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The Lived Experiences of Music Majors Dealing with Performance-Related Injuries

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the lived experiences of collegiate music majors dealing with performance-related injuries. The researcher sent a survey to students at music programs within 11 different Research 1 institutions. Participants completed the survey during October 2022. All participants remained anonymous. Study questions focused on participants' experiences dealing with a performance-related injury, resources regarding musicians' health, musical demographic information, and what kind of injury they dealt with. This study involved both quantitative and qualitative data. The researcher employed statistical analysis to analyze the quantitative results and a form of coding responses to look for patterns and themes in order to analyze the qualitative results. The results indicated that university music programs could benefit from having more wellness resources for their students and that participants' emotional well-being was often impacted because of their injury. The specific experiences of having an injury varied between individuals.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2 Literature Review.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Medical Aspects of Musicians' Health	3
Resources Created by Musicians	5
Musicians' Attitudes Towards Injury	6
Lived Experiences.....	7
Conclusion	8
Chapter 3 Methodology	9
Chapter 4 Results.....	12
Chapter 5 Conclusion	21
Appendix A Qualtrics™ Survey.....	24

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Participants Per Instrument Family	12
Figure 2. Participants' Year in Schooling.....	13
Figure 3. Participants' Majors	14
Figure 4. Current Ensemble Enrollment.....	16

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Music majors must frequently use their bodies in ways humans are not typically expected to. This strenuous activity leads to a much higher prominence of injury among musicians. For example, in a study discussed in Janet Horvath's *Playing (Less) Hurt* (2010), "seventy-six percent of respondents [in a study comprising 47 out of 48 orchestras in the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians] had experienced a serious injury during their careers" (Horvath, 7). Additionally, as discussed by Stanhope (2018), there are also a high amount of university music students who report dealing with musculoskeletal health issues. These risks require musicians, as well as collegiate music programs, to take early preventative action.

Additionally, when students develop injuries, it then takes a toll on music majors' ability to perform and to complete their coursework, and can lead to various other academic, social, and emotional challenges. This impact was explored with respect to professional musicians in Christine A. Guptill's (2011) article, "The Lived Experience of Professional Musicians with Playing-Related Injuries: A Phenomenological Inquiry." While there has been plenty of research on the various kinds of injuries musicians could deal with, such as Robert J. Wilson, Jeffrey T. Watson, and Donald H. Lee's article "Nerve Entrapment Syndromes in Musicians," there is significantly less exploration into the lived experiences of the music majors dealing with those injuries. This study helps to fill in that gap by directly exploring the lived experiences of music majors dealing with performance-related injuries.

Having dealt with a severe performance-related injury, the researcher personally understands the importance of this study. There are many struggles the researcher faced that are extremely specific to that of an injured musician. Additionally, through her own experiences, the researcher discovered a lack of accessible resources for musicians dealing with performance-related injuries. Dealing with a performance-related injury has proved to be an extremely difficult and personal journey and by completing this study the researcher hopes to help make things better for music majors who deal with injuries in the future.

This study aims to raise awareness regarding what it is like to be a music major with an injury. The researcher also endeavors for it to serve as an educational tool, informing music programs about what resources would be helpful to students dealing with injuries.

The following questions guided this research:

1. What are the social and emotional aspects of being a music major who has experienced an injury?
2. What supports and accommodations are viewed by music majors who have experienced an injury to be beneficial to their success and well-being? What supports and accommodations do they wish they had?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

Musicians' health is a very large issue with several important subtopics to discuss. The majority of research about musicians' health fits into four categories: the scientific and medical aspects of musicians' health, resources created by and for musicians, the attitudes of musicians towards their performance-related health, and the lived experiences of musicians dealing with injuries or other health issues. While the research is more abundant in the first two categories, it is important to examine all four, as they all provide valuable information pertaining to this study.

Medical Aspects of Musicians' Health

There are certain conditions that musicians tend to be at much higher risk for developing. One major category of these conditions consists of nerve entrapment syndromes. Wilson et al. (2014) reported that instrumental musicians are at much higher risk for carpal tunnel syndrome, ulnar neuropathy at the elbow, and thoracic outlet syndrome. When instrumental musicians develop playing-related pain, it is extremely important they are tested for these conditions, using both physical examinations and electrodiagnostic testing, as this can help them receive accurate and effective treatment (Wilson, 862).

