UNDERGRADUATES’ FAMILIARITY WITH AND PREFERENCE FOR ARABIC MUSIC IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER WORLD MUSIC

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ABSTRACT

This study examined undergraduate, non-music majors’ familiarity with and preference for Arabic music as compared to other world music. Several factors were examined to assess their effect on music preference including familiarity, musical characteristics, and student characteristics. Study participants included 203 undergraduate, non-music majors enrolled in six sections of music appreciation classes. Participants were divided into Caucasian and non-Caucasian groups ranging from 18 to 42 years of age. Music excerpts from Africa (Congo), Latin America (Mexico), Asia (Japan), and the Middle East (Kuwait) were used as examples of different world music. Arabic music was introduced as a new factor in this study that had not been explored in previous research. Knowing about students’ familiarity and preference for Arabic music may help in understanding the ramifications of its inclusion in music programs, and the proper method of introducing it to the students in the classroom. Participants listened to 12 musical excerpts and completed the WMFPT questionnaire. Results indicated that participants were not familiar with the world music excerpts, but did like the excerpts to a moderate degree. Significant positive relationships were found between preference and familiarity, within preference ratings, and within familiarity ratings. The most influential musical characteristics in liking world music were rhythm, tempo, and timbre, with rhythm being the most influential. Participants’ background seems to have no significant relationship with either familiarity or preference. Results revealed that playing a musical instrument, musical training, and previous exposure to music of other cultures significantly affected preference and familiarity ratings.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

One of the important purposes of music education, in general, is to expand students' knowledge and awareness of the various musical styles and to extend their music preferences (Byrnes, 1997; Droe, 2006). Students graduating from music programs “should have a more expanded basis for choosing music and perhaps an increased preference for different styles of music than before they started” (Droe, 2006, p. 23).

Learning about different world cultures and including world music in music education programs has become increasingly important in the United States in recent decades (Fung, 1994a; Fung, 1996; Klinger, 1996). Music is one aspect of world cultures that has received considerable attention. One of the National Standards for Music Education developed by MENC: The National Association for Music Education specifically calls for understanding music in relation to history and culture (MENC, 1994). One common place where students get exposed to world music is the music classroom. Schools are one of the places that most reflect the multicultural and multi-musical society in America (Kelly & Weelden, 2004). Universities are offering programs in ethnomusicology and world music classes for college students. This interest in world music is expected to increase due to the steady increase in the diversity of the population of the United States (Quesada, 2002).

Many researchers attest to the importance of exposing students to world music. Darling (2004) found that learning music of other cultures helps broaden students’ perspectives of music and musical concepts. Multicultural musical experiences help open students’ minds toward other cultures and develop their tolerance and understanding of
people from other parts of the world (Blair & Kondo, 2008; Fung, 1994b). Furthermore, students involved in multicultural experiences “often find commonalities with their own music and within themselves as musicians” (Blair & Kondo, 2008, p. 50). Shehan (1988) states that experiencing world music “can make a significant contribution to students’ emerging musical understanding, taste, and tolerance for other peoples of the world” (p. 23). In addition, musical diversity in a music program may expand students’ multicultural understanding and refine their aural skills. Campbell (2000) reinforced the importance of teaching music of other cultures in her article *Embracing the Wide World of Musical Cultures*:

> Cultural reasons for the inclusion of music also entice us; the very identity of a people is wrapped into their melodies, rhythms, dance movements and instruments. Our understanding of people of cultures different from our own is aided by knowing how they express themselves through performance and discovering why they value particular timbres, tunings, forms and functions. While musical understanding deepens, our perspective on cultural others also is shaped and reshaped. And as it is true for us, it also is true for our children. (p. 52)

Exploring multicultural music enables music teachers, as well, to widen their own interest in multicultural music, to expand their knowledge about the various functions of the music, and to further develop their own musical experiences (Olsen, 2000). Music teachers need to prepare themselves to be able to meet the needs of the culturally diverse students in their music classrooms.

> Each musical style of each culture has its own unique characteristics that could provide a distinctive educational value (Huang, 1997). Volk (1995) indicated that
teaching the music of Arabic cultures is useful in ear training due to its performance methodology; this may be because Arabic music requires performers to improvise their own ornamentation to any melody performed based on the scales and tonal center of the piece. Darling (2004) explains the practice of performing Arabic music and the importance of improvisation and embellishment to the music:

Unlike Western music, where an embellishment is used to highlight a note or series of notes, embellishment in Arabic music is woven organically into the music. A melody is almost never played in its simple form. Embellishment varies with the individual, the maqam, and the type of instrument. A player never repeats any melodic phrase the same way twice, using embellishment as an improvisatory element in the music. (p. 80)

This improvisation requires a careful judgment by the performer through attentive listening to the music. Furthermore, Arabic music is traditionally taught aurally and by rote, which helps students develop their listening abilities and sensitivity to pitch (Darling, 2004).

I am a music teacher who recently came from an Arabic culture, specifically Kuwait, to the United States to pursue my masters and doctoral degrees in music education. During my time here, I have noticed an interest among my colleagues, both music and non-music majors, in learning about Arabic music – and I found that the majority are unfamiliar with the music. In a recent article, Campbell and Beegle (2003) claim that the interest in learning about Arabic cultures, including their music, has increased significantly in the United States since September 11, 2001. The various observations I have made of K-12 and college music classrooms, combined with
discussions with students about world music, have caused me to think about how and when American college students are exposed to other world music and to what extent Arabic music is present in their music education experiences. Research concerning Arabic music in the classroom is very minimal: little has been written about the music’s pedagogical approach, teaching methodologies, and integration methods compared to other world music. Given this, it is essential for Arabic music to be included in research concerning world music.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine undergraduate, non-music majors’ familiarity with and preference for Arabic music as compared to other world music. World music excerpts were drawn from Africa (Congo), Latin America (Mexico), Asia (Japan), and the Middle East (Kuwait).

**Research Questions**

The specific research questions for this study were:

1. How familiar are students with various world musics, and which do they prefer?
2. To what extent do specific characteristics of music relate to students’ preferences for world music?
3. To what extent do students’ characteristics contribute to their preferences for world music?
4. What is the relationship between the students’ familiarity with and preference for Arabic music and their familiarity with and preference for other world music?
Definitions

• Preference: one’s associating of emotions, felt or expressed, with certain music or musical styles expressed by “liking” or “disliking” the music in question.
• Musical experience: previous musical training through performing or educational background.
• World music: multi-ethnic music or music from diverse world cultures.

Limitations

• For the purpose of this study, musical characteristics will include rhythm, tempo, melodic clarity, scale, timbre, and style.
• For the purpose of this study, Middle Eastern music refers to Arabic music specifically from Kuwait.

Significance of the Study

Music education should include exposure to many styles of music, including music from other cultures. Exposing students to world music, including Arabic music, can contribute to their knowledge and experience with various musical styles and contribute to their involvement in multicultural experiences (Shehan, 1988). Furthermore, learning about world music helps the students broaden their musical understandings, formulate their tastes, and develop their sensitivities to a larger spectrum of music and sounds. Quesada (2002) best expressed this notion when she stated that “One never learns as much about one’s own music as when one studies another’s” (p.139). The present study addresses the lack of the inclusion of Arabic music as world music in the research.
literature. Knowing about students’ familiarity and preference for Arabic music will help in understanding the ramifications of its inclusion in music programs and the proper method of introducing it to the students in the classroom.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century in the United States, industrial growth derived from inventions such as electricity, steel-making processes, and mass production assembly lines provided jobs for many people and rapidly expanded urban areas (Volk, 2004). A mass of immigrants came to America in pursuit of these opportunities and to have a better life. The American society, and the schools in particular, felt the impact of the resulting changes in the population. Educators found themselves facing a multicultural classroom for the first time. The school system became segregated and very little discussion about accommodating education to the new immigrant children occurred; actually, the opposite was more often true.

At this time, organizations concerned with professionalism in education started to form in an effort to advance their respective professions. One of the early organizations founded at that time was The National Teachers Association, which later became the National Education Association (NEA) in 1879. Many regional accrediting agencies concerned with ensuring quality standards in teacher education were soon formed. The Music Teachers National Association (MTNA), founded in 1876, was one of the early organizations concerned with professionalism in music education and later became one of the first to acquaint music educators with music from other cultures.

In the first quarter of the twentieth century, the dominant notion in the United States with regards to immigrants and their inclusion in the society continued to emulate the conceptions of the last decade during which the philosophy that prevailed was Social Darwinism (Abeles, Hoffer, & Klotman, 1995; Volk, 2004). Volk (2004) indicated that
this philosophy was “often applied . . . as a way to ‘keep America for the Americans,’ and to keep the ‘American stock’ pure, preferably by the exclusion of immigrants who were considered to be nonassimilable [sic]” (p.33). However, several views started to emerge during this period that promoted cultural pluralism and equality among people, and several attempts of merging immigrants and their cultures in the community and schools started to occur.

After World War I, interest in world peace, cooperation, and international friendships emerged (Abeles, Hoffer, & Klotman, 1995; Volk, 2004). Schools started to incorporate lessons on international friendships and educators began to teach world understanding (Volk, 2004). During the early years of the twentieth century, these lessons focused on the folklore and music of European countries. Through the work of organizations such as MTNA, and individual efforts of people interested in world music such as L. W. Mason’s presentations, educators began to be aware of other music in the world. By attending meetings and conferences held by professional organizations during this period, music educators received a broad exposure to music from various cultures through lectures, presentations, and concerts.

