they had not had the chance to study music during their childhood or had not continued with their musical activity:

Sarah (Yr 8): My mum said she regrets giving up music 'cause she really wanted to learn music when she was younger and so that's why I do lessons and everything and so she sort of thinks it's a good idea that I do music because she really wishes she could have learned music so that she could still have the knowledge now.

Jenny (Yr 8): Both of my parents [were influential] because they never had the opportunities to play instruments when they were kids and my dad was especially pleased that I took up music because all of his brothers and sisters play musical instruments except him and so he was kind of thrilled when I said I would be doing music.

Molly (Yr 8): My mum really wanted me to do music because she was like 'It's a really, really great opportunity to do this because when I was a child I didn't get to', so I thought that it's cool that we get to learn about music and people are willing to teach us.

The results of this study show that students from both year groups perceived their parents as influential upon their decisions to study elective music (see Tables 16 and 17). This result appears to be contradictory to the findings of previous research (Hayes, 1996; Hurley, 1995; MacKenzie, 1991; Pettengell, 1997). These previous studies found that students did not perceive their parents as having an influence upon their decisions to engage in musical activity. However, most of the authors of this research suggest that the influence of parents may be more subtle than their children realise (Hurley, 1995; MacKenzie, 1991; Pettengell, 1997). The findings of this current study are more consistent with previous research which found that the home environment was a significant influence upon students' continued musical involvement in secondary school (Stewart, 1991; Wragg, 1974).

A noteworthy finding of this study is the result that Year 8 students, as a group, appeared to perceive their mothers as more influential than fathers. In addition, after themselves both groups of students rated their mothers as the next most influential person upon their decisions to study elective music. Previous research has also identified the important influence of mothers (Eccles et al., 1983). Eccles et al. found that mothers influenced students' beliefs and attitudes more so than both fathers and teachers.

All of the Year 8 students and most of the Year 11 students indicated that their parents were supportive of their decisions to study elective music. Results from previous research have identified the importance of parental support for students' continued interest and involvement in music (Davidson et al., 1996; Manturzewska, 1990; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Stewart, 1991; Wragg, 1974). Stewart found that the typical student

enrolled in a secondary music class experienced support from home for his or her musical involvement. However, some Year 11 students in this current study indicated that their parents held concerns for their involvement in elective music. These concerns appeared to be based on utility value considerations and cost of participation factors.

Most of the Year 8 students commented that they had discussed their decisions with their parents. In contrast, the majority of Year 11 students had not discussed their decision with their parents. Year 8 students also appeared to receive more active encouragement from their parents to study elective music than did the Year 11 students. Year 11 students spoke about the importance of being able to exercise autonomy in their decision making. This result suggests that Year 11 students are exercising more independence in their decision making than the Year 8 students. It would also appear that Year 11 students, in contrast to Year 8 students, place more importance upon their autonomy in relation to their decision making.

Previous research has found that the musical values and attitudes of parents are important in developing their children's own attitudes to music learning (Achilles, 1992; Brand, 1986; Chadwick, 2001; Olszewski et al., 1987). Olszewski et al. (1987) state that the tendency of parents to express values related to the importance of academic achievement has an important influence upon their children's pursuit of and involvement in various domains and disciplines. Similarly, Eccles et al. (1998) suggest that the beliefs parents display regarding the value of activities and their encouragement of their children to pursue these activities have important consequences for the motivation of their children. The results of this study also seem to indicate that Year 8 students' decisions to study elective music were influenced by the values and attitudes of their parents. In contrast, the Year 11 students did not appear to be influenced to the same degree by their parents' values and attitudes.

Year 8 students were actively encouraged by their parents to study music based on intrinsic and utility value considerations. This result is consistent with previous research which found that parents express intrinsic and utility value considerations for their

children's musical involvement (Achilles, 1992; Addison, 1990). Year 8 students indicated that their parents had encouraged them to choose subjects which they liked and enjoyed. Achilles (1992) also found that the parents in her study indicated that they wanted their young children to be involved in music for enjoyment. Several Year 8 parents perceived that studying music would be useful to their music studies outside of school and provided an opportunity to broaden their musical skills and knowledge. Similarly, the parents in Addison's (1990) study considered musical involvement to be valuable because of its usefulness.

In addition, the parents of some Year 8 students were keen for their daughters to make the most of the opportunity to study music at school because they had either missed out on the opportunity to learn music when they were younger or they regretted not continuing with their music studies. However, only a few Year 8 parents viewed the study of elective music as potentially leading to a future career in music or the capacity to earn money through private teaching.

The Influence of Other Family Members

Year 8 and Year 11 students spoke about the influence of family members other than their parents. These family members included siblings, cousins, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. As discussed in Chapter 5, most of the Year 8 students and half of the Year 11 students have siblings who are also involved in musical activities (see Table 3). However, only a minority of Year 8 students (20%) and Year 11 students (10%) agreed or strongly agreed that their siblings had been influential in their decisions to study elective music (see Tables 16 and 17). Furthermore, when compared with other people of influence, both groups of students appeared to regard their siblings as among the least influential people in relation to their decisions to study elective music.

During the interviews, only two students, one from each year group, commented on the influence of siblings. One Year 8 student appeared to be involved in a competitive

relationship with her younger brother and thought that by studying elective music she would be able gain an advantage over him:

Wendy (Yr 8): My brother plays by ear and so I suppose it's natural for me to want to be better than my younger brother.

One Year 11 student expressed an obligation to help her younger sister who was also learning violin. She felt that studying elective music at school would enable her to gain more knowledge which she could pass on to her sister:

Leigh (Yr 11): My little sister plays the violin and piano as well. I've got a feeling that in order to help her out I have to be a higher standard than her.

Year 8 students appear to have been more influenced by their cousins, who were also involved in musical activities, than by their siblings:

Jane (Yr 8): Me and my cousin are really close and my cousin sort of plays the piano and stuff and we do things together like he learns the piano, I learn the piano, he does music [at school], so I do music and we sort of stay at the same level.

Linda (Yr 8): My cousin kept bugging me to do it and I said 'Why?' and she said 'Because if I get into your school then I'm going to do it' and I said 'Okay' and that was part of it.

One of the Year 8 students also appears to have been inspired to pursue her music studies by her older cousin's own interest in music. Furthermore, she perceived her cousin, who is studying music for the HSC, as a potential resource that she could go to if she needed help with her music studies:

Gillian (Yr 8): My cousin, she's in a band herself outside of school. She plays guitar and she kept talking about how her band and stuff is really fun and I thought well maybe I should continue music and I think she is doing music as part of her HSC as well and I can ask her if I need help.

Several students commented that their grandparents had been influential upon their decisions to study elective music. Two Year 8 students indicated that their grandmothers had always encouraged their musical involvement:

Molly (Yr 8): My auntie Rose [her grandmother], she's always like 'Your flute playing is so beautiful Molly and you're really good at that, so it's really good to do music', so I'm like 'Okay' and I like it when she is happy.

Wendy (Yr 8): My great grandmother recently died two years ago, but whenever she wrote to us it was 'How are you doing in your piano?' and stuff, so I thought it would be really nice to remember her.

One Year 11 student was influenced by her grandfather's own involvement and interest in music:

Kim (Yr 11): My grandfather did influence my decision like when he was playing lullabies to me or boogie-woogie and stuff like that. When I went to my pa's place he would play the piano and I just grew up with it and really enjoyed it. He helps me with my improvisation.

Two students, one from each year group, also commented on the influence of their aunts and uncles who are all musical. One Year 8 student was actively encouraged to study elective music by the brothers and sisters of her father:

Jenny (Yr 8): Well my dad's brothers and sisters all play piano and they're really good at it, so they urged me on to do music.

The musical involvement of one Year 11 students' aunts and uncles appears to have influenced her intrinsic interest in music:

Leigh (Yr 11): . . . my auntie and everyone, they play 'cello and other instruments so it seemed really interesting.

The results of this study show that several Year 8 and Year 11 students were also influenced by other family members in their decisions to study elective music (see Tables 16 and 17). Most of these family members are musically active. However, it would appear that for the majority of students in this study parental influence was greater than the influence of other family members.

Most of the Year 8 students and half of the Year 11 students have siblings who are also involved in musical activities. Previous research has found that siblings play important motivational roles in each other's musical development. (Howe & Sloboda, 1991a; Hurley, 1995; Pettengell, 1997; Strom, 2001). However, in this study only a few

students spoke about the influence on their decisions to study elective music of their younger siblings who play instruments. One Year 8 student was influenced by a competitive desire to be better than her younger brother. Sibling rivalry has also been identified by previous research (Howe & Sloboda, 1991a). A Year 11 student in this current study expressed the desire to pass on the knowledge she had gained in elective music to her younger sister. These results seem to indicate that complex dynamics exist in relation to the influence of siblings upon students' musical involvement. This finding is consistent with the results of Howe and Sloboda (1991a). They found that even though siblings influenced each other in various ways, it was evident that more complicated dynamics were at play. The results from this current study also seem to suggest that even though siblings may play a role in students' initial decisions to be involved in music, the decisions of students to continue with musical studies are not significantly influenced by their siblings. However, the high proportion of students who have siblings that are musically active lends further support to the suggestion made in Chapter 5 that these students come from families in which music is a valued activity.

Both groups of students were more inclined to cite the influence of relatives other than siblings. These family members included cousins the same age and older, grandparents, aunts and uncles. Some students were actively encouraged by their relatives to study elective music and other students were indirectly influenced by the musical involvement of their relatives. This result corroborates the findings of other research in which students perceived other musical relatives as influential upon their decisions to pursue their musical involvement (Hurley, 1995; Pettengell, 1997).

The Influence of Music Teachers

The influence of Year 8 and Year 11 students' classroom music teachers and private music teachers upon their decisions to study elective music rated quite highly for both groups of students when compared with other people of influence. As a group, after themselves and their mothers, the Year 8 students rated their classroom music teachers as the third most influential person and their private music teachers as the fourth most

influential person (see Table 16). As a group, after themselves, Year 11 students considered their classroom music teachers as the second most influential person and equal to the influence of their mothers (see Table 17). Year 11 students rated their private music teachers as the third most influential person and equal to their fathers.