Another condition of which instrumental musicians are more at risk is a neurological issue called focal dystonia. Jabusch et al. (2004) found that musicians with focal dystonia tended

to be much more likely to experience an anxiety disorder in addition to their dystonia compared to the healthy musician. This study also examined musicians with chronic pain and the dystonic musicians reported even higher anxiety levels and perfectionistic tendencies than those with chronic pain. The control group had the lowest anxiety and perfectionism levels, suggesting that anxiety disorders and perfectionistic tendencies could have a correlation to their injury status (Jabusch et al., 1172).

Barton et al. (2008) discovered university music majors who have not yet entered the profession, experience a high prevalence of pain and injury, with various forms of treatment being used. For some, this pain was already debilitating, affecting their ability to participate in activities outside of music. This study suggests effective treatment plans and supports are essential for musicians. Bosi (2017) confirmed these findings, stating that upper-body injuries are extremely prevalent among instrumental musicians and can greatly impact one's career. Bosi (2017) noted that many musicians do not seek medical attention until the injury is quite advanced, as they feel they cannot risk the time off. Bosi (2017) also concluded that prevention is the essential strategy to treating such injuries, helping prevent musicians from having pain or taking time off in the first place. However, once a musician is already injured, it may be too late for preventative techniques, and more advanced treatment is required (Bosi, 18).

In a study regarding the treatment preferences of collegiate musicians, Guptill et al. (2005) concluded that instrumental music majors wanted their treatment to minimally interfere with their playing, they wanted to be actively involved in their treatment, and they wanted compassionate health professionals. Additionally, the participants wanted to work with professionals who had specialized knowledge about musicians and who knew a lot about the arms and back.

In terms of vocal musicians' health, McBroom (2017) reported the importance of vocalists having a good team of Speech Language Pathologists (SLP's) and singing voice specialists. McBroom (2017) expressed the importance of establishing baseline data with an SLP, so in the event a singer becomes injured they know what their normal vocal levels are (McBroom 34). Additionally, McBroom (2017) suggests vocal musicians see a singing voice specialist, and not just a standard SLP, as they will have more experience regarding singers' specific needs.

For both vocal and instrumental musicians, scholars (Guptill et al., 2005; McBroom, 2017) expressed the importance of having a specialized team of care, understanding the specific needs and risks that come with being a musician.

Resources Created by Musicians

To help combat the high injury levels reported, many musicians have created resources to help others in their field. Leo (2018) created "Playing Without Pain", a website that provides resources to musicians who deal with pain or want to prevent injury. Leo created this website as her honors thesis project in her undergraduate studies after dealing with performance-related injuries herself. The website discusses different performance-related injuries, injury prevention methods, and workshop offerings, along with other resources for musicians.

Horvath (2010) discusses how musicians may become injured, different common health problems for instrumental musicians, and ways to help prevent injury. Horvath writes from the perspective of an injured musician who has since become very knowledgeable in the area of

musicians' wellness. Horvath provides a broad guide to musicians' health and wellness, intended for wide use by musicians who are not experts in the field of medicine.

Additionally, some musicians created resources more specialized to their specific instrument. For example, Soldan and Mellersh (2004) created *Illustrated Fluteplaying*, a book that contains images and verbal descriptions of various pedagogical elements of flute playing. This book gives many written and visual tips on injury prevention, and also provides guidance on how to play the flute more effectively.

Pearson (2006) provides an in-depth guide to body mapping for flutists. The concept of full-body awareness serves as a method of both injury prevention and injury maintenance. Pearson breaks down each part of the body, discussing its specific alignment. She also includes exercises flute players can do to help promote good posture as they relate to each area of the body. Suggested exercises included stretches, mental awareness activities, and using external stimuli to improve one's bodily alignment.

Overall, many musicians recognize the need for resources regarding musicians' health and bodily awareness (Horvath, 7-8). These advocates are committed to helping advance the classical music industry in this area (Horvath, 193-195).

Musicians' Attitudes Towards Injury

Stanhope (2018) concluded that university woodwind majors wanted to learn more about injury prevention. Participants tended to agree on some common risk factors and preventative

measures for injured musicians, including a sudden increase in playing time (risk) and a change in posture (prevention).

In a study on the mental and physical health of musicians, Voltmer et al. (2012) noted that musicians, as compared to physicians, aircraft manufacturers, and the general population, reported above-average physical health compared to the general population, but their mental health statistics fell below average. Voltmer et al. (2012) hypothesized this physical health score could be due to a mental separation between musicians' general health and their playing-related pain, along with their tendency to ignore their playing-related pain. This attitude tends to cause musicians to delay seeking treatment for performance-related injuries, negatively impacting their recovery time and overall prognosis according to this study.