The middle of the twentieth century saw great change in education (Volk, 2004). Volk explained the reasons behind this change:

Like general education, music education was abruptly awakened from the complacency of the early 1950s by social reforms resulting from desegregation … and the civil rights movement. General education answered these challenges with new methods and content in the curriculum. Music education dealt with these
societal pressures by an ever widening acceptance of the musics of all cultures in the school music repertoire. (p. 66)

The 1967 Tanglewood Symposium meeting was perhaps the first to call for a broader vision of multicultural and multi-musical experiences, thereby providing music education with an opportunity to redefine its role in American society (Kelly & Weelden, 2004). The perception that the music of the United States includes music from virtually every world culture became officially recognized (Mark & Gary, 1992). Since its initiation in 1907, MENC has been one of the primary organizations concerned with teaching music that opened the door for multicultural music education for many teachers (Volk, 2004). Throughout the middle of the twentieth century, the attention to the rich variety of world music expanded rapidly, and the later part of the twentieth century witnessed the most expansion of the attention to world music. The development of the increased interest in world music in music education is explained by Kelly & Weelden (2004):

The National Standards for Arts Education further emphasized this broader view of a multicultural, multi-musical education [and]…more recently, Vision 2020: The Housewright Symposium on the Future of Music Education built on the National Standards by reemphasizing the need for the music of all cultures to be included in the school curriculum. (p.36)

From the early 1970s, multiculturalism became, and continues to be, a prevalent movement in American education (Fung, 1996; Volk, 1991). Music teachers began experimenting with music from various cultures in the classroom, and the need for classroom instructional materials for teaching these styles of music became critical (Quesada & Volk, 1997). Even though research on world music was available, “there had
been very few efforts that would translate and apply that information to classroom music teaching” (p. 44). Over the past 20 years, research concerning multicultural music in the music classroom has increased significantly; however, only a limited number of studies have dealt with responses to world music in terms of student preferences. Fung (1994) found that “although many researchers have investigated music preference responses to aural musical stimuli [in general], very little is known concerning preference responses for non-Western musics” (p. 46).

Preference

In the pursuit of learning about students’ familiarity with and preference for world music, and specifically Arabic music, it is important to understand the factors that relate and contribute to musical preference in general. Research studies indicate that musical preference is affected by several factors. Factors such as familiarity, musical characteristics, and students’ characteristics have a significant effect on students’ preference for music (Brittin, 1996; Droe, 2006; Fung, 1996; LeBlanc et al., 2000; LeBlanc et al., 2002; Montgomery, 1996; Walker, 2006). Music educators can use these factors to predict the extent to which students’ preferences for specific music could be affected. World music, including Arabic music, includes many musical characteristics that are different than Western music, such as scales, rhythmic construction, microtonality, notation, and performance practice (Darling, 2004; Elsner, 1997). Thus, introducing world music to the students requires music teachers to familiarize themselves with that music and its functions so that they can provide their students with authentic and meaningful learning experiences.
Preference is one of the factors that affect students’ level of engagement in a music classroom, including their “enjoyment of performance, the desire to practice and improve, on-task behavior, and musical growth” (Droe, 2006, p. 24). For instance, Anthony (1974) found that one of the primary reasons students stayed in band was their positive preference for the chosen literature. Similarly, students’ abilities to listen to and appreciate other world music may be affected by their familiarity with and preference for various styles (Fung, 1996; Shah, 2000).

Factors Influencing Preference

Several factors influence students’ music preferences. These factors include students’ familiarity with the music, musical characteristics, students’ characteristics, students’ demographic factors, and students’ musical experience and training.

Familiarity. Familiarity is a critical factor that can influence preference. Price (1986) defined familiarity as the "assumption of having heard it somewhere before" (p. 153). Any music that shares some common characteristics with previously heard music will most likely be considered familiar and preferred (Droe, 2006).

Musical characteristics. What makes a student prefer some styles of music over others? During their school years, students are exposed to certain musical tonalities, harmonies, rhythms, tempos, dynamics, and timbres through the music they learn. Any of these musical characteristics are what students may use as factors to establish their preferences for new music styles (Brittin, 1996; Fung, 1996; LeBlanc et al., 2000; LeBlanc et al., 2002; Montgomery, 1996; Walker, 2006). For example, Walker (2006) examined musical characteristics and their contribution to students’ liking of a particular style of music. The subjects, African-American students in grades 5-12, listened to
several Western and non-Western excerpts of instrumental and vocal music. The researcher found several musical characteristics to be significant predictors for determining preference of musical style, with rhythm being the predominant characteristic. Burnsed (1998) found that expressive dynamics have a positive effect on the folk song preferences of elementary students. Fung (1996) investigated the relationship between musical characteristics and musicians’ and nonmusicians’ preferences for world music. He found that musical characteristics played a significant role in world music preference ratings. Fung indicated that “the entire sample (N = 449) preferred excerpts that were characterized as relatively fast, having many different pitches, tonal-centered, consonant, bright timbre, smooth, loud, complex or moderately complex in texture, and moderate in the richness of embellishment” (p. 71). LeBlanc et al. (2000), moreover, found tempo to have a significant influence on students’ music listening preferences. Similarly, Montgomery (1996) found a significant relationship between tempo and preference in her study.

The effect of tempo and different performing mediums on children's music preferences were investigated in a study by LeBlanc and Cote (1983). Elementary and middle school students listened to vocal and instrumental jazz examples at three different tempi: slow, moderate, and fast. The results indicated that students preferred faster tempi and that the instrumental medium was always preferred over the vocal medium. A subsequent study by LeBlanc, Jin, Stamou, and McCary (1999) found a significant positive correlation between increases in tempo and increases in fifth- and sixth-grade students’ preferences.
Student characteristics. Specific student characteristics appear to significantly influence music preference; these characteristics include gender, age, country of origin, and background (LeBlanc, Sims, Siivola, & Obert, 1996; LeBlanc et al., 1999; LeBlanc et al., 2000; LeBlanc et al., 2002). LeBlanc, Jin, Stamou, and McCrary (1999) examined the musical preferences of students from Greece, South Korea, and the United States. Participants were both male and female, and ranged in age from 8 to 18 years old. Music selections consisted of art music, traditional jazz, and rock music. The results revealed that an increase in age of participants from Greece and Korea was associated with a decrease of preferences for music, while an increase in age of participants from the United States was associated with an increase of preferences for music. This finding suggests that students’ cultures and countries of origin are possible factors affecting their musical preferences. The researchers also identified an interaction between gender and overall preference for music. Although female participants preferred music more than males in Greece, there was no meaningful relationship between gender and preference in Korea and the United States. The results suggest that "research findings based upon one culture cannot safely be assumed to apply to other cultures" (p. 76).

The relationships among musical styles, familiarity, age, gender, ethnicity, and musical training were the focus of a study by Shah (2000). The study included Malay, Chinese, Indian, Western art, and Western popular music. Students listened to the musical excerpts and completed a survey assessing their music preferences and familiarity with the music. Results indicated that “ethnicity appears to be the most important variable affecting preference decisions” (p. 144). In addition, age was a major
factor affecting students’ music preferences; older students tended to respond more favorably to all the musical styles than did the younger students.

Persinger (2001) investigated the relationship between music preferences of adults, ages 18 to 65, and a variety of variables including age, ethnicity, gender, and musical training. Participants answered survey questions after listening to a selection of contemporary music excerpts representing 18 musical categories. The results revealed that there was a significant relationship between the gender of an individual and preference for six of the music style categories; however, there was a lack of such significant relationships for the other thirteen music style categories. The researcher suggested that other factors such as ethnicity, age, and musical training may have induced a stronger influence than gender on participants’ preferences for certain musical styles. Almost all findings of this study concerning the relationship between preference and the other variables indicated significant relationships in some musical categories, and no significant relationships in others.

Statistically significant differences between older students and younger students in terms of overall music listening preference scores were also established in a study by LeBlanc and Cote (1983). The authors, however, found that fifth-grade students gave significantly higher preference ratings than sixth-grade students:

One factor that might explain this different outlook is the fact that all fifth-grade students in the study were housed in elementary schools where they were the oldest students. The sixth-grade students were all housed in middle schools where they were the youngest students. (p. 63)
The authors’ argument suggests that the relationship between older students in an education level with younger students in a higher education level is the same as the relationship between older and younger students of the same education level. LeBlanc, Sims, Siivola, and Obert (1996) studied music style preferences for a wide spectrum of age groups, spanning from fifth-grade through college students and older adults. Music selections included instrumental art music, vocal rock music, and traditional jazz music. The results indicated that "there was a general tendency for preference to assume a gentle U-shaped curve corresponding to grade level, with higher preferences in the lowest grades and again at college level . . . . the low point for preference was in the middle school or junior high years, grades 6, 7, and 8" (pp. 55-56).

Kamenetsky, Hill, and Trehub (1997) extended the study of gender as a factor influencing preference to include emotional differences. The study participants were a mix of males and females ranging from 18 to 68 years old. The music selections consisted of music by Bach, Chopin, and Liszt. The researchers indicated the existence of gender differences in emotional interpretations of music: "women found the music to be more emotionally expressive and more likable than men did" (p. 157). Gender differences in emotional interpretation of music were found to be not limited to particular musical pieces. This finding was interpreted by the researchers to be due to women's higher ability to decode expressive cues in music.