Students from both year groups generally appeared to perceive their classroom music teachers as more influential than private music teachers. However, this difference was only marginal. Of the Year 8 students, eleven (73%) agreed or strongly agreed that their previous classroom music teacher had influenced their decisions to study elective music and ten (66%) agreed or strongly agreed that their private music teacher had influenced their decisions to study elective music (see Table 16). Of the Year 11 students, seven (70%) agreed or strongly agreed that their previous classroom music teacher had influenced their decisions to study elective music and six (60%) agreed or strongly agreed that their private music teacher had influenced their decisions to study elective music (see Table 17).

During the interviews Year 8 students indicated that they had discussed their decisions to study elective music with their private music teachers more so than with their classroom music teachers. In contrast, Year 11 students appeared to discuss their decisions more with their classroom music teachers than with their private music teachers. Additionally, Year 8 students were more inclined to comment on the influence of their private music teachers and appeared to receive more active encouragement from their private music teachers to study elective music than did the Year 11 students. Several Year 8 students indicated that their private music teachers had told them they were musically talented and would do well in music elective music. The comments of their teachers appear to have reassured them about their ability to do well in elective music:

Susan (Yr 8): My teacher [private music teacher] said I was really good at playing my instrument [French horn] and that I was musically talented and so I should do it, and this probably influenced my decision because I felt more reassured that I would do well.

Several Year 8 students had instrumental teachers who encouraged them to study elective music based on utility value considerations. These teachers suggested to their students that studying elective music would be useful for their musical involvement outside of school and future music studies in secondary school:

Molly (Yr 8): My flute teacher definitely [influenced her] 'cause she said 'Oh you can play an instrument and it will be really good for your HSC and everything . . .'

Cindy (Yr 8): My teacher said it would be good theory wise because he said it would help with my theory outside of school.

Some Year 8 students and one Year 11 student were also encouraged to study music based on their prior musical experience and knowledge:

Sally (Yr 8): My piano teacher said to because I knew all the theory.

Molly (Yr 8): . . . she said [her flute teacher] 'You already know some stuff about music and so why don't you continue with it . . .'

Meg (Yr 11): He [her instrumental teacher] was like 'You should do it. You've been doing it for ten years you just can't drop it and not do it'.

One Year 8 student's instrumental teacher also encouraged her to study music based on intrinsic value considerations. Her teacher suggested that studying music would be interesting:

Molly (Yr 8): ' . . . it [elective music] will be really interesting' and I sort of agreed with that. My flute teacher had a lot of influence. She says all the time that I should do music. It's really great.

A few Year 11 students also commented on the influence of their private music teachers. One of these students was encouraged by her current and previous private music teachers to pursue her music studies in school:

Leslie (Yr 11): My private teacher definitely believed I should do music and he didn't really think I was going to choose anything else. . . My old 'cello teacher really helped me a lot with 'cello and I just felt like I should do music. He suggested that I should probably do music a few years ago.

Another Year 11 student appears to have been inspired by her flute teacher's own musical involvement:

Millie (Yr 11): I guess my flute teacher was an inspiration . . . and she did music at New South Wales [university] and she did teaching and stuff and I might not pursue that but it is a really good thing.

In contrast, Year 11 students were more inclined than the Year 8 students to discuss their decisions with their previous classroom music teacher and spoke more about the influence of their previous classroom music teacher. All of the Year 11 students who had previously studied elective music in junior school had the same classroom music teacher since they were in Year 9. This teacher is also their current classroom music teacher in Year 11. The influence of Year 11 students' previous classroom music teacher appears to have been more direct and active than the influence of Year 8 students' previous classroom music teachers. Most of the Year 11 students were influenced by comments that their previous classroom music teacher had made regarding their musical competence and ability to do well in elective music. These comments appeared to facilitate an expectation that they would be successful in elective music:

Kim (Yr 11): When we had a meeting down in the hall, he said I would be confident at it and he was pretty sure I would go well in it and that kind of makes you think maybe it's an okay choice.

Meg (Yr 11): . . . he used to say good things once in a while and that used to push me and make me feel good about playing the piano and stuff and he would show you that you are good at it, you just need to put more effort into it, and that's why he was influential.

One student was also informed by her previous classroom music teacher that music as a subject at the school received good marks in the HSC:

Liz (Yr 11): He kept telling us how good our school was at music so it kinds of like gives you a little confidence in how well you're going to do.

The majority of Year 8 students commented that they had not discussed the possibility of studying elective music with their previous Year 7 classroom music teachers. Only a few Year 8 students commented that their Year 7 classroom music teachers had encouraged them to study elective music:

Linda (Yr 8): She actually encouraged all of us to do well in music and because some of us did well she said 'Well maybe you should do music next year'.

Susan (Yr 8): I think he influenced me to do music because I played French horn and he wanted me to do music.

Year 8 students appeared to have been influenced by the ability of their previous Year 7 classroom music teacher to make music fun and interesting which inspired some of these students to learn more about music:

Marie (Yr 8): . . . she influenced me heaps. 'Cause when she used to play guitar and she used to do it really well, I thought 'Oh my God I can't play like that' and I wanted to play like that. . . . Our teacher showed us how fun it could be and how much you could learn . . .

Sally (Yr 8): . . . even though I can't sing we sung really good songs for 'Annie' [the musical] and that was fun and she was good.

Molly (Yr 8): They [her Year 7 classroom music teachers] taught us a bit more about it and I wanted to keep on learning more information about music like the notes and everything.

The majority of students in both year groups also spoke about the qualities they liked in a classroom music teacher. Several students from both year groups indicated that they liked their teacher to be encouraging, approachable, helpful, friendly, and able to give constructive criticism:

Molly (Yr 8): [they should] encourage you to go far.

Jenny (Yr 8): [they should] give constructive criticism 'cause my mum says 'I don't care if you get good marks I just want him to give you constructive criticism so you know what you did wrong'.

Wendy (Yr 8): . . . you should know that you can always go to them for help if you need help with anything to do with music . . .

Meg (Yr 11): I think the classroom needs to be more friendly instead of competitive 'cause we compete a lot and I don't know maybe competitiveness is a good thing but I like a teacher who is more a friend.

Students from both year groups also considered the teacher's musical knowledge and experience to be important. Several students stated that it was important for the teacher to be competent on a musical instrument and have a broad knowledge of music:

Sarah (Yr 8): They should be able to play some musical instrument and they should like know music and everything . . . they should know what they're talking about and they should have already studied it before because I don't think the school would let you become a music teacher if you never played . . .

Kim (Yr 11): It's also good if they can relate to most instruments like if they have a broad knowledge. . . .

Jo (Yr 11): I think they should be competent on an instrument I think that he would have to have a good understanding of the work already. To be able to teach it to us they need to be able to know it really well not just kind of because some of the things we do are kind of difficult at first . . .

The results of this current study seem to indicate that both Year 8 and Year 11 students were influenced by their music teachers to study elective music (see Tables 16 and 17). This result is consistent with the findings from previous research which indicated that students choices for musical involvement were influenced by their music teachers (Hurley, 1996; MacKenzie, 1991; Pettengell, 1997). Furthermore, the influence of Year 8 and Year 11 students' classroom music teachers and private music teachers rated quite highly for both groups of students when compared with other people of influence (see Tables 16 and 17).

The difference in students' perceptions regarding the influence of their private music teachers compared with their previous classroom music teachers was only marginal. One would possibly expect students to perceive their classroom music teachers as a greater influence than their private music teachers upon their decisions to study elective music due to the direct association of their classroom music teachers with their elective music studies at school. However, as the results presented in Chapter 5 relating to students' various musical experiences show, students appeared to perceive a strong connection between their music studies outside of school (for example, music lessons and external music examinations) and their music studies inside of school.

The results relating to the influence of private music teachers correspond with research conducted with instrumental students (Pettengell, 1997). Pettengell found that students' decisions to engage in musical study were significantly influenced by their private instrumental teachers. Furthermore, even though previous research has identified the significant role of private music teachers upon children's early musical involvement (Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sosniak, 1985), the results of this current study show that private teachers play an influential role in students' continued participation in musical activities beyond the private music lesson.

However, the results regarding the influence of classroom music teachers upon students in this current study appear to be inconsistent with the findings of Hayes (1996). She found that 32% of the Year 9 elective music students in her study were unsure as to the influence of their previous classroom music teacher, and 36% of the students indicated that their previous classroom music teacher had little or no influence upon their decisions to study elective music. The inconsistency between this current study and Hayes' study could possibly be explained by the different influences of individual teachers.

The Year 8 students in this current study indicated that they had discussed their decisions more with their private teachers than with their classroom music teachers and had received more active encouragement from their private music teachers than their classroom music teachers. In contrast, the Year 11 students appeared more inclined to discuss their decisions with their previous classroom music teachers than with their private instrumental teachers and received more active encouragement from their classroom music teacher to continue their elective music studies. Possibly these results suggest that Year 7 classroom music teachers at this school could be more active in encouraging Year 7 students to study elective music.

These results could also be explained by the nature of the relationship that these two groups of students had with their previous classroom music teachers and private music teachers. The Year 8 students probably had a greater rapport and a more established

relationship with their private instrumental teachers than with their classroom music teachers due to having only known their classroom music teachers for one year. Furthermore, Year 8 students would have experienced minimal contact with their previous classroom music teachers due to the large size of their Year 7 classes. In contrast, most of the Year 11 students had the same classroom music teacher since they were in Year 9 and would have experienced smaller class sizes. These factors would possibly account for a closer relationship developing between the Year 11 students and their previous classroom music teacher than between the Year 8 students and their previous Year 7 classroom music teachers. Furthermore, this could explain why Year 8 students felt more inclined to discuss their decisions with their private teachers than with their classroom music teachers.