Lived Experiences

Weimer and Vaughan-Marra (2022) examined the lived experiences of music educators who experience chronic illnesses. While this is a different population than professional performing musicians dealing with performance-related injuries, both groups experience health issues that impact their participation in musical settings. Participants noted feeling more isolated as a result of their chronic illness, dealing with misconceptions from colleagues, dealing with unpredictable symptoms, and dealing with severe exhaustion as a result of the job (Weimer & Vaughan-Marra, 55-57). In order to successfully teach music, participants had to become creative in their teaching approaches, prioritize their health needs, and adapt as needed regarding the Covid-19 pandemic.

Guptill (2011) addressed the lived experiences of injured professional musicians. The participants were injured professional instrumental musicians, and Guptill conducted in-depth interviews with each of them. It was concluded that musicians' injuries impacted their sense of time, their relationship between their body and their instrument, their sense of space, and their social relationships (Guptill, 89-91). Guptill's research took a more socio-emotional perspective, as opposed to a medical or logistical perspective, on the experience of dealing with a performance-related injury as a professional musician.

Conclusion

The research surrounding musicians' health largely focuses on the scientific and medical elements of musicians' health, resources created by and for musicians, the attitudes of musicians towards their health, and the lived experiences of musicians dealing with injuries or other health issues. Existing research predominately focuses on the first two categories, with some studies addressing the third and fourth topics. This study looks to expand upon on the fourth category—musicians' lived experiences.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This mixed-methods study was conducted virtually using a survey through the Qualtrics™ system. The survey was based on previous research. This background knowledge was supplemented by the researcher's personal experiences dealing with a performance-related injury. The survey consisted of both quantitative and qualitative measuring tools.

The survey began with a primary screening question, asking if participants had ever dealt with a performance-related injury. Participants needed to check "yes" in order to access the rest of the survey. Participants who checked "no" were immediately directed to a message informing them they had concluded the survey. After the initial screening page, qualifying participants were directed to 37 study questions, which took approximately 15 minutes to complete. Questions asked about the kinds of injuries participants dealt with and musical demographic information (i.e., instrument studied, ensemble participation, year in school, credit load, etc.). Questions also focused on participants' experiences having a performance-related injury and resources participants felt would be helpful regarding musicians' health. No personal identifiers were collected in this study.

In order to recruit participants, the researcher emailed faculty representatives at 11 music programs within large Research 1 institutions, asking them to share the survey with their students. The researcher contacted representatives for the music programs at Penn State University, the University of Florida, the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), Johns Hopkins University, Rutgers University, the University of Michigan, Florida State University, New York University, the University of Maryland, the University of Colorado Boulder, and the University of Oregon. The researcher also employed "snowball sampling" to recruit more

participants through a student at UCLA. The UCLA student reached out to the researcher after the survey was sent to their music program, offering to share the study with interested peers. The researcher approved this offer.

In the recruitment emails sent to selected university music programs, the researcher shared the survey link as well as the survey due date, which was exactly two weeks after the survey was initially sent out. One week later, the researcher then sent a follow-up email to those same faculty representatives. This follow-up email reminded them of the survey due date, and again asked the faculty members to share the survey with their students. The survey link was also included in the follow-up email. These due dates were adjusted for the participants recruited via “snowball sampling,” ensuring they had an equal amount of time to participate in the study.

Survey questions consisted of both open-ended and Likert scale formats. The Likert scale questions were analyzed using the three measures of central tendency: mean, median, and mode. All three measures were analyzed for each Likert scale question, as well as for other questions that were quantitative in nature (i.e., the number of credits participants were enrolled in). Each open-ended question was analyzed using qualitative coding procedures. The researcher studied all answers for each open-ended question, looking for between four and six common themes per question. The researcher then analyzed how each theme was supported by specific participants’ answers, marking each quote that corresponded to a specific theme. The data were then further investigated, looking into the frequency each theme was discussed and how each topic was supported.

Both the quantitative and qualitative data were then analyzed together, looking for overarching themes to conclude the study. The researcher used the results developed in the

individual quantitative and qualitative analyses for this process. Those discoveries will be discussed in the final two chapters of this document.

Chapter 4

Results

The researcher received a total of 84 survey responses. Of the participants who responded, 41 indicated they had a performance-related injury and met the criteria to complete the rest of the survey. Of these participants, 17 primarily played a woodwind instrument, four primarily played a brass instrument, three were primarily percussionists, nine primarily played a string instrument, five were primarily vocalists, and three were primarily pianists.