Students’ musical training and level of musical experience is another factor related to music preference. Fung (1996) examined music preferences of both music majors and non-music majors. Music selections consisted of instrumental music excerpts from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The researcher found a significant difference
between musicians’ and non-musicians’ preferences for world music, with musicians showing higher preference ratings than non-musicians. Furthermore, two studies (Darrow, Haack, & Kuribayashi, 1987; Shehan, 1985) indicated that musical experience is another strong factor that affects preference. In these studies, students with more musical experience had a wider spectrum of liking or disliking the music than students with less or no musical experience. Rawlings and Ciancarelli (1997) found that "training in music was associated with breadth of musical preference and, specifically, a liking for classical and religious music types" (p. 131).

Jin (1999) examined the relationship between listeners’ music experience and their music listening preference for music style. Listeners’ music experience was categorized as either formal or informal. Formal music experiences included the number of years a student was involved in school music programs, out-of-school music programs, and private music lessons. Informal music experiences consisted of students’ encounters with music through regular listening, recording, or attending concerts. The study participants were male and female students ranging in grade from 6th to 12th. Students completed a questionnaire after they listened to musical excerpts representing six different musical styles, including Western classical vocal music, jazz instrumental music, jazz vocal music, rap music, and rock music. The results indicated a significant positive relationship between formal music experience and music listening preference for classical instrumental music, classical vocal music, jazz instrumental music, and jazz vocal music. The researcher, however, found no significant relationship between formal music experience and rock music style preference, and a significant negative relationship with rap music style preference. The author suggested that, since the formal music
experience in this study was regarded to encompass only classical or jazz music experiences, it would be appropriate to conclude that participants who have more years of classical or jazz music experience prefer these styles, while they do not prefer rap music. The results also implied that students’ specific type of music experiences are associated with their music style preferences; participants in the instrumental group preferred instrumental music while participants in the choir group preferred classical vocal music. Informal music experience was also found to be significantly related to student’s music style preferences.

Relationship Between Familiarity and Preference in Music

Several researchers have examined the relationship between familiarity and preference. These studies provide evidence of familiarity affecting preference. For example, Getz (1966) examined the effect of familiarity produced by repetition on music preferences. In this study, students listened repeatedly to unfamiliar classical music excerpts written by composers familiar to them. The results revealed that familiarity generated by repeated listening to musical selections had a positive correlation with students’ music preference for these pieces. A similar finding was evident in a study by Bradley (1971) in which the students listened to contemporary art music for 14 weeks. Based on a pretest-posttest design, the researcher found an increase in preference for three of the contemporary music categories, indicating a positive relationship between familiarity through repetition and preference.

In a recent study by Ritossa and Rickard (2004), a relationship between familiarity and preference was also established. The researchers found that emotions associated with music, as indicators for preference, could be inferred from ratings of
familiarity. Emotions associated with music were defined as boring, unstimulating, disconcerting, exciting, festive, unsettling, relaxing, and peaceful. The results revealed that familiarity contributed significantly to the prediction of five of the eight emotions expressed in the songs selected:

Familiarity was positively correlated with the majority of the pleasant emotions, and negatively correlated with the unpleasant emotions of unsettling and disconcerting. This is not surprising given that people who find a song pleasant are more likely to listen to it repeatedly and become familiar with it. (pp. 14-15)

Other studies also examined the effect of familiarity on music preference (Hamlen & Shuell, 2006; Siebenaler, 1999). The researchers concluded that students' familiarity with certain music increases their preference for that music.

Evidence of familiarity not being a strong factor in determining preference does exist as well. For example, Gregory (1994) conducted a study examining listening preferences for multiple music styles including jazz and classical music by different composers. Participants were sixth-grade students, high school juniors and seniors, and college juniors and seniors. The results indicated that music rated the most familiar, however, did not receive the highest preference rating. The researcher found that students based their preference for music on their musical training and instrument rather than on their familiarity with it:

Instrumentalists had higher ratings for the band excerpts, and the keyboard/choral group had higher ratings for the keyboard and choral excerpts. Perhaps experience with a performance medium during training positively affects the listening
preference of unfamiliar music performed by that medium, particularly when compared with treatments of other media by the same composer. (pp. 340-341) This finding contradicts other findings concerning the relationship between familiarity and preference and will be one of the aspects to be examined in the current study.

A number of researchers have examined students’ preferences and familiarities with regard to music of other cultures from certain regions, such as Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Fung (1994a) studied the relationship between musical characteristics and college students’ preferences for world music. The characteristics examined were rhythm regularity, similarity to Western music, tonal centeredness, consonance, tempo, number of different pitches, melodic clarity, pitch range, and loudness level. The participants listened to selected excerpts of world music in random order and were asked to rate how much they liked or disliked and how familiar they were with each selection. Fung found that music with similar characteristics to Western music and music from cultures geographically closer to the United States had higher familiarity and preference ratings.

In another study, Fung (1994b) explored the relationship between world music preferences and multicultural attitudes of undergraduate, non-music majors. Musical excerpts were selected from Africa, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, the Middle East, and Thailand. After listening to the excerpts in a random order, participants responded on a 7-point scale for music preference (1 = strongly dislike, 7 = strongly like). Fung found that social and cultural attitudes affect world music preference and that instrumental musical styles were preferred over vocal musical styles. In a subsequent study, Fung (1996) investigated the relationship between musical characteristics, familiarity, and preferences of musicians and non-musicians for world music. World
music excerpts were selected from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. All selections were instrumental “to avoid intervening factors such as a language barrier or gender of singer(s)” (p. 64). The musical characteristics included tempo, pitch, redundancy, tonal centeredness, consonance, brightness and timbre, percussiveness, loudness, textural complexity, and richness in embellishments. Fung asked participants to rate each excerpt based on a 7-point scale for music preference ((1 = strongly dislike, 7 = strongly like) and a 3-point scale for familiarity with musical styles (1 = unfamiliar, 2 = somewhat familiar, 3 = familiar). Fung found that musical characteristics played a significant role in musical preferences and that a positive relationship existed between familiarity and preference. The results also suggested that differences in tempo, pitch, consonance, timbre, style, and loudness of the different musical excerpts were more significant factors in non-musicians’ world music preference ratings than for musicians.

**Teaching World Music and Obstacles in Integration**

Selecting the type of music that constitutes the body of the curriculum to be taught is one of the critical decisions music teachers must make (Droe, 2006). Reynolds (2000) believes that "music educators can make no more important decision than the selection of the material with which we teach our students" (p. 33). When incorporating multicultural music as part of the curriculum, selecting that music becomes a critical decision, as well. In considering the role of multicultural music in school music curricula, a question arises: which music of what culture? Quesada (2002) suggests that the teacher’s level of confidence and knowledge of teaching a specific style of music are essential factors that affect multicultural music selection and integration in the curricula. The author further suggests that “a teacher’s level of familiarity with and training to teach
specific styles will determine in large measure the degree of implementation of world music programs” (p. 146). Walker (2006) emphasized the importance of acquiring knowledge about students’ familiarity with and their preference for music styles to adequately teach cultural diversity and reach all students.

A number of obstacles are faced when attempting to integrate other cultures’ music into K-12 and college music programs. One may be lack of information about the music of many world cultures. Another is the limited availability of authentic instruments or the teacher’s experience with that culture. Furthermore, deciding which musical culture to present in the music classroom and choosing from the many different musical styles available is a major challenge for music teachers (Klinger, 1996; Quesada, 2002). A major concern of music teachers when introducing new music from other cultures is to present music that is exciting, attractive, and appealing to their students. Thus, teachers need to know the factors that contribute to their students’ attitudes toward world music. Fung (1994a) stated that there are a limited number of studies on students’ attitudes and responses to world music. It is important for teachers to know whether or not the selected music would benefit and capture their students’ interest. Music teachers “struggle to find ways that engage their students in meaningful ways with music that may sound unfamiliar or strange” (Blair & Kondo, 2008, p. 50).

Several research studies introduced methods and ideas for teaching music of other cultures. Kuzmich (2002) suggests several strategies for simplifying the learning process when introducing music of other cultures. The author emphasizes the importance of careful and meaningful listening to the music and making internal decisions about its characteristics:
Engaging the mind, is central to sensitizing or enhancing oral awareness; to being receptive to the offerings in a musical work. Whenever you listen to unusual music, see whether you can determine how it remains coherent – what kinds of happenings contribute to its form; as well, the manipulations that create tension. (p. 10)

Quesada (2002) suggests a number of approaches for successfully teaching world music. She emphasizes the importance of the teacher being familiar with the music to be taught. Moreover, teachers’ proper training in and comfort level with teaching world music are important factors for overcoming obstacles associated with teaching music of other cultures. Huang (1997) explores how incorporating different cultures’ music, such as Middle Eastern music, in a college music appreciation classroom can broaden students’ listening skills and learning experience. The author investigated the various relationships between Western music and other cultures’ music and recommended that teachers start from these relationships. Huang suggested that “the key to productively integrating non-Western musics into the standard music appreciation syllabus may be to choose them for their relationship to the Western musics under consideration” (p. 29). Huang presented several examples of these relationships for the teacher to use in instructions. For example, the teacher could start with the history behind the development of a particular concept or instrument, such as the Middle Eastern origins of some medieval European musical instruments and styles. Another example is the influence of a particular non-Western tradition on the music of Western composers, such as the impact of Javanese gamelan music on Debussy. Huang further advised the teacher to look for “analogous art forms across cultures exhibiting similar aesthetic, ritual, or social functions or systems.
exhibiting similar structure” (pp. 29-30). For illustration, the author pointed to the similarity between Western opera, Chinese opera, and Japanese Kabuki – they all combine music, words, and mythical and historical stories in their structure.