The results of this study also suggest that students were influenced by the values and attitudes of people (for example, their music teachers) in addition to their parents. Previous research has identified the important influence of teachers' values, perceptions, attitudes, expectations, and behaviours upon students' achievement-related beliefs, achievement, and continued interest in music (Eccles et al., 1983; Hedden, 1982; Hurley, 1995; Klinedinst, 1991; Temmerman, 1993). It is evident that music teachers' (for example, classroom and private teachers) perceptions are particularly important in increasing students' confidence in their ability to do well in music. This finding is consistent with research conducted with secondary school mathematics students which found that students' competence beliefs are derived in part from their teachers' judgements of their competence (Eccles et al., 1983).

Students from both year groups also spoke about the qualities they liked in a classroom music teacher. Previous research has identified the important influence of music teachers' personality and style upon students' continued involvement in music (Hayes, 1996; Klinedinst, 1991). Hayes (1996) found that the personalities of classroom music teachers had an important influence upon students' decisions to study elective music in Year 9 of secondary school. The students in this current study stated that they liked a music teacher who was approachable, encouraging, friendly, and helpful. Similarly, the

students in Hayes' (1996) study stated that they liked a music teacher who was approachable, friendly, helpful, and fair. Both groups of students in this current study also spoke about the importance of their classroom music teachers having broad musical knowledge and experience, particularly the ability to be able play a musical instrument well. Similarly, Temmerman (1993) found that the adult participants in her study commented on the importance of school-based music teachers having a sound knowledge of the subject area and developing positive attitudes toward musical involvement. Even though the students in this current study did not state that these qualities had directly influenced their decisions to study elective music it is possible that they may have indirectly influenced their choices.

The Influence of Friends and Others

Most of the students spoke about the influence of their friends from inside of school and outside of school upon their decisions to study elective music. However, as a group, Year 8 students rated the influence of their friends upon their decisions to study elective music as more important than did the Year 11 students (see Tables 16 and 17). The majority of Year 8 students (60%) agreed or strongly agreed that their friends were influential. In contrast, only a minority of Year 11 students (30%) agreed that their friends were influential. However, both groups of students generally perceived their friends as less influential than their parents and music teachers, although Year 8 students perceived their fathers as less influential than their friends (see Tables 16 and 17).

Several students from each year group were influenced by affiliation needs that were also identified by Hurley (1995) in his research with instrumental music students. These needs were based on the desire to be with friends who were also electing music:

Wendy (Yr 8): Yes, at the time I chose to do music because I knew Molly was doing it . . .

Molly (Yr 8): The fact that Wendy was doing music influenced my decision . . .

Julia (Yr 11): Well I chose music at the end of last year when I knew that Carrie and everyone else was doing it.

For both groups of students, having friends in the same class meant that they wouldn't be alone:

Sally (Yr 8): Most of my friends didn't like music but then, I don't think I would have done it if there were no friends that were doing it, because then I would be alone in the class.

Carrie (Yr 11): . . . and I wouldn't have done it if Julia didn't do it because I don't like being alone and it was good to have a friend doing it.

For several Year 11 students having friends in the same class meant that they would have someone else to relate to in the class:

Liz (Yr 11): It probably did for me 'cause if I'm going to sit in the class then I want to have someone to talk to and stuff. I guess it's an added bonus.

Kim (Yr 11): If you had known that no-one was going to be in your class that you were going to get along with then maybe you'd think 'I don't want to do it'. But Jo and Liz were going to be there. . .

Some Year 11 students also commented on the familiarity of the elective music class as a result of their previous years studying elective music together:

Kim (Yr 11) It helps that we've been together for so long because we feel comfortable performing or singing . . .

Julia (Yr 11): It probably influenced me because I have been with the same people for three or four years and I kind of know them.

Several students spoke about being actively encouraged by their friends to study elective music. A few Year 8 students and one Year 11 student were encouraged by their friends to study elective music based on their musical competence:

Sarah (Yr 8): One of my friends at this school was doing music and she said I should do music because I'm really good at it.

Linda (Yr 8): Most of them encouraged me to do music. I don't know why but they said that 'You're pretty good so you should do music' and so that kind of made me think probably I should do it.

Meg (Yr 11): This Year 12 friend told me 'You may as well do it 'cause you have the talent'.

A few Year 8 students were advised by friends to study subjects based on intrinsic value considerations. Their friends encouraged them to choose something that they would enjoy:

Sarah (Yr 8): I was told to do subjects that you like and enjoy because there is no point in doing something that you absolutely hate unless you have to and that's sort of what I think as well.

In addition to being advised to choose something she liked, one Year 8 student was told by her friend that music is fun and she would enjoy herself:

Polly (Yr 8): One of my friends from another school who is a bit older than me said I should do music because it's fun and I would enjoy myself, and also because I didn't like any of the other ones and I told her that and she said, 'You may as well do something you like'.

Several students were influenced by older friends who had previously studied elective music or were currently studying elective music. These friends told them what they could expect to study in elective music:

Lucy (Yr 8): . . . when I was in Year 7 I had friends in Year 8 [who were studying elective music] and they said music was really good and it helped you play an instrument.

Meg (Yr 8): I knew from friends and other people who do it [at this school] that you get to have a double period most of the time just practising your instrument and I thought that was a nice idea.

Leslie (Yr 11): My friends at accordion orchestra influenced me because they did music at high school and they helped me a lot, telling me what was involved and that it was pretty good and that I should do it.

When asked whether they were influenced by anyone else to study music, several students from each year group spoke about the influence of people other than their family, friends, and music teachers. The majority of people were known to students and included older children from outside of the family. Some Year 8 students were influenced by senior students at the same school. One Year 8 student sought advice from a Year 11 student who had studied elective music in her junior years:

Sally (Yr 8): I asked Beth White and she said it was fun.

Some Year 8 students were also influenced by friends of their family members. One student was influenced by the friends of her older sister. This student commented that she considered them to be really 'cool':

Marie (Yr 8): . . my sister plays guitar and she has these two friends that are in bands and one them plays lead guitar and he has this really mad guitar and watching him play it's like 'Oh wow !' and it's really cool and then there is this other guy and he has a guitar and he plays really well and he tried to teach me but I didn't really learn much.

Another Year 8 student was influenced by the people who participated in the amateur musical society in which both her father and herself were involved:

Jenny (Yr 8): . . . and lots of people at my dad's musical society [influenced her to study elective music].

However, some Year 8 students commented on the influence of people they did not know. Several students cited the influence of pop and rock musicians. These students appear to have perceived these performers as role models and were encouraged by the musical competence of these people:

Jane (Yr 8): . . . I think to see other people perform, like if they can do something you'd want to be able to do it, like famous people. They sort of encourage you to do music because they have all these good talents and you say 'I want to be like that'.

One Year 8 student also commented on the influence of someone she had spoken to on the internet who had advised her to seek music lessons:

Jane (Yr 8): I actually went on the internet to find out some tips and every one of them said 'You should get a real teacher'.

Only one Year 11 student cited the influence of another person. This student was encouraged to study music by her Year advisor at the school:

Jo (Yr 11): My year advisor encouraged me to do it because of the comments on my report and because he knows I like it.

The results of this study show that the decision to study elective music for students from both year groups was influenced in part by their friends. However, both groups of

students generally perceived their friends as less influential than their parents and music teachers (see Tables 16 and 17). Only a minority of Year 11 students considered their friends to be influential upon their decisions to study elective music. This result is consistent with the findings of Hayes (1996). She found that the majority of Year 9 elective music students in her study did not perceive their friends as being influential upon their decisions to study elective music. In contrast to the Year 11 students, the majority of Year 8 students in this current study perceived their friends to have been influential. This result is contradictory to the findings of Hayes (1996). Possibly, friendship considerations are more important in the decisions of younger students.

Several students from each Year group appeared to be influenced by affiliation needs, that is the desire to be with friends. This result is consistent with the results of Hurley (1995) who found that students in his study expressed the desire to be with friends who were also learning an instrument. The needs of the students in this current study were based on a desire to be with friends who were also choosing to study elective music so that they would not be alone in the class. Some Year 11 students also considered the familiarity of the class to be an important influence. Most of the Year 11 students had been in the same elective music class with each other since they were in Year 8 which seems to have influenced the decisions of some students.

Several students also spoke about being actively encouraged by their friends to study elective music. These students had been encouraged by their friends to study elective music based on intrinsic and utility value considerations, levels of musical ability, and expectations for the elective music course. This result indicates that students were influenced by the values, perceptions, and attitudes of people (for example, their friends) in addition to parents and music teachers.

When asked whether they were influenced by anyone else to study elective music, several Year 8 students and one Year 11 student spoke about the influence of people other than their family, friends, and music teachers. However, the influence of these other people appears to have been only marginal compared with other people in their

lives. Some Year 8 students commented on the influence of older children outside of the family including friends of family members and older students at their school. Sloboda and Howe (1991) also found that several students in their study were influenced by older children from outside of their families.

Summary

This chapter presented and discussed the results in relation to the third research question of this study: *What are Year 8 and Year 11 students' perceptions of the influence of other people upon their decisions to study elective music?* The final section of this chapter presents a summary of the findings in relation to this research question.

Consistent with the findings of previous research the vast majority of students in this study indicated that they had decided to study elective music from personal choice and that the influence of others was secondary in their decisions. However, the students in this current study did acknowledge the influence of other people upon their decisions to study elective music. These people included their parents, other family members, music teachers (classroom and private music teachers), friends, and others.

The majority of students from both year groups perceived their parents as influential upon their decisions to study elective music. The influence of mothers was particularly apparent. The findings from this study and the literature also indicate that the support of parents is an important factor in students' decisions for musical involvement. All of the Year 8 students and most of the Year 11 students indicated that their parents had been supportive of their decisions to study elective music. However, Year 8 students appeared to be receive more active encouragement from their parents to study elective music than did the Year 11 students indicating that the Year 11 students had exercised more autonomy in relation to their decision making.

In addition to their parents, students from both year groups also spoke about the influence of other family members most of who were musically active, including siblings, cousins, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. In comparison to their initial musical

involvement, the influence of students' siblings upon their decisions to study elective music appeared to be minimal. The musical activity in the families of most of these students has possibly inspired their own continued involvement in music.