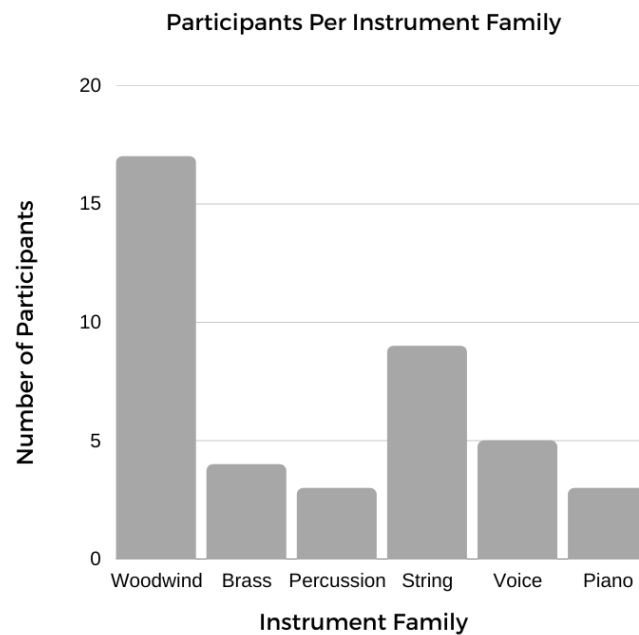


Figure 1. Participants Per Instrument Family

The participants ranged from first year undergraduate students to Ph.D. candidates, with the median participant age being a third-year undergraduate. There were eight participants in their first year of undergraduate studies, eight in their second year, eight in their third year, and seven participants in their fourth year of undergraduate studies. In terms of the graduate students,

there were three first year graduate students, five second year graduate students, and two doctoral students.

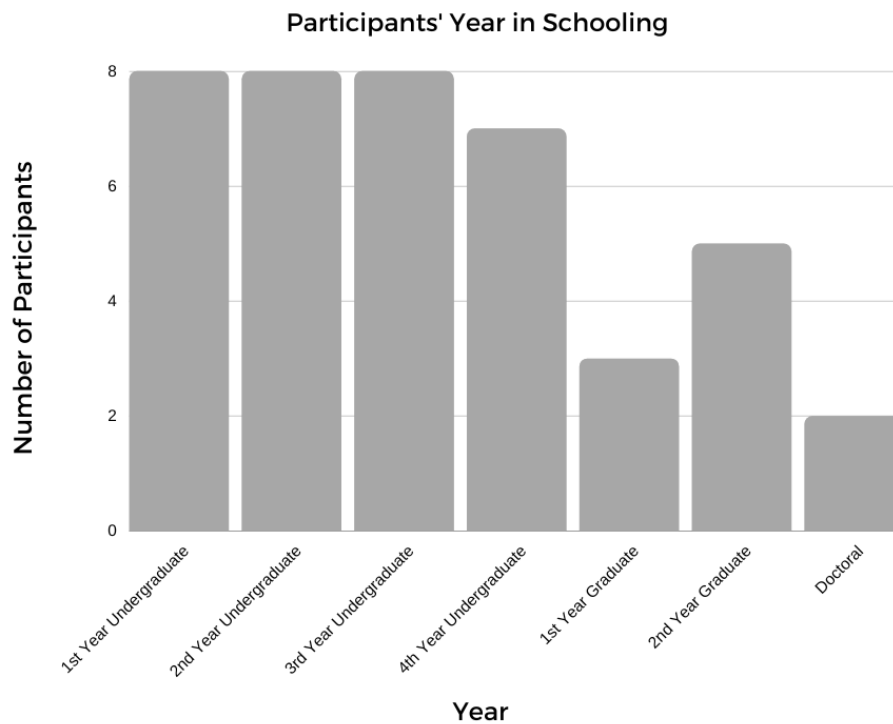


Figure 2. Participants' Year in Schooling

The majority of participants majored in either Music Performance (n=16) or Music Education (n=14). There were also four participants who majored in Music Composition. Additionally, there were five participants in other music-related majors, like Music Technology (n=2) or a double major in music and another field (n=3). There were also two participants who were not music majors, but participated in their university's music program in other capacities.