Elsner (1997) investigated the difficulties that face the European ear in listening to Arabic music. The author suggests that individuals must leave aside the system of listening to music and musical structure they are accustomed to in order to experience this foreign tradition. These suggestions can be helpful for teachers facing the challenges inherent in incorporating multicultural music, including Arabic music, into their curricula.

*Arabic Music as a World Music*

Interestingly, Arabic music has never been included in studies of world music preference in the United States. This lack of focus on Arabic music may be due to a number of factors, including (a) its very limited existence in school music curricula, (b) the geographic and cultural differences between the U.S. and Arabic countries, and (c) the characteristics of Arabic music itself, such as its unique quarter-tone tonality, rhythm, and performance practice (Elsner, 1997). World music, including Arabic music, is usually not treated with the same regard as Western art in the American music classroom (Teicher, 1997). Several factors may explain the reason for the hesitation of music teachers to teach music from a multicultural perspective: examples include the lack of training necessary for the music teacher to develop and implement multicultural music lessons (Campbell, 1992) and the very limited availability of resources concerning Arabic music for music teachers (Darling, 2004).
Norman’s (1999) study presented several reasons behind music teachers’ reluctance to teach multicultural music, including the lack of an adequate background, time constraints, students’ lack of preference for the music, and language constraints. Although many of music education’s professional organizations advocate for the adoption of a broader cultural perspective, “the college education of most practicing music teachers in the United States has been largely confined to the study of music in the Western European tradition” (Norman, 1999, pp. 37-38).

The structure for teaching Arabic music is different than teaching Western music. It has its own set of rules regarding notation, performance, tonality, and concepts (Elsner, 1997). Listeners to Arabic music are faced with a demanding task of learning a new musical thought process. This notion is stressed by Elsner:

The more the ability for musical thought and articulation bound to or determined by a musical tradition has established itself as an individual strength, all the more demanding becomes the process of adopting a foreign tradition. The extensively memorized construction elements and principles of systems of thought and articulation of the own tradition obstruct the acquisition of additional musical competence that is bound to a foreign tradition …. For the adoption of a foreign tradition, one does not indeed need to give up the own system, but must leave it to one side…. listeners of Arabic music will discover in this way worlds and far stretches of mental-social existences of humanity that had been previously unimagined. (pp. 123-124)

Arabic music is melodically and rhythmically oriented and contains unique characteristics including its interval system and its classification and melodic function.
(Elsner, 1997). Moreover, the major/minor scale system is replaced with Arabic modes that contain micro-tonality (Ayari & McAdams, 2003; Marcus, 2002). Darling (2004) suggested that “five elements set classical Arabic music apart from all other types of music: homophony, melodic mode (scale), embellishment, rhythm, and improvisation” (p. 78). The demand for great listening ability and sensitivity for performing Arabic music make it a valuable ear-training tool and learning experience for developing students’ listening ability (Darling, 2004; Volk, 1995). Listeners to Arabic music must perceive the expressive potential hidden behind and associated with this music to be able to make sense of it, understand it, and enjoy it (Elsner, 1997). Teachers need to study the culture of the music they plan to teach, the music’s distinguishing characteristics, and the students’ preferences for and attitudes toward these cultures if they are to provide a better and more authentic learning experience. Teachers should not be discouraged by Arabic music’s foreign features, but regard this music with an attitude similar to all world music, viewing the musical differences as an opportunity for learning and expanding both their own and their students’ musical appreciation and understanding.

Summary

Teaching music of other cultures is essential for the development of students’ musical understanding and cultural awareness. Knowing the students’ preference for world music and music styles plays an essential role in selecting the music for a curriculum. Musical characteristics, students’ characteristics, and familiarity are factors that influence students’ preference for music styles. Research indicates that teaching world music has significant benefits, even though it requires more effort by the teacher (Blair & Kondo, 2008; Campbell, 2000; Darling, 2004; Fung, 1994b; Olsen, 2000;
Shehan, 1988). Arabic music encompasses unique elements that could contribute to students’ personal and musical growth (Darling, 2004; Volk, 1995).

The unique traits of Arabic music should not deter teachers from including it in the music curriculum. Music educators should look upon the inherent instructional challenges as an opportunity to explore new concepts of music and broaden their students’ perspectives and understanding of different musical styles. Arabic music introduces concepts such as embellishment, new scales, unique rhythmic formations, and unique improvisational techniques (Darling, 2004). Furthermore, the study of world music broadens students’ musical awareness and appreciation by exposing them to different musical characteristics, styles, and other cultures. It is important for educators to recognize students’ music preferences when introducing new music styles, which may translate to more successful and meaningful learning experiences.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The purpose of this study was to examine undergraduate, non-music majors’ familiarity with and preference for Arabic music as compared to other world music. Participants listened to 12 world music excerpts and completed a survey that solicits demographic data and information regarding their familiarity with and preference for each excerpt.

Participants

Study participants included undergraduate, non-music majors enrolled in six sections of music appreciation classes at a state university in the Midwest. Of the 250 students enrolled in the six sections, 203 participated in this study (56% male and 44% female). The age range of participants was 18 to 42, with a mean of 20 years (SD = 2.669). Concerning the ethnicity of the sample, 89% of students were Caucasian, 9% African American, 0.5% Korean, 0.5% Vietnamese, 0.5% Mexican, and 0.5% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

Materials and Instrumentation

Music Excerpts

In assessing the students’ preference for and familiarity with Arabic music, participants listened to 12 music excerpts. Each of the four regions selected for this study – Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Middle East – were represented by three excerpts. All examples were instrumental to control for any bias in students’ responses due to their familiarity or lack of familiarity with the language in a musical excerpt, language barrier constraints, and influence of the gender of singers.
The African and Latin American excerpts were selected from examples used in a similar study by Fung (1996). The music from Asia was selected with input from a musicology professor who teaches Japanese ensemble and history at the university. The Middle Eastern pieces were selected and provided by the researcher, a music teacher of Middle Eastern music at the high school and college levels, and an active musician in the culture.

Authenticity of the music selections was met by selecting music recordings performed by native performers of each culture, performed with authentic instruments of each culture and musical style, and including performances of traditional and popular music repertoires of each culture. Pieces that were selected for each region include at least one popular piece and at least one traditional folk piece that most represent each culture. Each excerpt was approximately 45 to 60 seconds in length. All 12 excerpts were randomized using a computer program and were played in the order specified in Table 1.
Table 1

*Music Selections*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Recording &amp; Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congo (Africa)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>“Kalubambu tambo abibongo”</td>
<td><em>The Music of Africa Series, Musical Instruments 5. Xylophones, Kaleidophone (1972)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan (Asia)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“Tsuru no Sugomori”</td>
<td>Personal collection of a musicology professor at the university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>“Nagauta shamisen”</td>
<td>Personal collection of a musicology professor at the university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>“Etenraku”</td>
<td>Personal collection of a musicology professor at the university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico (Latin America)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Luzita”</td>
<td><em>Chulas Fronteras, Arhoolie (1976)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>“Muchachos Alegres”</td>
<td><em>Chulas Fronteras, Arhoolie (1976)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>“Cotula”</td>
<td><em>Chulas Fronteras, Arhoolie (1976)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait (Middle East)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>“Qif Bittwaf”</td>
<td><em>The Kuwaiti National Orchestra, United Nations Day Concert (2004)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data Collection Tool*

Participants completed the “World Music Familiarity and Preference Test” (WMFPT), a two-page questionnaire (see Appendix B). The first page consisted of 9
demographic and background questions related to the participants’ age, gender, ethnicity, major, and musical experiences. The second page contained a table of items pertaining to the 12 music excerpts. For each item, participants 1) indicated their familiarity with the excerpt on a 3-point scale (NF = not familiar, SF = somewhat familiar, VF = very familiar); 2) indicated their preference for the excerpt on a 5-point scale (SD = strongly dislike, D = dislike, N = neutral, L = like, SL = strongly like); and 3) checked musical characteristics that led them to either like or dislike the excerpt.

**Reliability.** Two different procedures were used in determining the reliability of the WMFPT. The first procedure was a test-retest reliability approach implemented to measure the overall reliability of the questionnaire. The WMFPT was administered to a total of 22 participants from a population similar to the study sample. Participants then retook the test within one week. Calculation of the test-retest reliability coefficient ($r_{12}$) yielded a value of .83. The second procedure implemented addressed the internal consistency of the instrument. Calculation of coefficient alpha based on the data obtained in this study yielded a value of .85.

**Validity.** The content validity of the WMFPT was established by having six judges evaluate the overall content, the clarity of the questions, and the appropriateness of each item as it relates to the purpose of the study. Individual item validity was evaluated via the use of a 5-point scale with 1 being agree that the item is acceptable, and 5 being disagree that the item is acceptable. Table 2 presents the results of this item validity evaluation. The grand mean of 1.18 and the fact that no individual item had a mean higher than 1.67 seem to clearly establish the content validity of each of the items on the WMFPT. Similarly, face and content validity of the WMFPT were evaluated on a 5-point
Table 2

*Item Validity of the WMFPT*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Judge 1</th>
<th>Judge 2</th>
<th>Judge 3</th>
<th>Judge 4</th>
<th>Judge 5</th>
<th>Judge 6</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.17</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand mean = 1.18

*Note.* Possible responses range from 1 (item is acceptable) to 5 (item is not acceptable)

Table 3

*Face and Overall Content Validity for The Background Tool*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Judge 1</th>
<th>Judge 2</th>
<th>Judge 3</th>
<th>Judge 4</th>
<th>Judge 5</th>
<th>Judge 6</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The WMFPT measures all of the major concepts of the study</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The written material is clear and legible</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient room is provided to write answers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directions for completion of the test are understandable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand mean = 1.04

*Note.* Possible responses range from 1 (agree) to 5 (disagree)
scale with 1 being agree and 5 being disagree. The face and content validity test was divided into two sections corresponding to the two sections of the instrument: the first page which included the Background Tool, and the second page which included the Preference and Familiarity Tool. Tables 3 and 4 present the data for face and content validity. The grand mean of 1.04 for the face and content validity of the Background Tool and the grand mean of 1.21 for the face and content validity of the Preference and Familiarity Tool, along with the data on item validity, indicate that the judges found the WMFPT to have a relatively high level of content validity.