It is evident from the findings of this study and the literature that students' music teachers (classroom teachers and private teachers) are an important influence upon their decisions for musical involvement. Students' perceptions of the influence of their previous classroom music teachers seem to have been greater in this study than has been identified by previous research. It was apparent that Year 8 students' previous Year 7 classroom music teachers had inspired them to continue their classroom music studies at school. Comments made by the Year 11 students' classroom music teacher appeared to contribute to their expectations for success in senior elective music. However, Year 8 students, in contrast to Year 11 students, seemed to receive less active encouragement from their previous classroom music teachers to study elective music.

The influence of friends appeared to be greater for the Year 8 students than for the Year 11 students. In addition, Year 8 students, in particular, commented on the influence of people apart from their family, friends, and music teachers. However, these other people only appeared to have a marginal influence compared to other people in their lives.

It is evident from the results of this study and the literature that students' decisions for musical involvement appear to be influenced by the expectations, behaviours, perceptions, attitudes, and values of other people. Students appeared to receive encouragement from most of these people (for example, parents, music teachers, and friends) to study elective music on the basis of their musical competence, previous musical experience, and value considerations (for example, the enjoyment and usefulness of studying music). The perceptions of students' music teachers and friends appear to have been particularly important in increasing students' confidence in their ability to do well in elective music. However, a noteworthy finding of this study is that students did not comment on the influence of their parents' perceptions of their musical competence. Possibly these results indicate that students consider the perceptions of

their friends and music teachers regarding their musical competence as more important and relevant than the perceptions of their parents.

In conclusion, the results of this study show that various people in the lives of these students' were influential upon their decisions to study elective music. The perceptions of students regarding the influence of these people highlight the important role that various people play in students' continued musical involvement.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to explore students' perceptions of the factors which influenced their decisions to study elective music in secondary school. Students in New South Wales secondary schools who choose to continue their involvement in classroom-based music studies after having completed the Mandatory Course of music can elect to study classroom music. However, it would appear that in Australian secondary schools, generally the proportion of students who choose to study elective music after having completed mandatory music courses is quite small (McPherson, 1997).

It was evident from the review of related literature that there were many possible factors that may potentially influence students' decisions in relation to their involvement in various musical activities. However, the scope of this study did not enable the consideration of all of these factors. Therefore, this study explored students' perceptions of the influence of selected factors that were shown by the review of related literature to be influential upon students' decisions for musical involvement. These factors included selected components of students' achievement-related beliefs and various environmental factors. The components of students' achievement-related beliefs considered by this study included their expectancies for success, competence beliefs, and task values. Environmental factors investigated by this study included other people (for example, students' parents, other family members, music teachers, friends, and others) and various musical experiences (for example, students' primary school musical experiences, secondary school musical experiences, and outside of school musical experiences). In addition, this study also sought to establish when students first became involved in formal musical activities, the nature of this initial involvement, and the people who influenced their initial involvement.

This study was conducted in a selective girls' high school in the Sydney metropolitan area, in which I am a music teacher. The participants in this study were Year 8 students

who were studying the Additional Study Course and Year 11 students who were studying the Music 2 course. In addition, the classroom music teacher of both these classes also participated in the study. In adopting a cross-sectional design it was possible for this study to explore the differences and similarities between Year 8 and Year 11 students in relation to their perceptions of the factors that influenced their decisions to study elective music. Even though individual differences were ascertained by the results the intention of this study was to identify themes that occurred both within and between the two year groups. In endeavouring to facilitate greater insights into the perceptions of students this study utilised a predominantly qualitative design for the collection and analysis of data. A combination of methods including the use of semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire was employed in the collection of data.

The results of this study have shown that a complex network of factors has the potential to influence students' decisions to study elective music in secondary school. It was evident that most students who choose to study elective music have a range of previous musical experiences, consider themselves to be musically competent, and perceive music as a highly valued part of their lives. The following parts of this chapter outline the summary of findings, the implications for music education in secondary schools, and the implications of this study for future research.

Summary of Findings

Students' History of Musical Involvement

Students who choose to study elective music at the school in which this study was conducted appear to have strong musical backgrounds. The results showed that most students who participated in the study had an extensive history of musical involvement and all students had been involved in some form of musical activity apart from school music classes before they made the decision to study elective music in secondary school. The majority of students from both year groups had been involved in musical activities

from a young age, with most students aged between four and nine when they first became involved in some type of formal musical activity.

The nature of most students' initial involvement in musical activities consisted of participation in private or group instrumental music lessons, with piano being the most commonly studied instrument. Even though most students' initial involvement consisted of instrumental lessons outside of school, it would appear that the instrumental tutorial programmes in which some students participated during primary school also played an important role in their initial involvement in formal musical activities.

Consistent with the findings of previous research (Chadwick, 2001; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sosniak, 1985) the results of this study also showed that students' families, particularly their parents, played an important role in their initial involvement in formal musical activities. Students' mothers were found to be especially influential and their siblings also appear to have played an important role. The majority of students were found to have musically active family members which suggests that they come from home environments in which music is considered to be a valued activity. However, the finding that not all of the students in this study come from musically active families shows that students' involvement in musical activities is not reliant upon the musical involvement of their families. This finding is consistent with the results of previous research which indicated that the musical involvement of students' families is not a necessary prerequisite for the attainment of musical competence (Brand, 1986; Davidson et al., 1996; Manturzevska, 1990; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sosniak, 1985; Wragg, 1974).

The musical activities in which students participated that were explored by this study, included primary school musical activities, secondary school musical activities, and outside of school musical activities. Most students did not perceive their primary school music experiences (for example, classroom musical activities and co-curricular activities) as particularly influential upon their decisions to study elective music in secondary school. However, Year 8 students, in contrast to Year 11 students, were more

inclined to consider these activities, particularly co-curricular activities, as influential. The high participation rates for students from both year groups in primary school musical activities, particularly co-curricular activities, indicate that music was a valued activity for these students during primary school.

In support of the findings from research conducted with Year 9 elective music students (Hayes, 1996), the secondary school musical experiences of students in this current study, particularly their previous classroom music experiences, were perceived by them as having a more direct and significant influence upon their decisions. However, in contrast to the Year 11 students, Year 8 students generally perceived these experiences as more influential. Year 8 students were significantly influenced by the enjoyment they had experienced in their previous Year 7 Mandatory Course music classes. In addition, Year 8 students spoke about the importance of these experiences in determining their continued participation in classroom music at secondary school. For most Year 11 students the decision to study elective music appeared to be part of a natural progression from studying elective music in junior school. Only one Year 11 student had not previously studied elective music in secondary school. The decisions of Year 11 students appeared to be influenced by their expectations in relation to the content and format of elective music which were based on their previous elective classroom music experiences in junior secondary school. The finding that most students in this study were also involved in secondary school co-curricular musical activities was inconsistent with previous research conducted with elective music students (Hayes, 1996).

An obvious relationship was also found between the students who chose to study elective music and their levels of involvement in musical activities outside of school. Most students were involved in some form of musical activity outside of school (for example, instrumental music lessons, music examinations, community based musical activities, and music competitions/eisteddfods). Students from both year groups considered the knowledge and skills they had acquired in their musical activities outside of school to be useful and in some cases necessary for studying elective music at school. Similarly to the results of previous studies (Hayes, 1996; Pettengell, 1997; Stewart,

1991), this current study found that the activities with the highest rates of participation were instrumental music lessons and external music examinations.

Students' Perceptions of the Influence of their Achievement-related Beliefs

It was evident from the results of this study that students' decisions to study elective music were influenced by their achievement-related beliefs (for example, their expectancies for success, competence beliefs, and task values). Students' achievement-related beliefs have important implications for their various behaviours in relation to learning, including their choices, performance levels, and their degree of involvement in various activities (Eccles et al., 1998; Wigfield & Eccles, 2002; Wigfield et al., 1997). Consistent with the results of previous research conducted with instrumental music students (Hurley, 1995; McPherson, 2000-2001) this current study also found that students hold initial expectations and values for studying elective music.

Differences were apparent between the two year groups in terms of students' perceptions regarding the influence of these achievement-related beliefs. Most students perceived their expectancies for success as an influential factor. However, this factor was more important in the decisions of the Year 11 students than the decisions of the Year 8 students. Year 11 students had chosen to study elective music because they perceived it to be a subject in which they thought they could do well and achieve good marks for their HSC (Higher School Certificate). For this reason Year 11 students also valued the importance of doing well more highly than the Year 8 students. In addition, Year 11 students commented that the culture of their school was an important influence upon the decisions of senior students to study subjects in which they expected to do well.

In contrast, Year 8 students valued the intrinsic aspects (for example, their enjoyment and interest) of studying elective music more highly than the importance of doing well. Furthermore, this factor appeared to be the most significant influence upon the decisions of Year 8 students. Even though Year 11 students also indicated that they had chosen to study elective music because of intrinsic factors these considerations appeared to occupy

a position of secondary significance in comparison to the value they assigned to the importance of doing well in elective music. Students from both year groups also appeared to be motivated to do well in elective music because they liked and enjoyed music.

As other studies have found (Hayes, 1996; Hurley, 1995; Kehrberg, as cited in Krueger, 1989; Klinedinst, 1991) students' decisions in this current study to study elective music were also influenced by their competence beliefs. Most students appeared to perceive themselves as musically competent and their competence beliefs and/or expectancies for success seemed to be influenced by their previous successful musical experiences including their previous classroom music experiences and their outside of school musical activities (for example, external music examinations and instrumental music lessons). However, it was evident that students perceived their success in previous classroom music activities to have been a greater influence upon their decisions to study elective music, although this factor was more significant in the decisions of the Year 11 students than the decisions of the Year 8 students. In addition, Year 11 students considered their musical competence to be a more important factor in their decisions to study elective music in senior years than in junior years.

Students' decisions were also influenced by the perceived usefulness of studying elective music. This result is consistent with the findings from previous research which found that students are more inclined to study subjects or be involved in activities which they perceive as useful (Hayes, 1996; Hurley, 1995; McPherson, 2000-2001; Sherman & Fennema, 1977). Similar to the findings of Hayes (1996) the vast majority of students considered studying elective music to be useful for improving their musical knowledge and skills. In addition, students perceived that studying elective music would be useful for their musical activities outside of school and would enable them to maintain interest in these activities. Furthermore, students considered studying elective music to be useful for future goals including their continued participation in classroom music in secondary school and plans for involvement in musical activities when they eventually left school.