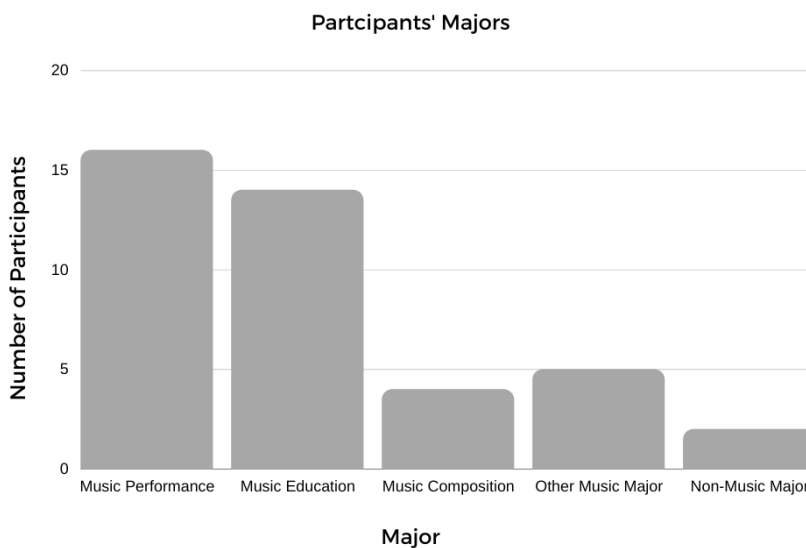


Figure 3. Participants' Majors

Of these participants, 29 responded that they already had a performance-related injury before coming to college, and seven responded that they did not previously have an injury. The mean was 1.23, with both a median and a mode answer of 1. Additionally, 12 participants responded that they currently have a performance-related injury, and 20 participants responded that they do not currently have a performance-related injury. This led to a mean of 1.63, and a median and mode of 2.

When asked about the types of injuries participants experienced, medical concerns were classified under orthopedic injuries, short-term injuries, vocal injuries, and general chronic pain. Some participants dealt with multiple injuries, so their responses were counted in more than one category. Of the 29 participants who described what kind of injury they experienced, n=17 had health issues that could be classified as orthopedic injuries. Some of the most common orthopedic injuries reported included tendonitis and Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. Ten participants dealt with issues that could be classified as short-term injuries. These injuries tended to be issues

of pain that happened only occasionally and resolved shortly after stopping playing. They also included individual accidents like a split lip or knocking a trombone mouthpiece into the participant's mouth. Additionally, three participants reported injuries that could be classified as vocal injuries. These injuries included Muscle Tension Dysphonia, pre-nodules, partial paralysis of the vocal folds, and pain in the laryngeal area. Finally, five participants reported dealing with issues that could be classified as more general chronic pain. These consisted of more widespread pain without a specific reported medical condition causing it.

When asked how many hours participants spend playing an instrument per day (including ensembles, lessons, etc.), answers ranged from 0-8 hours, with a mean practice time of 3.04 hours. The median practice time was 2.5 hours, with a mode of 2 hours. Additionally, when asked how much time participants spend speaking or singing per day, answers ranged from 0.5-12.0 hours. The mean amount of phonation was 5.02 hours, with a median vocalization time of 5 hours and a mode of 3 hours.

In terms of the number of credits in which students were enrolled, undergraduate students were currently enrolled in a mean of 17.1 credits, with a median of 17 credits and a mode of 18 credits. The highest amount of credits an undergraduate participant was enrolled in was 22, and the lowest was 14 credits. In terms of the graduate students, current course load ranged from 9-17 credits, with a mean of 12 credits. The median for graduate students was 11 credits, with a mode of 10 credits. Additionally, participants reported being currently enrolled in anywhere between 0-6 ensembles. The mean number of ensembles participants were currently enrolled in was 2.14, with a median of two ensembles and a mode of one ensemble. Participants tended to agree that the number of ensembles they were in affected their physical health/pain levels, with 19 participants making this conclusion. The other 12 participants stated they felt the number of

ensembles they participated in didn't have a medical impact. This led to a mean answer of $N=1.39$, with both a median and a mode of $N=1$.