Table 4

*Face and Overall Content Validity for The Preference and Familiarity Tool*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Judge 1</th>
<th>Judge 2</th>
<th>Judge 3</th>
<th>Judge 4</th>
<th>Judge 5</th>
<th>Judge 6</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The WMFPT measures all of the major concepts of the study</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The written material is clear and legible</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient room is provided to write answers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directions for completion of the test are understandable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand mean = 1.21

*Note.* Possible responses range from 1 (agree) to 5 (disagree)
**Personnel, Facilities, and Equipment**

The study was conducted in the classroom in which the participants regularly attend their classes. The musical examples were recorded on a high quality TDK CD-R 700MB disk and played back on a Magnavox Compact Disk Player CDB582 connected to two Paradigm speakers. The researcher administered the treatment and data collection.

**Procedures**

Participants listened to the 12 musical excerpts and completed the WMFPT test. This procedure took approximately 20 minutes for each section. The specific protocol and narrative used is included in Appendix C.

**Data Analysis**

Data was coded using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data coding included the following: 1) the coding for age represented the actual age of the individual; 2) the coding for ethnicity, gender, major, musical training, and musical background consisted of assigning numbers for each possible answer within each category; 3) the coding for familiarity and preference consisted of assigning numbers for each possible answer within each category; and 4) the coding for musical characteristics consisted of assigning numbers for either checking or not checking each of the characteristics.

Data was analyzed to evaluate participants’ preference and familiarity responses to the excerpts. The means of responses for familiarity and preference were calculated and ranked. The relationship between familiarity scores of the four regions were analyzed through a correlation matrix using Pearson r. Similarly, the relationship between familiarity and preference was tested by correlation coefficients using Pearson r.
Frequency distribution was implemented on the preference factors in numbers and percentages. Data collected was studied to find and interpret the relation between preference and familiarity, between preference and musical characteristics, and between demographic factors and students’ characteristics and preference. A series of independent sample t-tests were implemented to determine the effect of age, gender, ethnicity, musical training, musical background, and familiarity on students’ preferences.
Participants (N = 203) listened to 12 world music excerpts and completed the World Music Familiarity and Preference Test (WMFPT). The responses were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The results are organized based on the various variables of the study: first, the relationships among total familiarity scores, total preference scores, and between familiarity and preference; second, the impact of musical characteristics, demographic factors, and musical background on participants’ familiarity and preferences.

Familiarity and Preference

The WMFPT included 12 world music excerpts, with three excerpts representing each of the four world music cultures: Africa, Asia, Middle East, and Latin America. For each musical excerpt, students indicated how familiar they were with that music and how much they preferred it. Since every music of a given culture was represented by 3 music excerpts, and the possible familiarity ratings for each excerpt could range from 1 to 3, the combined familiarity ratings for the 3 excerpts of a specific region could range from 3 to 9. Similarly, preference ratings could range from 1 to 5 for each excerpt, thus the combined preference ratings for the 3 excerpts of a specific region could range from 3 to 15.

As indicated in Table 5, familiarity for all the regions ranked on the low end of the continuum, but students reported being least familiar with African Music ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 0.83$) and most familiar with Latin American music ($M = 4.67$, $SD = 1.60$). Results for total preference ratings (see Table 6) show that students liked Middle Eastern music
(\(M = 10.05, SD = 2.11\)) the most, followed by Latin American music (\(M = 9.84, SD = 2.50\)), African music (\(M = 8.63, SD = 1.92\)), and Asian music (\(M = 8.34, SD = 2.47\)).

Table 5

*Descriptive Statistics for Musical Familiarity by Region*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Possible responses range from 3 (not familiar) to 9 (very familiar).

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics for Preference by Region*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>10.05</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>9.84</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>8.63</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>8.34</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Possible responses range from 3 (strongly dislike) to 15 (strongly like).

To examine relationships among total familiarity scores for the various regions, correlation coefficients were calculated. As indicated in Table 7, coefficients ranged from .43 (Asia and Africa) to .65 (Middle East and Latin America). All relationships were
significant and positive, with the strongest relationship being between Middle East and Latin America; an increase of familiarity with Middle Eastern music is accompanied by an increase of familiarity with Latin American music.

Table 7

*Correlation Matrix of Familiarity Ratings among Regions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
<th>Middle East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>.53*</td>
<td>.61*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>.52*</td>
<td>.55*</td>
<td>.65*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* *p* < .01.

Table 8

*Correlation Matrix of Preference Ratings among Regions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
<th>Middle East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* *p* < .01.

To examine relationships among total preference scores for the various regions, correlation coefficients were calculated. Table 8 presents these coefficients, which ranged from .12 (Latin America and Africa) to .50 (Middle East and Asia). All relationships
were significant and positive except between Latin America and Africa. The strongest relationship was between the Middle East and Asia: an increase of preference for Middle Eastern music was accompanied by an increase of preference for Asian music.

Relationships between familiarity and preference within each culture also were examined. As can be seen in Table 9, a significant and positive relationship was found between familiarity and preference for all regions except Africa, for which the relationship was non-significant.

Table 9

*Correlation Matrix of Familiarity and Preference Ratings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Familiarity – Preference correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>.44*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>.35*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>.25*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .01.

*Factors that Contribute to Liking and Disliking World Music*

*Musical Characteristics*

After providing a familiarity and preference rating for each excerpt, students were asked to consider which musical elements or characteristics may have caused them to either like or dislike the excerpt. Results are reported in Table 10. Tempo was cited very often as a “like” factor in conjunction with all regions’ music except Asia, where it was cited much less often as a “like” factor and cited more often in the “dislike” category.
The same results were evident with rhythm; rhythm was cited very often as a “like” factor for all regions except Asia, for which it was cited much less often as a “like” factor. Timbre, however, was cited approximately the same number of times across all four regions as a “like” factor.

Melody & Harmony was cited more often as a “like” factor for Latin American and Middle Eastern music, much less often for Asian music, and even less for African music. Dynamics was generally cited less often for all regions’ music as compared to other factors. Overall, Tempo and Rhythm were the most influential music factors for liking certain music, while Melody & Harmony and Timbre were the most influential music factors for disliking the music.
### Table 10

*Frequency Distribution for Factors Associated with Liking and Disliking Excerpts*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Like</th>
<th></th>
<th>Dislike</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of responses</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No. of responses</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melody &amp; Harmony</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Several musical characteristics were not considered as like or dislike factors by the participants. As a result, total percentages need not equal 100%. Since each region was represented by 3 excerpts, number of responses for each category could range from 0 to 609.
Influence of Age, Ethnicity, and Gender on World Music Familiarity and Preference

Demographic factors of the participants were considered as possible attributes that could affect students’ familiarity with and preference for world music. Three demographic variables – age, ethnicity, and gender – were explored in relation to familiarity and preference ratings for each world music culture.

Age. Results in Table 11 indicate that no significant relationships were found between age and familiarity for any of the regions. Similarly, results in Table 12 reveal no significant relationships between age and preference.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Familiarity – Age</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .01.
Table 12

*Correlation Matrix of Preference Ratings with Age*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preference – Age correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Africa                      | -.14  
| Middle East                 | -.01  
| Asia                        | -.09  
| Latin America               | .05   

* p < .01.

*Ethnicity.* Most of the participants fell within two ethnic groups, Caucasian and African American, while four more ethnicity groups were represented by only one participant each. Thus, the ethnicity category was collapsed into two groups: Caucasian and non-Caucasian. All ethnicities other than Caucasian were combined into the non-Caucasian group. T-tests revealed no significant differences between the two ethnicity categories with respect to familiarity or preference. Tables 13 and 14 present these results.
Table 13

*Familiarity Ratings Categorized by Ethnicity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-Caucasian Mean / SD</th>
<th>Caucasian Mean / SD</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3.41 / 0.67</td>
<td>3.50 / 0.85</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>4.05 / 1.09</td>
<td>4.09 / 1.19</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>3.86 / 1.21</td>
<td>3.88 / 1.24</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>4.59 / 1.71</td>
<td>4.67 / 1.60</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* 3 = not familiar; 9 = very familiar

* p < .05

Table 14

*Preference Ratings Categorized by Ethnicity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-Caucasian Mean / SD</th>
<th>Caucasian Mean / SD</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>8.50 / 1.57</td>
<td>8.65 / 1.96</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>9.86 / 2.75</td>
<td>10.07 / 2.03</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>7.41 / 2.77</td>
<td>8.45 / 2.42</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>8.95 / 2.82</td>
<td>9.94 / 2.44</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* 3 = strongly dislike; 15 = strongly like

* p < .05

**Gender.** Another series of t-tests were conducted to identify any differences between genders with respect to familiarity and preference. No differences were found for familiarity (see Table 15). As Table 16 reveals, a statistically significant gender effect was found for participants’ preferences in the Asian music category; male participants
expressed greater preference ($M = 8.66$) than female participants ($M = 7.92$), $t(200) = 2.13, p < .05$. No other gender differences were indicated.