The high level of value that most students from both year groups assigned to the study of elective music appeared to offset any cost of participation factors or negative aspects associated with studying elective music. However, the achievement-related beliefs of some Year 8 students appeared to be influential upon their decisions not to continue studying elective music in Year 9. Some Year 8 students thought that the course would become too difficult and they did not appear to have the confidence in their abilities to pursue the study of elective music. Other Year 8 students did not perceive music as useful for their future lives.

This study also identified the influence of relative-intrinsic considerations and relative-competence beliefs upon students' decisions. Students from both year groups indicated that they held greater competence beliefs in music than in other subjects and that they found music to be more enjoyable and interesting than their other subjects. Both Year 8 students and Year 11 students commented that they preferred the practical component of classroom music and that they liked the degree of autonomy, freedom, and choice they experienced in their studies. Furthermore, they enjoyed the variety of activities in the music classroom and the interactive/cooperative, practical nature of the class. Group work was particularly valued.

Students' Perceptions of the Influence of Others

The vast majority of students in this study indicated that their decision to study elective music was a personal choice. MacKenzie (1991) suggests that studying music from personal choice facilitates the most beneficial learning state for students. However, the students in this study also acknowledged the influence of others upon their decisions to study elective music. Previous research has shown that the attitudes, values, perceptions, expectations, and behaviours of students' parents and teachers, in particular, have an important influence upon students' achievement-related beliefs, levels of achievement, and continued interest in music (Eccles et al., 1983; Hedden, 1982; Hurley, 1995; Klinedinst, 1991; Temmerman, 1993). Students in this current study were encouraged by various people in their lives, particularly their parents, music teachers, and friends, to

study elective music on the basis of their musical competence and value considerations (for example, the enjoyment and usefulness of studying elective music). In contrast to previous research, this study also highlighted the important influence of the perceptions, attitudes, and values of students' friends upon their decisions to study elective music.

The majority of students from both year groups perceived their parents to have been influential upon their decisions. Students' mothers were found to be particularly influential. Similar to the findings of previous research (Stewart, 1991) all of the Year 8 students and most of the Year 11 students were supported in their decisions to study elective music by their parents. However, it was apparent that Year 8 students, in contrast to Year 11 students, received more active encouragement from their parents and were more inclined to discuss their decision with their parents. The Year 11 students appeared to exercise more autonomy in their decisions than the Year 8 students. In addition to parents, students from both year groups were also influenced by other family members (for example, siblings, cousins, grandparents, aunts and uncles) most of who were musically active. However, even though most of the Year 8 students and half of the Year 11 students had siblings who were musically active the influence of these siblings appeared to be minimal in relation to their choice of subject.

Students in both year groups also perceived the influence of their private music teachers and previous classroom music teachers to be quite high in comparison to other people of influence. The influence of classroom music teachers also appeared to be greater in this study than has been identified by previous studies (Hayes, 1996). Year 8 students were influenced by the way in which their previous Year 7 classroom music teachers had made their classes enjoyable and interesting. The confidence of Year 11 students to pursue their elective music studies was increased by their Year 10 classroom music teacher's expectations for their success. In addition, it appears that students' private music teachers had an important role to play in their continued musical involvement. In speaking about the qualities of classroom music teachers students commented that they liked their classroom music teacher to be approachable, encouraging, friendly, fair, and helpful. It was also evident that Year 8 students, in contrast to the Year 11 students, did

not receive as much active encouragement to study elective music from their previous Year 7 classroom music teachers.

While both groups of students spoke about the influence of friends, Year 8 students, in contrast to Year 11 students, appeared to perceive their friends as more influential. However, as found in previous research (Hurley, 1995) several students from both year groups indicated that their decisions had been influenced by their desire to be with friends who were also choosing to study elective music. Only a few students, in particular Year 8 students, spoke about the influence of other people apart from family, teachers, and friends. These people included older students from outside of their families, friends of the family, pop and rock musicians, and people they had spoken to on the internet. However, these other people appeared to be less influential in comparison to their family, music teachers, and friends.

Implications for Music Education in Secondary Schools

The summary of results in the previous sections has been considered within the specific context in which the study was conducted and may not necessarily be generalisable to all educational settings. However, even though the findings from this study may not be applicable to all educational settings there are possible implications for secondary music education in New South Wales. The results from this study have potential significance for attracting students to study elective music and maintaining the interest of those students who are already studying elective music. The following part of this chapter will discuss the implications for the setting in which the study was conducted and the wider setting of secondary music education.

A very significant finding of this study is that all students had participated in musical activity before they studied classroom music in secondary school. In addition, most of the students in this study had been involved in various musical activities since they were quite young which suggests that they had already made a commitment to musical involvement before they attended secondary school. The decision to study elective

music in secondary school for the students in this study would seem to have been a decision largely to continue their previous musical involvement. Most students in this study had a background of extensive involvement in primary school co-curricular activities, outside of school musical activities, and secondary school co-curricular musical activities. Therefore, it is evident that at the secondary school in which this study was conducted elective music tends not to be chosen by students who do not have previous musical experience beyond that which they acquire in the school music classroom.

A further important finding was that students' decisions to study elective music had been influenced by perceptions of themselves as musically competent and that these perceptions had been influenced by their previous successful musical experiences. Other research has shown that successful and positive music experiences contribute to the continued musical involvement of individuals of various ages (Bowles, 1991; Boyack, 1999; Elkan, 1996; Hayes, 1996; Stewart, 1991; Walker & Haman, 1995). It is apparent that the previous musical experiences of students are important in determining their confidence and interest in further pursuing their musical involvement.

Furthermore, it is evident that previous positive musical experiences and perceptions of musical competence have important consequences for students' confidence to pursue their music studies further in secondary school. McPherson and Dunbar-Hall (2001) state that one of the major strengths of music education in Australia is the recognition that students at all stages of their schooling should have access to music. However, the results of this current study show that even though all students are provided with access to elective music courses in secondary school, it would appear that the students who choose to study elective music are generally those students who perceive themselves as musically competent and have a strong musical background.

If this is the case, then elective music may be perceived by secondary school students as a subject which only musically competent students with previous musical experience choose to study. It is possible that students who have not acquired previous musical

experience beyond that which they have gained in the compulsory music courses studied in secondary and primary school music classrooms, may perceive themselves as not having the necessary prerequisite skills to study elective classroom music courses in secondary school. Therefore, if students have not participated in musical experiences beyond the primary school classroom prior to studying the Mandatory Course of music in secondary school it is unlikely that they will choose to continue their involvement in classroom music by studying elective music courses in secondary school. These students will potentially miss out on opportunities for involvement in elective classroom music courses during subsequent years of secondary school.

The participation of students in school musical activities throughout secondary school appears to have implications for their long-term involvement in musical activities and attitudes toward music in their adult lives. Previous research has shown that adults who pursue their musical involvement after secondary school and possess positive attitudes toward music have been involved in musical activities throughout their years at secondary school (Elkan, 1996; Frakes, as cited in Radocy, 1986; Noble, 1976; Walker & Haman, 1995). Therefore, it is apparent that students who have not continued their musical involvement in secondary school may also have diminished opportunities for musical involvement when they eventually leave school.

It is also possible that the elective nature of classroom music in secondary school may contribute to the perception of music as a specialist subject which is only studied by students who are already 'musical'. In his discussion of the reasons why Australian students may not choose to study elective music in secondary school, McPherson (1997) suggests that parents and students may view music as an elitist subject and an educational frill for the talented few. Similarly, research conducted with adults has shown that they perceived music during their school years as being for the talented few (Achilles, 1992). If this perception exists among secondary school music students then the elective nature of music may implicitly suggest to students that it is a subject that can only be studied by those who have musical talent. However, as the results of this study show, students who chose to study elective music had access to various opportunities for

musical involvement beyond the school music classroom. These opportunities have enabled the students in this study to develop their musical abilities. Regardless of whether these students can be described as talented or not, it is apparent that opportunities for musical involvement beyond the school classroom are important in determining students' confidence and interest to pursue elective music studies in secondary school.

Another important finding of this study is that the majority of students perceived their primary school classroom music experiences as less influential upon their decisions than their involvement in various co-curricular activities during primary school. Musical activities within students' primary school classrooms appeared to be less influential due to the highly variable nature of their delivery. It also seems evident that while primary schools tend to value and encourage their students' participation in various co-curricular activities which provide important opportunities for students' initial and continued involvement in music, compulsory classroom based music courses do not receive the same support and are possibly not valued as highly as more visible co-curricular musical activities. Students may perceive this discrepancy between classroom musical activities and co-curricular musical activities as suggesting that co-curricular activities are more important than classroom based courses. This may lead to the perception of students during primary school that music is an activity which is only pursued by the talented few. By the time these students reach secondary school they may consider classroom based music courses as having minimal relevance to them.

In contrast to their previous primary school classroom experiences, students in this study perceived their previous secondary classroom music experiences as having a significant influence upon their decisions to study elective music. In addition, students' perceptions of themselves as musically competent appeared to be enhanced by their previous successful experiences in secondary classroom music. Furthermore, Year 8 students appeared to be significantly influenced by the enjoyment they had experienced in their previous Year 7 Mandatory Course music classes and several students spoke about the importance of these classes for inspiring their continued interest in studying classroom

music courses in secondary school. It would appear that Mandatory Course music classes are important in motivating students to continue their musical involvement by choosing to study elective classroom music at secondary school. However, these classes seem to be less influential in inspiring the interest of students who do not necessarily have a strong musical background.

These results have important implications for the way in which we teach compulsory music courses in our schools, both primary and secondary. Findings from this study in relation to the aspects of classroom music which students enjoy and find interesting provide valuable information for both primary and secondary educators in terms of designing music programmes which enable students to gain confidence in their musical abilities and encourage them to pursue their musical involvement in subsequent school years. Students in this study appeared to enjoy the degree of autonomy, freedom, and choice they were able to exercise in relation to their learning in classroom music. Furthermore, they enjoyed the variety of activities in which they could engage and the practical nature of the music classes. Group work was particularly endorsed as an enjoyable approach to learning. Numerous students in this study also commented on how these aspects of learning in classroom music differed from their way of learning in other subjects. In addition, students spoke about how they perceived music as more enjoyable and interesting than other subjects. Furthermore, students appeared to perceive themselves as more competent in music than in other subjects.