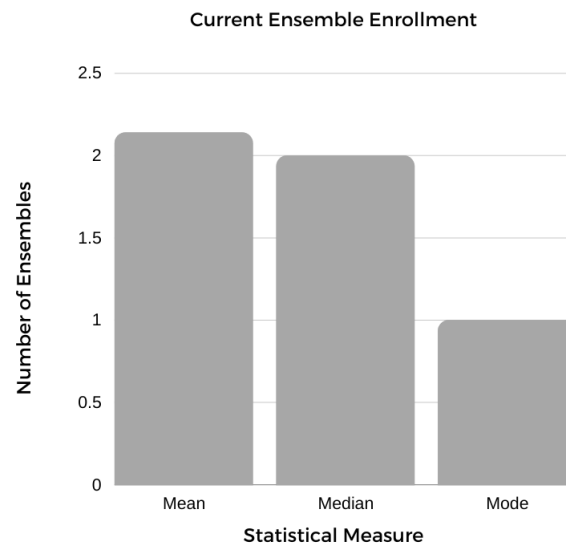


Figure 4. Current Ensemble Enrollment

The next set of questions followed a Likert scale format. For the first of these questions, participants were asked to rate on a scale of 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree whether they are in pain when they're not playing an instrument or singing because of a music-related injury. The mean response was $N=3.03$, with a median of 3 and a mode of 4. For the next question, participants used the same scale to rate if they have trouble sleeping at night due to being in pain. This question had a mean response of 2.38, with a median of 2 and a mode of 1. Next, participants used the same scale to rate if they felt like they could talk to their studio teacher about their health. Not a single participant chose the "neither agree nor disagree" answer for this question. The mean answer for this question was 4.04, with a median answer of 4 and a mode of 5. In the next question, participants were asked whether their music professors were

knowledgeable about performance health. This question had a mean of 3.75, with both a median and mode of 4. In the next question, participants were asked whether they felt their music professors were willing to accommodate their injury. No participants chose the “strongly disagree” option for this question. The mean answer for this question was 3.97, with a median answer of 4 and a mode of 5.

In the next question, participants used the same Likert scale to state whether they have thought about switching their major outside of music because of their physical health. The mean response for this question was 2.38, with both a median and a mode answer of 1. After that, participants were asked whether they felt their professors cared about their physical health. None of the participants chose the “strongly disagree” option for this question. The mean answer for this question was 4.17, with median and mode values of 5. The following Likert scale prompt was “my music program has plenty of injury prevention resources”. This prompt received a mean score of 2.34, a median score of 2, and a mode of 1. Next, participants were asked whether they felt their music program has resources to help them with their injury. The mean response for this question was 2.59, with a median of 3 and a mode of 1. In the following question, participants were asked if they feel knowledgeable about musicians’ health. This question received a mean answer of 3.03, a median response of 3, and a mode of 4. The next prompt participants received was “I have seen a medical professional because of pain playing my instrument or singing”. The mean answer for this question was 3.52, with a median answer of 4 and a mode of 5. Participants were then asked if they stretch before and after they play their instrument or sing. This question received a mean answer of 3.17, a median answer of 3, and a mode of 2.

Next, participants were asked if they could play or sing for a full ensemble rehearsal without having pain. The mean response for this prompt was 2.86. The median answer was 3, and the mode was 2. The next question prompted participants to evaluate whether they could name at least three music major peers who were injured. The mean response for this question was 3.28. The median response was 4, and the mode was 5. The following question then asked whether participants' injuries affected their ability to function normally. The mean answer to this question was 2.86, with a median answer of 3 and a mode of 1. After that, participants were prompted to evaluate whether their injury has impacted their ability to learn as a music major. This question received a mean response of 2.93, a median of 3, and a mode of 1. For the next question, participants evaluated whether they were able to get a quick and accurate diagnosis for their injury. The mean answer to this question was 2.79. The median answer was 3, and the mode was 4. Next, participants were asked whether their injury impacted their mental health. The mean response for this prompt was 3.69, with a median response of 4 and a mode of 5. Finally, the last of the Likert scale questions asked participants if their injury made them less successful in their classes. This question had both a mean and a median answer of 3.0, and a mode of 4.

Participants were then asked to share any additional resources they wish they had regarding musicians' health and/or injury prevention. Responses could mainly be classified under access to the Alexander Technique, access to specialized physical therapies, more education/awareness regarding wellness, and increased mental health support. The Alexander Technique is a method of using bodily awareness to release tension and reduce physical pain. Participants who mentioned the Alexander Technique discussed wanting a full-time Alexander Technique faculty member on their music program's faculty to support their students and wanting a greater focus on the Alexander Technique in their music program's curriculum.

Responses classified under access to specialized physical therapies mentioned wanting access to physical therapists, chiropractors, and/or massage therapists who specialized in working with musicians. Participants who wished for increased education/awareness surrounding musicians' wellness brought up several different points. They discussed wanting to learn proper stretching techniques, wanting their teachers to place more of an emphasis on posture, providing an initial educational seminar to new music students about health and wellness, and wanting a greater focus on general musicians' health/wellness education in their music curriculum. Two more participants also mentioned wanting more resources and supports for students' mental health. Finally, some other requests participants had were having their music program utilize an ensemble rotation so students don't need to play in an excessive number of ensembles at once, referring students to studio teachers who specialize in injury, and having their music program provide singer-specific recovery resources, as well as tools to help prevent instrumentalists pain (i.e., neck straps for clarinet and saxophone players).