Table 15

_Familiarity Ratings Categorized by Gender_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male Mean / SD</th>
<th>Female Mean / SD</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3.51 / 0.86</td>
<td>3.44 / 0.78</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>4.14 / 1.19</td>
<td>4.00 / 1.17</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>3.97 / 1.27</td>
<td>3.74 / 1.18</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>4.76 / 1.70</td>
<td>4.54 / 1.48</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. 3 = not familiar; 9 = very familiar

* $p < .05$

Table 16

_Preference Ratings Categorized by Gender_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male Mean / SD</th>
<th>Female Mean / SD</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>8.42 / 2.00</td>
<td>8.88 / 1.79</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>9.88 / 2.19</td>
<td>10.24 / 2.01</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>8.66 / 2.38</td>
<td>7.92 / 2.55</td>
<td>.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>9.73 / 2.53</td>
<td>10.01 / 2.45</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. 3 = strongly dislike; 15 = strongly like

* $p < .05$
Influence of Participants’ Musical Background and Training on World Music Familiarity and Preference

Questions 4 through 9 (see Appendix B) were analyzed to determine the possible effect of students’ musical background and training on world music familiarity and preference. With respect to African music, a statistically significant difference was found between students who play a musical instrument ($M = 3.67$) and students who do not play a musical instrument ($M = 3.32$), $t(201) = 3.07, p < .05$. A similar significant difference was found for Middle Eastern music ($M = 4.33$ and $M = 3.85$, respectively), $t(201) = 3.00, p < .05$. Results are shown in Table 17.

Table 17

Familiarity Ratings Categorized by Musical Instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Play a musical instrument</th>
<th>Don’t play a musical instrument</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean / $SD$</td>
<td>Mean / $SD$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3.67 / 0.99</td>
<td>3.32 / 0.60</td>
<td>.002*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>4.33 / 1.32</td>
<td>3.85 / 0.98</td>
<td>.003*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>3.95 / 1.32</td>
<td>3.81 / 1.14</td>
<td>.413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>4.88 / 1.77</td>
<td>4.46 / 1.39</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 3 = not familiar; 9 = very familiar
* $p < .05$

Although there was a statistically significant difference between students who play a musical instrument and those who do not with regard to familiarity, all of the familiarity means are quite low; this indicates that the majority of participants were not familiar with the music presented in this study.
Similar differences were found for preferences. Students who played a musical instrument showed significantly greater preference for Asian music ($M = 8.75$) and Middle Eastern music ($M = 10.40$) than students who do not play a musical instrument ($M = 7.95$ and $M = 9.71$, respectively): $t(201) = 2.32, p < .05$; and $t(201) = 2.36, p < .05$, respectively. Results are shown in Table 18.

Table 18

*Preference Ratings Categorized by Musical Instrument*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Play a musical instrument</th>
<th>Don’t play a musical instrument</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>8.69 / 2.12</td>
<td>8.58 / 1.72</td>
<td>.684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>10.40 / 2.07</td>
<td>9.71 / 2.11</td>
<td>.019*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>8.75 / 2.48</td>
<td>7.95 / 2.42</td>
<td>.022*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>9.84 / 2.63</td>
<td>9.84 / 2.37</td>
<td>.996</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* 3 = strongly dislike; 15 = strongly like

* $p < .05$

As indicated in Table 19, previous musical training also had an effect on familiarity ratings. Participants with no musical training indicated being less familiar with African music ($M = 3.32$), Middle Eastern music ($M = 3.83$), and Latin American music ($M = 4.33$) than students with musical training ($M = 3.57$, $M = 4.20$, $M = 4.84$, respectively): $t(200) = 2.07, p < .05$; $t(200) = 2.08, p < .05$; and $t(200) = 2.12, p < .05$, respectively.
Table 19

*Familiarity Ratings Categorized by Musical Training*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Training</th>
<th>No Musical Training</th>
<th>( p )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean / SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mean / SD</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3.57 / 0.88</td>
<td>3.32 / 0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>4.20 / 1.24</td>
<td>3.83 / 1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>3.96 / 1.29</td>
<td>3.70 / 1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>4.84 / 1.67</td>
<td>4.33 / 1.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* 3 = not familiar; 9 = very familiar
*p < .05

With respect to preference ratings, only one significant difference was indicated: participants with previous musical training showed greater preference for Asian music \((M = 8.63)\) than students with no musical training \((M = 7.73)\), \(t(200) = 2.45, p < .05\). Results are shown in Table 20.

Table 20

*Preference Ratings Categorized by Musical Training*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Training</th>
<th>No Musical Training</th>
<th>( p )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean / SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mean / SD</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>8.63 / 1.93</td>
<td>8.67 / 1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>10.19 / 2.21</td>
<td>9.71 / 1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>8.63 / 2.47</td>
<td>7.73 / 2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>10.04 / 2.55</td>
<td>9.39 / 2.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* 3 = strongly dislike; 15 = strongly like
*p < .05
The majority of participants who had previous musical training (n = 128) reported training in performance (n = 87), while the remaining participants reported a combination of theory, history, general, and performance training – with theory having the highest rating (n = 31).

Participants who studied music of other cultures while in grades K-12 or during college reported significantly higher familiarity ratings across all regions than those who had not studied music of other cultures. Results in Table 21 reveal that those participants who studied music of other cultures reported being more familiar with African music ($M = 3.84$), Middle Eastern music ($M = 4.42$), Asian music ($M = 4.18$), and Latin American music ($M = 5.15$) than those who had not ($M = 3.33$, $M = 3.94$, $M = 3.74$, $M = 4.47$, respectively): $t(197) = 4.15$, $p < .05$; $t(197) = 2.56$, $p < .05$; $t(197) = 2.40$, $p < .05$; and $t(197) = 2.73$, $p < .05$, respectively.

Table 21

**Familiarity Ratings Categorized by Exposure to Other Cultures’ Music**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Studied music of other cultures</th>
<th>Did not study music of other cultures</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean / SD</td>
<td>Mean / SD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3.84 / 1.03</td>
<td>3.33 / 0.64</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>4.42 / 1.30</td>
<td>3.94 / 1.11</td>
<td>.011*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>4.18 / 1.28</td>
<td>3.74 / 1.13</td>
<td>.017*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>5.15 / 1.73</td>
<td>4.47 / 1.49</td>
<td>.007*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. 3 = not familiar; 9 = very familiar

* $p < .05$
As indicated in Table 22, no significant effects on preference were found with regard to the study of music of other cultures.

Table 22

*Preference Ratings Categorized by Exposure to Other Cultures’ Music*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studied music of other cultures</th>
<th>Did not study music of other cultures</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean / SD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>8.73 / 2.06</td>
<td>8.57 / 1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>10.40 / 1.86</td>
<td>9.91 / 2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>8.80 / 2.30</td>
<td>8.20 / 2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>10.29 / 2.29</td>
<td>9.74 / 2.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. 3 = strongly dislike; 15 = strongly like  
* p < .05

When asked about their interest in learning about music of cultures other than their own, the majority of participants expressed some interest in learning about music of other cultures (n = 152), while some participants were not at all interested (n = 22), and some participants expressed high interest in learning about music of other cultures (n = 29). These results are reflected on the next question for which the majority of participants responded having never (n = 84) or rarely (n = 82) listened to music from other cultures; the number of participants who listened frequently to music of other cultures was much lower (n = 30) and even fewer participants were found to be listening regularly to music of other cultures (n = 5). Latin American music was rated as the most listened to by the participants (n = 77), followed by Asian music (n = 24), African music (n = 20), and Middle Eastern music (n = 18).
Summary

Participants in this study listened to 12 world music excerpts and indicated familiarity and preference ratings via the WMFPT. Results indicate that participants were not familiar with the world music excerpts, but did like the excerpts to a moderate degree. A significant positive relationship was found between preference and familiarity, within preference ratings, and within familiarity ratings. The results revealed that rhythm, tempo, and timbre were the most influential musical characteristics in liking world music, with rhythm being the most influential. Participants’ background seems to have no significant relationship with both familiarity and preference except between gender and preference for Asian music.

The strongest effect on participants’ familiarity and preferences was their musical background. Playing a musical instrument, musical training, and previous exposure to music of other cultures affected preference and familiarity ratings significantly. Participants playing a musical instrument indicated more familiarity and higher preference ratings for world music. Previous musical training also had a significant effect on familiarity ratings, with less effect on preference ratings. Results also revealed that participants who previously studied music of other cultures reported significantly higher familiarity ratings, however, this effect was nonexistent with regard to preference.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter presents deeper interpretations of the results focusing on answering the main questions of the study and the possible factors that contributed to these results. The chapter is organized around the research questions and concludes with implications for education and suggestions for further research.

Participants’ Familiarity With and Preference For World Music

Familiarity

Overall, participants were not very familiar with the world music excerpts, but did like the excerpts to a moderate degree. As found in previous research, participants were mostly familiar with the music of Latin America, which may be attributed to geographical proximity or cultural awareness as Latin America is the closest region geographically to the United States (Fung, 1994a). Furthermore, the large Hispanic population currently in the United States may provide Americans with more exposure to that culture and its music through direct contact with the people of the culture, the spread of its language, and the increasing commonality of Spanish radio stations and TV programs.