The comments of these students highlight the uniqueness of learning in music. In motivating students' interest in classroom music courses and their continued involvement in these courses, primary and secondary educators should endeavour to facilitate a classroom environment which is both enjoyable and interesting, encourages both independent and cooperative learning, facilitates student choice, caters to the needs and abilities of individual students, and enables them to gain or maintain confidence in their abilities. Possibly, when speaking to students about the advantages of studying elective music, secondary music educators need to highlight the unique differences between elective music and other school subjects, and emphasise these aspects of

learning in order to facilitate a classroom environment which encourages students to further pursue their involvement in classroom music in subsequent secondary school years.

Another noteworthy finding of this study was the strong relationship between students' decisions to study elective music and their perceptions of its usefulness to their involvement in musical activities outside of school and vice versa. The participation of most students in musical activities outside of school indicates that they are motivated and committed to pursue their musical studies beyond the secondary school musical environment. Nazareth (1999) suggests that if students perceive connections between their learning in school music and their learning in outside of school music then they may be more inclined to be involved in further music learning. A greater awareness and acknowledgement on the part of music educators of this perceived connection between music inside of school and music outside of school would possibly highlight the relevance of studying elective music in school for students who are already involved in music outside of school. Furthermore, an awareness of students' participation in these activities would provide music educators with important knowledge regarding the degree of musical experience they bring with them to the secondary school music classroom. This knowledge would enable music educators to design programmes that more effectively cater for the needs and abilities of individual students.

This study also highlighted the important influence of other people upon students' decisions to study elective music. The values, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours of parents, and music teachers (private teachers and classroom teachers) appeared to be particularly influential. In contrast to previous research conducted with secondary school elective music students (Hayes, 1996), an additional important finding of this study was the influence of the attitudes, perceptions, values, and behaviours of friends upon students' decisions. The influence of these various people highlights the important role that they occupy in students' decisions for their continued musical involvement.

An obvious significant finding of this study which also differed from previous research (Hayes, 1996) was the perceived influence of students' previous classroom music teachers upon their decisions. It is apparent that secondary classroom music teachers occupy an important position in which they have the potential to influence and encourage the continued involvement of students in classroom music courses. Year 8 students spoke about how they had been influenced by their Year 7 classroom music teachers who had made music classes enjoyable and interesting. Year 11 students were encouraged to pursue elective music in senior secondary school by their Year 10 classroom music teachers' comments regarding their musical competence and potential for success in music. It was also apparent that the students in this current study may have been indirectly influenced by the personalities of their previous classroom music teachers. These comments made by the students indicate that it is important for primary and secondary educators to facilitate enjoyable and interesting classroom music environments in which students develop positive attitudes toward their musical involvement and are motivated to pursue their classroom music studies further. However, it is also evident that teachers of Year 7 classroom music at the school in which the study was conducted could be more active in their encouragement of students to study elective music.

Both the literature and results of this study show that parental support is important for students' decisions for musical involvement. Furthermore, it is evident from the results of this study and the literature that parental support and encouragement are more important influences than parents' own musical involvement upon students' involvement in musical activities. These results have important implications for those students who do not have support from home for their musical involvement. Secondary music educators and primary educators need to be able to provide a school environment which supports and encourages the involvement of students in various musical activities who may not have support from home. It may be possible to offset the influence of a lack of support from home by providing opportunities and experiences in music as discussed previously, which allow students to pursue their musical interests and gain confidence in their musical abilities.

A particularly important finding in this study was the difference in Year 8 and Year 11 students' primary motivations for studying elective music. Generally the Year 8 students were primarily motivated to study elective music because of the value they assigned to the intrinsic aspects (for example, enjoyment and interest) of studying elective music. For Year 8 students the importance of doing well was not as important as the enjoyment they experienced through their participation in classroom music. In contrast, the Year 11 students were primarily motivated to study elective music because it was a subject in which they thought they would be able to do well and achieve good marks in the HSC (Higher School Certificate). The Year 11 students assigned greater value to the importance of doing well than to the intrinsic aspects of studying elective music and indicated that students at the school only study subjects in which they think they will do well. In addition, they commented that their competence beliefs were a more significant influence upon their decisions for studying elective music in senior secondary school than in junior secondary school.

It is possible that the more competitive culture of selective schools makes students more inclined to study subjects in which they expect to do well. However, the competitive nature of the HSC in New South Wales secondary schools would also possibly encourage students to study subjects in which they will be able to achieve good marks and not necessarily those subjects which they enjoy and find interesting. It appears that students who choose to study the Music 2 course in senior secondary school are extrinsically motivated to obtain good marks for their HSC and are less intrinsically motivated to study music. If music educators are to encourage the desire of students to pursue their learning in formal and informal music settings when they leave school (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1999b) then we need to be more active in fostering students' intrinsic motivations to engage in music learning beyond the junior secondary school.

In summary, the implications discussed in this part of the chapter have been inferred from the results of a study conducted within a specific context. Further research is needed in order to explore the validity of these implications for other educational

settings. The following part of this chapter outlines some of the possible directions for future research.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study has highlighted some of the factors that influence students' decisions to study elective music in the secondary school in which the study was conducted. However, the results of this study are limited by its focus on the specific context of a selective girls' high school. Future research conducted in the context of other types of secondary school settings would be potentially valuable in providing a more comprehensive picture of why students choose to study elective music in secondary school. These studies could be conducted in various secondary schools within metropolitan and country areas, including other girls' schools, comprehensive schools, boys' schools, private schools, and additional selective schools. Furthermore, this research could be conducted in different states throughout Australia. Results from this research may highlight differences and similarities in factors that influence students' decision to study elective music in these various educational settings.

The cross-sectional design of this study was able to identify differences and similarities between junior and senior students' perceptions of the factors that influence their decisions to study elective music in secondary school. However, even though it was evident that there were differences in the primary motivations between the two year groups for studying elective music this study was not able to substantiate how and when students' motivations may change. Future research conducted in various educational settings which adopts a longitudinal design may be able to assess when students' motivations change and provide a greater understanding of the factors which influence students' continued involvement in elective music courses in secondary school.

The use of a qualitative design in this study has provided a detailed understanding of students' perceptions regarding the influence of various selected factors upon their decisions to study elective music in secondary school. However, future research which

adopts different methodologies to address the purpose of this study could provide different perspectives and add to the information acquired in this study. Furthermore, research conducted with a broader population may be able to explore a greater range of factors and potentially uncover additional factors that may influence students' decisions.

While this study referred to the influence of some cultural aspects within students' environments (for example, the school environment) future studies may wish to further explore the influence of cultural and environmental factors. This research could investigate the influence of various aspects of the classroom environment, and the specific school environment in which students make their decisions to study elective music. In addition, future research could explore the influence of different teachers and teaching styles. Furthermore, influences such as the ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic background, and home environments of students could be considered by future studies.

This study was also limited by the retrospective nature of its design. The study was conducted when students were in their second term of studying the two different elective music courses. Future research which considers students' perceptions regarding the factors that influence their decisions to study elective music when they are actually making these decisions may produce different results. The retrospective nature of most of the questions that were directed to the students in this study relied upon students' long-term memories which may not have been entirely accurate. Furthermore, some of the questions regarding students' initial involvement in musical activities could be addressed directly to the students' parents. Parents may have a better recollection of the events surrounding students' initial involvement in formal musical activities which would possibly add greater depth to students' perceptions. In addition, students' private music teachers could be approached to further address their influence upon students' decisions for continued musical involvement.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, this study has shown that a range of factors can influence students' decisions to study elective music in secondary school. In exploring students' perceptions of the influence of these factors this study has provided a first hand account of why some students choose to continue their involvement in classroom music courses in a selected New South Wales secondary school.

Despite access to music education being provided to all students in New South Wales secondary schools, it is evident that, typically, elective music is selected by students who have an extensive history of musical involvement, have support from their families for their involvement in elective music, and have already made a commitment to studying music beyond the secondary school musical environment. Furthermore, these students perceive themselves to be musically competent and consider music to be a highly valued component of their lives.

In order to provide opportunities for all students to develop their musical abilities, music educators need to be able to design classroom programmes which cater for their diverse backgrounds, abilities, interests, and needs. These types of programmes are potentially important in enabling students to access opportunities to engage in successful musical experiences which are enjoyable, interesting, and which motivate them to pursue their involvement in classroom music at secondary school.

In order to ensure the survival of elective classroom music courses within our schools secondary music educators may also need to be more active in their efforts to attract students to these courses. An understanding of the factors that motivate students to continue their musical involvement in secondary school music classes is crucial in enabling educators at all levels of schooling to provide opportunities for all students to experience positive and successful musical experiences which motivate them for long-term involvement in music both within school and in their future lives beyond secondary school.

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APPENDIX 1

DEFINITION OF TERMS

In relation to this study, terms have been defined in the following ways:

Achievement-related beliefs:	The beliefs that students may hold in relation to their learning in achievement situations (for example, schools). In this study these beliefs consist of three components in relation to the study of elective music and are defined according to pre-existing definitions (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles et al., 1998; Wigfield, 1994; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992; Wigfield & Eccles, 2002): (i) Expectancies for success – students' expectations of how well they think they will do in elective music (ii) Competence beliefs – students' perceptions regarding their musical competence (iii) Task values – students' perceptions of how elective music meets their needs. Values are defined in terms of the following four components: a. Intrinsic value – the enjoyment or interest the student derives from studying elective music b. Attainment value - the importance of doing well in or being good at elective music c. Utility value – the degree to which studying elective music relates to students' goals and the usefulness of studying elective music to other aspects of their lives d. Cost of participation – the negative aspects associated with studying elective music
Students:	The sample of Year 8 and Year 11 students who were selected to participate in this study.
Primary school:	The initial stage of schooling in New South Wales which incorporates Kindergarten to Year 6.
Secondary school:	The stage of schooling in New South Wales which follows primary school and incorporates Years 7-12.