Finally, the last question asked participants if they had any additional comments they'd like to share. Their comments involved wanting more resources, the extent of their injury, gender issues, having a lack of time for self-care, and the importance of prioritizing musicians' health. In this question, participants discussed wanting more mental health resources, as well as easy access to physical therapists similar to that of an athlete. One participant described being in their university's marching band, which they stated had a higher rate of injury than other ensembles. Another participant discussed how demanding music majors' schedules are, stating that it caused a few of their classmates to have "seizures onset, lots of physical pain, and significant health issues since starting college, not to mention the mental health issues." The same participant discussed how the lack of time for self-care took a major toll on their body personally, in

addition to the significant health issues some of their peers experienced. Finally, another participant discussed how important it is to increase awareness of musicians' health. They discussed wanting to "break the stigma that people should play through their pain instead of taking care of their bodies." They stated that "there's no good reason to hurt yourself for your career."

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Overall, participants discussed not having enough resources to support their health as musicians. The majority of participants felt their professors and studio teachers cared about and supported their medical needs. One theory that emerged as to why there was this lack of resources (i.e., physical therapists, Alexander Technique teachers, etc.) is due to financial reasons. Music programs are often not the most highly funded programs at their respective institutions and administrators likely feel they do not have more funds to allocate towards wellness resources. These “financial pressures,” as discussed by Pitts (2013) create detrimental effects towards students’ collegiate music education but their students’ wellness was viewed as an imperative issue. Stanhope (2018) reported a significant number of music majors predict that they may develop a performance-related injury in the next six months if not supported. If students cannot make music in a healthy way they are not being set up for a successful and long-term career. Students’ injuries tended to greatly impact their mental health but most participants did not consider switching their major outside of music because of it. Participants cared about the field and wanted to keep going despite their physical obstacles. Interestingly enough, though, when asked if they stretch before and after playing their instrument/singing, many participants did not check the “somewhat agree” or “strongly agree” options. The mean answer for this question was 3.17, which inferred a very mixed spectrum of answers. Stretching is something students could do by themselves and for free to help with their injury or with injury prevention, yet about half the participants do not do it. This could be due to a lack of education regarding helpful stretches, a lack of a cultural emphasis on wellness in their music program, feeling like

they are too overwhelmed and do not have the time to stretch, or simply a lack of personal initiative regarding stretching.

Overall, a stronger emphasis on musicians' health is needed throughout participants' music programs. Students need access to specialized physical therapies, health/wellness education, and mental health resources. In order to help all of these issues progress, there should also be a greater cultural emphasis on health and wellness in university music programs.

For future research, the researcher suggests conducting more in-depth interviews with participants about their experiences dealing with performance-related injuries. While the survey used in this study provided a lot of helpful information, a lot more detail could be gauged from live interviews. Additionally, the researcher also suggests investigating what resources different university music programs offer, why they've chosen to provide those resources, and what barriers are currently in place preventing increased wellness resources at their music program. This research could provide valuable information to build off of this study and further investigate music students' wellness needs.

If the researcher was to do this study again, more clarification on questions meant specifically for vocalists versus instrumentalists would have been provided. For example, the question where participants were asked how many hours a day they spend speaking or singing is only relevant to the vocalists in this study, but because the researcher did not specify, all participants answered that question. This made the singers' actual daily phonation time unclear. The same could be said about the instrumental version of that question. Since it did not specify that only instrumentalists should fill out that question, all participants shared how much time they spent playing an instrument per day. This number would obviously vary significantly

between the instrumentalist and vocalist participants in the study, and the vocalists' could have skewed the results.

Additionally, there were several questions in this study the researcher would have changed from a short response question to a multiple choice question or a drop-down menu. There were certain questions in the study where participants' answers were not clear (i.e., when asked how many ensembles they were in some participants provided two different answers); in these situations a different question format would have provided more clarity.

Overall, this study provided a great deal of important information for the profession. Musicians' health is an essential topic, and it is extremely important students have sufficient resources in this area. A solid focus on wellness needs sets musicians up for fruitful, long-term, careers.