Based on the possible geographical effect, Middle Eastern music should be the least familiar to participants. Results indicate, however, that Middle Eastern music was second in familiarity ratings. These results may be due to current political events that may have exposed participants to music of the Middle East. Moreover, the World Wide Web enables current students to listen to a wider variety of music than what is directly available in their own cultures and environment. The results of this study suggest that
familiarity with the music of one world culture may lead to familiarity with the music of other world cultures. That is, people who listen to music of one world culture may tend to not limit themselves to that culture, but explore others as well.

**Preference**

Relationships between total preference scores showed positive correlations between all regions except between Latin America and Africa. This finding suggests that an increase of preference for one world music may lead to an increase of preference for another world music. This is significant for music teachers to consider when introducing new world music to their students. Teachers might introduce a certain world music that has a positive response alongside another world music. Specifically, the results of this study indicate a positive correlation between preference for Middle Eastern music and Asian music. Thus, students who have been taught Asian music and expressed high preference for it may express similar attitudes when later introduced to Middle Eastern music.

**Familiarity and Preference**

Data analysis revealed a significant positive correlation between familiarity and preference. Outcomes show that the more familiarity participants have with a world music, the greater preference they express for that music. This supports Fung’s (1996) conclusion that people prefer the music with which they are familiar. One anomaly, however, was found in this study: Latin American music was the most familiar but Middle Eastern music was the most preferred. This implies that people may also like music with which they are not familiar. Other factors appear to play an important role in
preference, including specific musical characteristics and participants’ musical background.

Familiarity and Preference: Relationships With Musical Characteristics

The musical characteristics that were most influential in liking world music were rhythm, tempo, and timbre, with rhythm being the most influential; this is similar to the findings of previous studies (LeBlanc et al., 2000; Walker, 2006). Results indicated that participants liked most the rhythm and tempo of Latin American and Middle Eastern music, while they liked least the dynamics and melody & harmony of African music. In general, results indicated that participants like music that has a regular beat and a moderate to fast tempo, characteristics that existed in both the Latin American and Middle Eastern excerpts.

Timbre was also one of the factors that affected participants’ preference of world music. Participants liked most the timbre of Middle Eastern music, while they liked least the timbre of Asian music. In general, the Middle Eastern excerpts featured instruments that are closer in sound and character to Western instruments than the Asian excerpts which may have led to these results.

Dynamics and melody & harmony seem to have the least effect on participants’ liking of world music. The small influence of melody & harmony may be understandable when considering their relative complexity and the need for more active and in-depth listening to make decisions about their effect. Had participants listened to the music more than once, the influence of these characteristics may have changed. Since participants may have been overwhelmed with all the other musical aspects and characteristics of the
excerpts in this study, they may have overlooked dynamics because of its relative subtlety compared to the other musical characteristics.

The most disliked musical characteristics were the timbre and melody & harmony of African and Asian music. With respect to timbre, it may be that the participants found the instruments of African and Asian music to be the most unfamiliar. Furthermore, the Middle Eastern and Latin American excerpts had more obvious melodic lines and harmonic progressions than the African and Asian excerpts. The music of Africa and Asia was mostly percussive in structure, less harmonic in nature, and utilized distinctive instrumental sounds with which participants may be unaccustomed and unfamiliar.

A relationship was evident between musical characteristics and preference; the higher the percentages of possible responses of the “like” factor of rhythm and timbre, the higher the preference. Results showed that Middle Eastern music had the highest possible responses of the “like” factor for both rhythm and timbre, and at the same time was the most preferred. Conversely, results showed that Asian music had the lowest possible responses of the “like” factor for both rhythm and timbre, and at the same time was the least preferred. Further, Asian music had the highest possible responses of the “dislike” factor for both rhythm and timbre. Parallel to previous studies (Brittin, 1996; Fung, 1996; LeBlanc et al., 2000; LeBlanc et al., 2002; Montgomery, 1996; Walker, 2006), these results may confirm the effect of musical characteristics on listeners’ preferences.

*Familiarity and Preference: Relationships With Participants’ Background*

There was no significant effect of ethnicity on familiarity. Results revealed that the majority of African-American participants indicated little or no familiarity with
African music. This result calls attention to the important distinction between the ethnic culture and the environmental culture of the participant – that is, the difference between a person’s ethnicity and the actual environment and culture surrounding that person. For instance, a person could have a Middle Eastern ethnic background but be born and raised in a Western culture; the individual might not even identify with the native culture’s distinctive characteristics. This and the fact that the authentic African excerpts presented in this study have different characteristics than African-American music in the United States should be taken in consideration.

Unlike a previous study (Shah, 2000), no significant relation was found between ethnicity and preference. This may imply that a person’s ethnicity may not affect preference for music of world cultures. However, the fact that the number of participants from non-Caucasian ethnic groups in this study was very low as a percentage of the total number of the sample, and the fact that the music of cultures from which some of the participants came were not represented, suggests that the results need to be interpreted with caution.

Gender was considered as a factor that may affect participants’ preference for world music. A considerable effect was found for Asian music: males preferred Asian music more than females. However, no statistically significant gender effect was found for any of the other regions. This result appears to confirm previous research by Persinger (2001): other factors may induce a stronger influence than gender on participants’ preferences for certain musical styles.

Age was also considered as a factor that may affect participants’ familiarity with and preference for world music. However, no significant relationship between age and
familiarity or age and preference was found. These results are in agreement with the findings of Fung (1994b), but contradict the findings of Shah (2000) and LeBlanc and Cote (1983). Not surprisingly, perhaps, other studies have produced mixed results with respect to the effect of age (Persinger, 2001; Siivola & Obert, 1996). A sample with wider age representations than the current sample may shed some additional light on the issue. However, the fact that the relationship between preference and age for Africa yielded a very close number to be considered statistically significant relationship (p = .05) may be worth looking into in future examination.

**Familiarity and Preference: Relationships With Participants’ Musical Background**

The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between participants who played a musical instrument and those who did not with regard to their familiarity with world music. Participants playing a musical instrument were more familiar with African music than those who do not play a musical instrument; the same was true for Middle Eastern music. This difference between the two groups with regard to their familiarity with world music suggests that playing a musical instrument may increase students’ familiarity with world music.

Although a statistically significant difference between the instrument and non-instrument groups was evident, it was obvious that neither group was familiar with the music in this study. This may be because the majority of students in the United States who play an instrument are mostly practicing and exposed to Western European or popular repertoire and much less involved with world music performances. Moreover, the majority of participants who play a musical instrument indicated that they played some type of a Western instrument. With regard to preference, results indicated that
participants who play a musical instrument tend to prefer world music more than those who don’t. Playing a musical instrument seems to help students to appreciate and like music with which they are not familiar.

Participants who had some musical training were more familiar with world music than those who had no training. Since more than 63% of the participants (n = 128) indicated having received musical training, it may be conceivable to suggest that students who had musical training may be more inclined to explore different styles of music unfamiliar to them.

With the exception of Asia, musical training has no effect on participants’ preference for world music. Since the majority of participants indicated that their musical training mainly involved performance training through private lessons, group lessons, band, and other training settings, and that this training was confined to Western and popular music styles, it may be plausible to conclude that musical training in a particular style of music may not positively increase preference for other music styles. This conclusion is in agreement with a previous study by Jin (1999) in which the researcher found that students’ specific type of music experiences are associated with specific music style preferences.

Although participants who had previously studied music of other cultures while in grades K-12 or during college showed greater familiarity with world music, their preference for these music styles was not affected by their exposure to that music. It was beyond this study’s capacity to investigate the type and authenticity of the music taught in these schools and the music teachers’ experiences and capabilities for teaching them.
The fact that the majority of participants expressed some interest in learning about music of cultures other than their own is very encouraging, since most of the participants indicated that they either never or rarely listen to music from other cultures. This interest may be a result of any of the factors introduced in this study such as musical training, participants’ backgrounds, instrument preference, certain musical characteristics, or other factors that are not included in this study.

*Implications for Education*

The results of this study suggest several implications for music teachers. First, the findings imply that students need not be exposed to music of every culture of the world. Exposing students to the music of one or two world cultures may open their minds toward the music of other world cultures. Second, teachers should not be hesitant to explore music of cultures unfamiliar to their students. As found in this study, students expressed strong preference for Middle Eastern music despite it being unfamiliar. It seems that factors other than familiarity may affect preference decisions, including specific musical characteristics. Teachers may be able to offset the effect of students’ unfamiliarity with a certain culture’s music by introducing examples that include targeted musical characteristics. For instance, when selecting music of a world culture to share, teachers should consider selecting music that includes familiar instruments, simple rhythmic structures, and moderate to fast tempi, thus accounting for possible preference factors. Teachers may also wish to choose world music that has some similar characteristics to Western music. It may be helpful to start by introducing world music that includes instruments related in sound and character to Western instruments and progress gradually to more foreign sounding music and instruments.
Based on the findings of the current study, Arabic music may be attractive and even preferred by the students as compared to other world music. Teachers’ hesitation to introduce Arabic music to their students because it is unfamiliar or includes foreign structures and modalities does not justify excluding it from the repertoire. As indicated above, teachers could begin by introducing Arabic music that shares traits with the music that is familiar to the students; these traits might include major and minor modes, familiar rhythmic structures, and similar instruments to the familiar repertoire. Examples of such music include 1) *Abdul Qader*, a Kuwaiti folklore music in 4/4 meter and Hizaj Arabic mode that is equivalent to the harmonic minor scale; 2) *Watan al Nahar* by Abdul Kareem Abdul Qader, a Kuwaiti song in 4/4 and major mode; 3) *Maqazel al Khair Dori* by Shadi Al Khalij, a Kuwaiti traditional song in 3/4 and melodic minor mode; and 4) *Ehna el Khatawi el Akeda* by Shadi Al Khalij, a Kuwaiti traditional song in 4/4 and major mode. The Arabic examples might then gradually progress to more complex and foreign sounding music, including the distinctive modes, quarter tone scales, and unfamiliar instruments.