Junior secondary school:	The first four years of secondary school incorporating Years 7-10.
Senior secondary school:	The final two years of secondary school incorporating Years 11-12.
Year 8:	The second year of secondary school.
Year 11:	The fifth year of secondary school.
Selective schools:	Secondary schools intended to meet the needs of students with particular gifts or talents and which require students to meet certain selection criteria in order to attend.
Elective music:	Any of the New South Wales secondary classroom music courses which students choose to study (for example, Additional Study Course, Music 1 course, Music 2 course, and Music Extension). In this study elective music specifically refers to the Additional Study course and the Music 2 course.
Mandatory Course:	The compulsory course of classroom music which all students in New South Wales are required to study in junior secondary school (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1994).
Additional Study Course:	The elective classroom music course chosen by students in junior secondary school in New South Wales after they have completed the Mandatory course (Board of Studies New South Wales, 1994).
Music 2 course:	One of the three elective classroom music courses that can be chosen by students in senior secondary schools in New South Wales which builds on the Year 7-10 Mandatory and Additional Study Courses (New South Wales Board of Studies, 1999b).
Higher School Certificate (HSC):	The final assessment in New South Wales secondary schools undertaken by students in Year 12.

Musical experiences:	Various musical activities in which students had participated previously or were currently participating at the time they decided to study elective music. In this study they are defined as follows: (i) Primary school musical experiences (for example, musical activities within the regular classroom and co-curricular musical activities) (ii) Secondary school musical experiences (for example, classroom music and co-curricular musical activities) (iii) Outside of school musical experiences (for example, instrumental and theory/musicianship lessons, music examinations, and community-based musical activities)
Formal musical activities:	Organised musical activities either individual or group that are taught by a music teacher and which students attend on a regular basis.
Musical involvement:	The involvement or participation of students or their family in various musical activities either formal or informal.
Co-curricular musical activities:	Musical activities which take place in addition to the musical activities that occur within the context of the regular school classroom. These activities are usually voluntary and occur outside of normal school hours. These activities are additional to syllabus requirements.
Student perceptions:	Students' cognitive interpretations of the various factors that influence their decision to study elective music.
External music examinations:	Practical, theory, or musicianship examinations which are conducted by private bodies. Generally Australian students participate in examinations conducted by the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB). Some students also participate in examinations conducted by the Trinity College of London, an international examinations board.

APPENDIX 2

STUDENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Why did you decide to study elective music this year?
2. Have these reasons changed since you were in Year 8? (if so, how?) (**Year 11 only**)
3. In which previous years have you studied elective music in secondary school? (**Year 11 only**)

History of Musical Involvement

4. When & why did you initially become involved in music?
 - a. Who encouraged/influenced you?
5. What were your primary school experiences of music (classes, co-curricular)?
 - a. Did these experiences influence your decision to study elective music? If so, how?
6. Have your outside of school musical activities, if any, influenced your decision to study elective music this year? How?
7. Did your experiences in classroom music last year influence your decision to choose elective music this year? Why?
8. Did your participation in co-curricular activities at this school influence your decision? How?
9. Are there any other experiences (in and/or outside of school) that have influenced your decision to study elective music this year?

Influence of Others

10. Was there anyone in your life who influenced your decision to study elective music this year?
 - a. Who were they and in what way did they influence you?
11. Who had the greatest influence on your decision to study elective music this year? Why?
12. How influential were your parents in your decision to study elective music this year?

13. Is there anyone else in your family that was influential in your decision to study elective music this year? Why?
14. How influential was your previous classroom music teacher in your decision to study elective music this year? Why?
15. How influential was your private music teacher/s in your decision to study elective music this year? Why?
16. How influential were your friends (inside and outside of school) in your decision to study elective music this year?

Achievement-related Beliefs

17. What are your goals/purposes for studying elective music?
18. Have these changed since you were in Year 8, and if so how? (**Year 11 only**)
19. What do you expect/hope to learn in music this year?
20. Do you plan to continue studying elective music next year? Why?
21. Do you plan to study music for the HSC? Why? (**Year 8 only**)
22. Do you plan to pursue musical activities after the HSC?
 - a. If yes, what kind of musical activity?
 - b. If not, why not?
23. How important is it for you to do well in elective music this year? Why?
 - a. Did this factor influence your decision? How?
24. How important is studying elective music for you compared to your other subjects? Why?
25. Did you choose to study elective music this year because you enjoy music?
 - a. If so, what are the aspects of classroom music that you enjoy?
26. Did you choose to study elective music this year because you thought it would be useful to you? Why?
27. Have you had to give up/sacrifice other things in your life in order to study elective music at school (for example, other subjects, social time)?
 - a. Did this influence your decision? How?
28. Are there any negative aspects related to studying elective music at school? If so, what are they?

29. Did you choose to study elective music this year because you expected to do well this year? What were these expectations influenced by?

APPENDIX 3

TEACHER INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Why do you think students at this school elect to study music in Year 8 and Year 11?
2. How do you think music as a subject of study is perceived by the rest of the school? (for example, usefulness and importance)
3. Do you think that the selective school nature of this school impacts upon students' decisions to study elective music? If so, how?
4. Does the music faculty encourage students to study elective music in Year 8/11? If so, what is the nature of this encouragement?
5. Do you think it is important for students to study elective music? Why?
6. What aspects of elective music do you think students enjoy? Why?
7. What aspects of elective music do you think students dislike? Why?
8. Do you think the things students learn in elective music will be useful to them in the future? Why?
9. What do you think may be the negative aspects of studying elective music in Years 8 and 11?
10. Do you think that prior musical experience is necessary for studying Year 8 elective music? If so, what kind of experience?
11. Do you think that previous classroom experiences in music influence the decisions of these students? Why?
12. Why are there no marks on the Year 7 reports?
13. What is the process that is undertaken by students in Year 7 in terms of selecting their electives for Year 8?
14. What is the process that is undertaken by students in Year 10 in terms of selecting their subjects for Year 11?

APPENDIX 4



The University of Sydney
**SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM
OF MUSIC**



**“Students’ perceptions of the factors that influence their decisions to study elective music in
Year 8 and Year 11 of secondary school”**

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is part of a research study which seeks the viewpoints of secondary school students in Year 8 and Year 11 in relation to the factors that influence their decisions to study elective music in secondary school.

This study is being conducted by The Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney, under the supervision of Dr Kathryn Marsh who can be contacted on (02) 9351 1333 (w).

All information collected in this questionnaire will be confidential.
Pseudonyms will be used in the final results.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager of Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 9351 4811

Name: _____

Roll Class: _____

1. Do you have any family members who are involved in musical activities? **Yes/No**

2. Please indicate which of the following people in your family are involved in musical activities by placing a tick in the box or boxes that correspond/s with your answer:

- ☐ a. Your mother
- ☐ b. Your father
- ☐ c. Your brothers &/or sisters
- ☐ d. Other (please specify) _____
- ☐ e. None of the Above

3. Please indicate the age that you initially became involved in musical activities which were taught by a music teacher (for example, music lessons) by placing a tick in the box that corresponds with your answer:

- ☐ a. Age 4-5
- ☐ b. Age 6-7
- ☐ c. Age 8-9
- ☐ d. Age 10-11
- ☐ e. Other (please specify) _____

In part 'i' of questions 4-8 please circle either 'Yes' or 'No'

In part 'i' of questions 4-8 please tick the box that corresponds with your answer/s

4. i. Do you currently have private music lessons outside of school (for example, instrumental, musicianship, theory)? **Yes/No**

ii. If you answered 'Yes' please state what kind of lessons these are:

- ☐ a. Instrumental /Vocal
- ☐ b. Theory/Musicianship
- ☐ c. Other (please specify)

5. i. Did you participate in any co-curricular musical activities during primary school (for example, choir, band, or others)? **Yes/No**

ii. If you answered 'Yes' please state what kind of activities these were:

- ☐ a. Choir
- ☐ b. Concert band
- ☐ c. String ensemble/Orchestra
- ☐ d. Recorder ensemble
- ☐ e. Instrumental tutorials
- ☐ f. Other (please specify) _____

6. i. Do you participate in any co-curricular musical activities at this school (for example, Concert band, Intermediate band, Orchestra, Stage band, Rock band, Vocal ensemble, Instrumental/Vocal tutorials) ? **Yes/No**

ii. If you answered 'Yes' please state what kind of activities these are:

- ☐ a. Concert band
- ☐ b. Intermediate band
- ☐ c. Orchestra
- ☐ d. Rock band
- ☐ e. Stage band
- ☐ f. Vocal ensemble
- ☐ g. Instrumental/Vocal tutorials
- ☐ h. Other (please specify)_____

7. i. Do you participate in any musical activities outside of this school (for example, Community bands, Church groups, Musicals, Eisteddfods/Competitions, others)? **Yes/No**

ii. If you answered 'Yes' please state what kind of activities these are:

- ☐ a. Musicals
- ☐ b. Church groups (for example, choirs and/or bands)
- ☐ c. Community concert/brass band
- ☐ d. Eisteddfods/competitions
- ☐ e. Other (please specify) _____

8. i. Do you participate in AMEB music examinations and/or Trinity music examinations? **Yes/No**

ii. If you answered 'Yes' please tick the box/es below that correspond/s with your answer/s.

- ☐ AMEB Theory/Musicianship
- ☐ AMEB Practical
- ☐ Trinity Theory/Musicianship
- ☐ Trinity Practical
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

9. Please tick the box that most correctly represents your opinion in response to the statement (in bold type) in the top box of the table below:

SD=Strongly Disagree D=Disagree U=Uncertain A=Agree SA=Strongly Agree

The following people were influential in my decision to study elective music this year:	SD	D	U	A	SA
a. My father					
b. My mother					
c. My friends					
d. My previous classroom music teacher					
e. My siblings (sister and brothers)					
f. My private music teacher/s					
g. Myself					
h. Other (please specify):					

10. Please tick the box that most correctly represents your opinion in response to the statement (in bold type) in the top box of the table below:

SD=Strongly Disagree D=Disagree U=Uncertain A=Agree SA=Strongly Agree

The following experiences were influential in my decision to study elective music this year:	SD	D	U	A	SA
a. My experiences in classroom music last year					
b. My primary school musical experiences					
d. My involvement in co-curricular musical activities at this school					
e. My involvement in musical activities outside of school (for example, music examinations, competitions, lessons, community activities etc.)					
f. Other (please specify):					

11. What were your reasons for choosing to study elective music this year?

12. What do you perceive to be your goals for studying elective music this year?

13. What aspect/s of studying elective music do you enjoy?

14. How have your reasons changed for studying elective music, if at all, since you studied elective music in junior school?