Appendix A
Qualtrics™ Survey

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 Instrument

Q2 Year (ex: 2nd year undergraduate or 1st year graduate student)

Q3 Major

Q6 Have you ever had a performance-related injury?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Have you ever had a performance-related injury? = No

Q7 Did you have a performance related injury before coming to college?

Q8 Do you have a performance-related injury now?

Q9 If you feel comfortable sharing, what injury or injuries have you dealt with?

Q11 On average, how many hours a day do you spend playing an instrument? (Including classes, ensembles, lessons, etc.)

Q12 On average, how many hours a day do you spend speaking or singing? (Including classes, ensembles, lessons, casual conversations, etc.)

Q13 How many credits are you taking?

Q14 How many ensembles are you currently in?

Q15 Do you feel the number of ensembles you are in impacts your physical health/pain levels?

Q18 I am in pain when I'm not playing my instrument (or singing) because of a music-related injury

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q19 I have trouble sleeping at night because I'm in pain

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q20 I feel like I can talk to my studio teacher about my health

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q21 My music professors are knowledgeable about performance health

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q22 My music professors are willing to accommodate my injury

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q23 I have thought about switching my major outside of music because of my physical health

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q24 I believe my professors care about my physical health

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q25 My music program has plenty of injury prevention resources

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q26 My music program has resources to help me with my injury

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q27 I feel knowledgeable about musicians' health

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q28 I have seen a medical professional because of pain playing my instrument or singing

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q29 I stretch before and after I play my instrument or sing

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q30 I can play/sing for a full ensemble rehearsal without having pain

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q31 I can name at least three music major peers who are injured

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q32 My injury affects my ability to function normally

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q33 My injury has impacted my ability to learn as a music major

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q34 I was able to get a quick and accurate diagnosis for my injury

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q35 My injury has impacted my mental health

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q36 My injury has made me less successful in my classes

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

Q37 Please list any additional resources you wish you had regarding musicians' health & injury prevention:

Q38 Any additional comments:

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ACADEMIC VITA

HEATHER NEVINS

EDUCATION

Penn State University, Bachelor of Music Education
Schreyer Honors College
Dean's List: 7 semesters

HONORS AND AWARDS

Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, 2022
Golden Key Honor Society, 2022
Undergraduate Jury Recognition, Fall 2020
One of the top two jury performances among 50+ undergraduate woodwind majors
National Merit Finalist, 2019

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Co-founder/President, Penn State Musicians' Wellness Association, 2021-2022

- Created a new organization focused on health and wellness for musicians, coordinated events, promoted engagement and created social media graphics.
- Organized a three-day residency with an expert in musicians' health.

President/Treasurer, Penn State Flute Club, 2020-2022

- Organized and led the planning of events, promoted engagement and coordinated a full-day Flute Day festival.
- Served on the Executive Board responsible for community building among members due to physical separation from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Family Relations Chair, Encore Benefitting THON, 2021-2022

- Helped plan events, including spearheading a recital fundraiser featuring 10 professors in Penn State's School of Music.
- Facilitated engagement between Encore members and our paired THON family affected by childhood cancer.

Treasurer/Ambassador, Penn State Hillel, 2019-2021

- Engaged the Jewish student community as Ambassador (2019-2020) and planned social events.
- Managed finances, supported the Jewish community, ran a micro-grant program, and served on the Student Executive Board as Treasurer in 2021.

EMPLOYMENT

ID Card Team Member, Penn State University, May 2022-Present

- Vet incoming first-year students and distributed ID Cards.
- Educate families about Penn State's student payment system (LionCash).
- Call 400 LionCash vendors across Pennsylvania.
- Digitize LionCash vendor application files.

Peer Research Consultant, Penn State University Libraries, August 2022-Present

- Help undergraduates to find academic materials, refine their online search results, and develop research papers.

Social Media Marketing Intern, Olami, Summer 2022

- Reviewed and collected data for Jewish education initiatives.

Mentor, Learning Edge Academic Program, Penn State University, Summer 2022

- Mentored 24 incoming first-year Penn State students.
- Organized a dozen events.
- Advised students about how to succeed academically and how to use Penn State services and community resources.

Cashier/Customer Service Advocate, Target, Summers 2019-2021

Assistant Music Teacher, First Presbyterian Church's Aftercare Program, 2019

- Instructed approximately 30 preschool and elementary school students to perform vocal and instrumental songs and assisted with student performances.

Counselor, Vero Beach High School Drama Camp, Summers 2017-2018

- Assisted teaching 40 elementary and middle school students to perform musicals.
- Taught music, dancing, and acting.