Thank you for your cooperation in completing this questionnaire.

14. a. Will you be studying elective music next year?

☐

a. Yes

☐

b. No

☐

c. Unsure

b. If you answered '**No**' in part 'a' of this question, what are your reasons for not studying elective music next year?

Thank you for your cooperation in completing this questionnaire.

APPENDIX 5



The University of Sydney
**SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM
OF MUSIC**



29/1/2003

Dear Principal,

I am writing to request your permission to undertake a research study entitled **“Students’ perceptions of the factors that influence their decisions to study elective music in Year 8 and Year 11 of secondary school”** in your school. This study seeks the perspectives of secondary school music students in Year 8 and Year 11 in relation to the factors which influence their decisions to study elective music in secondary school. It also seeks the perspective of their classroom music teacher.

Results will provide information that may be valuable in helping educators better understand the motivational choices of students who study elective music in secondary school. This has many benefits for education in general, and more specifically music education.

Data collection will involve the participation of students in group interviews with other students from their music class and the completion of a questionnaire. The classroom teacher of both classes will also be asked to participate in an interview. The interviews and questionnaire will follow the outlines attached. Distribution of information and consent forms would require one short visit to each of the classes.

All information collected will be used exclusively for the purposes of this research study. Participants will remain anonymous, and the information collected will be confidential. Participants will retain copyright over any recorded material. Participation is entirely voluntary, and participants have the right to withdraw at any time. In addition, the school will be given a pseudonym in any published material. On completion of the study, a summary of results will be available on request.

If you wish for more information in relation to this study, please contact me on (02) 9922 4519. Alternatively, the supervisor for this study, Dr Kathryn Marsh may be contacted at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music on (02) 9351 1333. I will contact you within a fortnight to discuss whether you would agree to my undertaking this research in your school, and how this could be implemented.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Oyston

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager of Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 9351 4811

APPENDIX 6



The University of Sydney

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



“Students’ perceptions of the factors that influence their decisions to study elective music in Year 8 and Year 11 of secondary school”

SUBJECT INFORMATION STATEMENT **Research Project**

This study seeks the perceptions of secondary school music students in relation to the factors which influence their decisions to study elective music in Year 8 and Year 11 of secondary school. The perspective of the students’ classroom music teacher is also sought. The study is being carried out by the Department of Music Education, University of Sydney, under the supervision of Dr Kathryn Marsh.

Students will be asked to participate, in group interviews with other students from their music class, with the researcher, which will be recorded on both video tape and audio tape. The classroom music teacher of both the Year 8 and Year 11 classes will also be interviewed by the researcher. The study will also require students to complete a questionnaire during one of their regular music classes. Interviews will occur during term 2 and if necessary, continue throughout term 3 of 2003. The administering of the questionnaire will take place during term 3 of 2003, after the completion of student interviews.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent. If you do consent to participate you may withdraw at any time. Any decision not to participate will in no way prejudice your academic standing or relationship to the school. All information obtained during this study will be confidential and any identifying data relating to either the school or the participants will be removed from the records as soon as possible. On completion of the study, a summary of results will be available on request. The input of music students and their teacher in this school will be valuable in highlighting the factors which motivate students to study elective music in secondary school.

If you wish to gain more information about the study, or have any concerns, please contact me on (02) 9922 4519. If you have any further concerns please contact Dr Kathryn Marsh, the supervisor of the study, on (02) 9351 1333.

Thank you, for your time and assistance,

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Oyston

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager of Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 9351 4811

Page 1 of 1

APPENDIX 7



The University of Sydney

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



“Students’ perceptions of the factors that influence their decisions to study elective music in Year 8 and Year 11 of secondary school”

CLASSROOM MUSIC TEACHER PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM **(interview)**

I _____ consent to participating in research conducted by Suzanne Oyston. I understand that this will involve participation in an interview, and that the identity of the participants remains confidential. I understand that recorded audio and video tapes will only be used for the purposes of the research study and participants retain copyright over all recorded material. I understand that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time. If you have any further concerns please contact Dr Kathryn Marsh, the supervisor of the study, on (02) 9351 1333.

Signed _____ (Teacher)

Witnessed by _____ (Print name)

Signed _____

Date _____

Please return this form to:

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager of Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 9351 4811

Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

APPENDIX 8



The University of Sydney

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC



“Students’ perceptions of the factors that influence their decisions to study elective music in Year 8 and Year 11 of secondary school”

PARENTAL AND PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM **(interview and questionnaire)**

I consent to my child _____ participating in research conducted by Suzanne Oyston. I understand that this will involve participation in group interviews, and the completion of a questionnaire, and that the identity of the participants remains confidential. I understand that recorded audio and video tapes will only be used for the purposes of the research study and participants retain copyright over all recorded material. I understand that participation is voluntary and that my child may withdraw at any time. If you have any further concerns please contact Dr Kathryn Marsh, the supervisor of the study, on (02) 9351 1333.

Signed _____ (Parent / Guardian)

Signed _____ (Student / Participant)

Witnessed by _____ (Print name)

Signed _____

Date _____

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager of Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 9351 4811

Please return this form to:

Sydney Conservatorium of Music.



The University of Sydney

NSW 2006 Australia

Human Research Ethics Committee

Manager:

Mrs Gail Briody

Telephone: (02) 9351 4811

(02) 9351 4474

Facsimile: (02) 9351 6706

Email: gbriody@mail.usyd.edu.au

Rooms L4.14 & L4.13 Main Quadrangle A14

Human Secretariat

Telephone: (02) 9036 9309

(02) 9036 8308

Facsimile: (02) 9036 9310

Email: r.todd@reschols.usyd.edu.aum.williams@reschols.usyd.edu.au

5 March 2003

Dr M Stanley
Sydney Conservatorium of Music
Building C41
The University of Sydney

Dear Dr Stanley

I am pleased to inform you that the Human Research Ethics Committee at its meeting on 24 February 2003 approved your protocol on the following study. Please note that subject to annual monitoring returns, the approved protocol is valid for five years.

Title: *The development of talent in music : student's viewpoints on the factors which affect their motivation to pursue music education in secondary school*

Ref No.: 3580

Approval Period: February 2003 – February 2004

Authorised Personnel: Dr Michael Stanley
Ms Suzanne Oyston

In order to comply with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans*, and in line with the Human Research Ethics Committee requirements the Chief Investigator's responsibility is to ensure that:

- (1) The individual researcher's protocol complies with the final and Committee approved.
- (2) Modifications to the protocol cannot proceed until such approval is obtained in writing.
- (3) The confidentiality and anonymity of all research subjects is maintained at all times, except as required by law.
- (4) All research subjects are provided with a Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee.
- (5) The Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form are to be on University of Sydney letterhead and include the full title of the research project and telephone contacts for the researchers, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee.

- (6) The following statement must appear on the bottom of the Participant Information Sheet. *Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager of Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 9351 4811.*
- (7) The standard University policy concerning storage of data and tapes should be followed. While temporary storage of data or tapes at the researcher's home or an off-campus site is acceptable during the active transcription phase of the project, permanent storage should be at a secure, University controlled site for a minimum of five years.
- (8) A progress report should be provided by the end of each year. Failure to do so will lead to withdrawal of the approval of the research protocol and re-application to the Committee must occur before recommencing.
- (9) A report and a copy of any published material should be provided at the completion of the Project.

Yours sincerely,

[Redaction]

Associate Professor Stewart Kellie
Chairman, Human Research Ethics Committee

Encl. Subject Information Sheet
Dear Principal letter
Parental and Participant Consent Form
Questionnaire
Proposed Student Interview Schedule
Proposed Teacher Interview Schedule

cc: Ms S Oyston, 16/58 Kurraba Road, NEUTRAL BAY NSW 2089



Early Childhood and Primary Education
Secondary Education
Technical and Further Education
Vocational Education and Training
Higher Education
Adult and Community Education

Ms Suzanne Oyston

[Redaction]

Dear Ms Oyston

SERAP Number: 02.231

I refer to your application to conduct a research project in NSW government schools entitled *The development of talent in music: Students' viewpoints on the factors which affect their motivation to pursue music education in secondary school*. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved. You may now contact the Principals of the nominated schools to seek their participation.

This approval will remain valid until 17/03/2004.

You should include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to schools. I draw your attention to the following requirements for all researchers in NSW government schools:

- School Principals have the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time. The approval of the Principal for the specific method of gathering information for the school must also be sought.
- The privacy of the school and the students is to be protected.
- The participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school's convenience.
- Any proposal to publish the outcomes of the study should be discussed with the Research Approvals Officer before publication proceeds.

When your study is completed please forward your report marked to Strategic Research Directorate, Department of Education and Training, Level 6, 35 Bridge Street, Sydney, NSW 2000.

Yours sincerely

[Redaction]

Dr Paul Brock
Director of Strategic Research
17 March 2003

APPENDIX 11

CODING CATEGORIES

Achievement-related beliefs (ACH)

- Subcategories:
1. expectancies for success
 2. competence beliefs
 3. attainment value
 4. intrinsic value
 5. utility value
 6. cost of participation

History of musical involvement (HMI)

- Subcategories:
1. nature of initial involvement
 2. people who influenced this initial involvement
 3. primary school musical experiences
 4. secondary school musical experiences
 5. outside of school musical experiences

Influence of other people (IOP)

- Subcategories:
1. parents
 2. siblings
 3. friends
 4. private music teachers
 5. classroom music teachers
 6. others