*Further Research*

A number of factors may have contributed to the results found in this study. The results of familiarity and preference may be due to the choice of excerpts used. Further research might also include alternative and additional excerpts from more than one country of each region to allow for increased generalizability. Taking into consideration that the majority of participants were around 20 years old, a sample with a wider age range might identify age effects on preference and familiarity. One particular aspect of the study may raise an important question: would the same results have emerged if a
researcher with a different ethnicity had administered the questionnaire? The possibility exists that students expressed strong preference for Middle Eastern music because they perceived that it was part of the researcher’s ethnicity. However, the fact that students were not informed about the origins of the excerpts they listened to during the survey, combined with their unfamiliarity with these excerpts, would seem to mitigate this concern. Nonetheless, it would be interesting to include this variable in future research.

Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to examine undergraduate, non-music majors’ familiarity with and preference for Arabic music as compared to other world music. Music excerpts from Africa (Congo), Latin America (Mexico), Asia (Japan), and the Middle East (Kuwait) were used as examples of different world music. The data obtained from this study provides evidence of several significant relationships between participants’ preferences and the different variables in the study. Overall, participants were not familiar with the world music excerpts, but did like the excerpts to a moderate degree. A significant positive relationship was found between preference and familiarity, within preference ratings, and within familiarity ratings. The most influential musical characteristics in liking world music were rhythm, tempo, and timbre, with rhythm being the most influential. Participants’ background seems to have no significant relationship with both familiarity and preference except between gender and preference for Asian music. Relationships between participants’ musical background with both preference and familiarity were established. Playing a musical instrument, musical training, and previous exposure to music of other cultures affected preference and familiarity ratings significantly.
Arabic music was introduced as a new factor in this study that had not been explored in previous research. Knowing about students’ familiarity and preference for Arabic music may help in understanding the ramifications of its inclusion in music programs, and the proper method of introducing it to the students in the classroom. The findings were, at minimum, encouraging for the inclusion of Arabic music in the curriculum’s repertoire. Although Arabic music was the most preferred music in this study, it must be taken into account that the excerpts presented do not represent the whole region of the Middle East, but rather only a part of it. Based on the findings of this and other studies, teachers may be encouraged to begin exploring the music of this region as they seek to broaden their students’ learning experiences.
References


Quesada, M. (2002). Teaching unfamiliar styles of music. In B. Reimer (Ed), *World musics and music education: Facing the issues* (pp. 139-159). Reston, VA : MENC, the National Association for Music Education.


APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM
Consent Form for Doctoral Research Project
Hamid Alkoot
Department of Music Education
School of Music
Ball State University
Spring 2009

Study Title

Undergraduates’ Familiarity with and Preference for Arabic Music in Comparison with Other World Music

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine undergraduate, non-music majors’ familiarity with and preference for Arabic music as compared to other world music. The study examines the possible attributions of musical characteristics, students’ characteristics, demographic factors, and students’ familiarity to the students’ preferences of Arabic music. Knowing about students’ familiarity with and preference for Arabic music will help in understanding the ramification of its inclusion in music programs and the proper method of introducing it to the students in the classroom. Through listening to a collection of music pieces, the survey will generate three sets of data: (1) students’ musical experiences and background information; (2) student’s familiarity with several world music; and (3) students’ preferences for world music based on musical characteristics. The survey will take only 20 minutes of your time.

Respect for Persons

This study is not a required activity, and no one will be penalized if you choose not to participate in the survey. Also, no one will contact you as a result of your participation in this survey.

Benefits and Risks

Through your participation in this study, the data generated will provide increased understanding of students’ perspectives and attitudes toward world music in general and Arabic music in particular. This will also help music teachers to provide a comprehensive music learning experience for their students and expand their exposure to new musical styles. The data will also help music teachers in making more informed decisions when introducing world music to their students. The risks are negligible because all surveys are anonymous.
Confidentiality

Protecting your privacy in taking this survey will be accomplished through anonymity. No identification information will be collected or acquired in this survey. The surveys will be kept secure by the researcher and will be available only to the chair of his dissertation committee. All data collected will be entered into a software program on the researcher’s password protected computer. After analysis, findings will be downloaded to a disc and stored. The data collected will be stored in the researcher’s office for three years and then shredded.

IRB Contact Information

For one’s rights as a research subject or have questions concerning this survey, please contact the following: Research Compliance, Office of Academic Research and Sponsored Programs, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306, (765) 285-5070,

I have read the above and consent to participate in this research project entitled, “College Students’ Familiarity and Preference of Arabic Music in Comparison with other World Music.”

Participant’s Name (print)  Date

Participant’s Signature

Researcher Contact Information

Principal Investigator:  Faculty Supervisor:
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School of Music  Professor and Area Coordinator of Music Education
Ball State University  School of Music
Muncie, IN 47306  Ball State University
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Fax: 765.285.5401
APPENDIX B
WORLD MUSIC FAMILIARITY AND PREFERENCE TEST
(WMFPT)
World Music Familiarity and Preference Test

The purpose of this study is to examine undergraduate, non-music majors’ familiarity with and preference for world music. Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to answer questions that you view as sensitive. The data collected will be private. Other than the research team, data will only be available for regulatory agencies such as the Office of Human Research Protections and the Ball State University Human Research Committee.

Please answer the following questions:

1- Age: _______
2- Gender: Male    Female
3- Ethnicity: (check all that may apply)
   Caucasian        Cuban
   American Indian  African-American
   Chinese          Alaskan Native
   Korean           Japanese
   Vietnamese       Filipino
   Mexican          Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
   Hispanic         Latino
   Puerto Rican     Other (please specify)_________________

4- Do you play a musical instrument?
   No                     Yes

5- Do you have any music training before enrolling in the current class (performance, theory, general, or history)? If yes, please specify
   No                     Yes __________________________________________

6- Are you personally interested in learning about music of cultures other than your own?
   Not at all interested  Somewhat interested  Highly interested

7- How often do you listen to music from one or more of the following regions: Asia, Africa, Latin America, or Middle East? If never, skip question 8.
   Never      Rarely      Frequently      Regularly

8- Please specify the region:
   Africa    Asia    Latin America    Middle East    Other__________

9- Did you study music of other cultures while in grades K-12 or during college? If yes, please specify the culture(s) you have studied.
   No                     Yes ________________________________
You will be listening to 12 world music excerpts. Each excerpt will last 45 to 60 seconds. Following each excerpt, indicate how familiar you are with that piece of music, and to what degree you like that piece of music by circling the appropriate numbers. Also, indicate which musical characteristics lead you to either like or dislike a musical excerpt (check as many as apply).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>Familiarity</th>
<th>Preference</th>
<th>Preference Factors</th>
<th>Preference Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NF = not familiar</td>
<td>SF = somewhat familiar</td>
<td>VF = very familiar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Like …</td>
<td>I Dislike …</td>
<td>I Like …</td>
<td>I Dislike …</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td>Tempo</td>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed of the beat</td>
<td>Speed of the beat</td>
<td>Louds and softs</td>
<td>Louds and softs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td>Dynamics</td>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination and/or arrangement of long and short sounds, OR Steady/Irregular beat</td>
<td>Combination and/or arrangement of long and short sounds, OR Steady/Irregular beat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melody &amp; Harmony</td>
<td>Melody &amp; Harmony</td>
<td>Timbre</td>
<td>Timbre</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Choice and arrangement of pitches</td>
<td>Types and variety of instruments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Types and variety of instruments</td>
<td>Types and variety of instruments</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>NF SF VF</td>
<td>SD D N L SL</td>
<td>SD D N L SL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>NF SF VF</td>
<td>SD D N L SL</td>
<td>SD D N L SL</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NF SF VF</td>
<td>SD D N L SL</td>
<td>SD D N L SL</td>
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<tr>
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<td>NF SF VF</td>
<td>SD D N L SL</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>NF SF VF</td>
<td>SD D N L SL</td>
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<td>NF SF VF</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>NF SF VF</td>
<td>SD D N L SL</td>
<td>SD D N L SL</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1- Place the questionnaires on a table by the entrance of the classroom. As students enter and without going into detail, explain to the students that it is simply a survey and that the details will be discussed as soon as all students are present.

2- When all students are present, read the following paragraph:

Hello everyone, I am a doctoral student here at Ball State University and the questionnaire you are holding now is a part of my doctoral dissertation study. The first page is a consent form that explains the purpose of the study and information regarding your participation. Please notice that your participation is absolutely voluntary and refusing to participate will not result in any consequences. If you agree to participate, please sign this form. If you don’t wish to participate, please keep the questionnaire with you until it is collected at the end of the session. [allow 3 minutes]

3- Explain how to answer the questionnaire. Read the following paragraph:

Please go to the first page of the questionnaire. This page contains questions about your age, ethnicity, musical experience, major, and gender. Please answer all the questions now before proceeding to the next page. You will have 5 minutes to answer these questions. [allow 5 minutes]

4- After the students finish answering the first page, read the following paragraph:

Please go to the second page. You will listen to 12 musical excerpts that require you to indicate your familiarity with and preference for each excerpt. On the scale for familiarity in the left column, please circle the abbreviation that most represents your familiarity with the style of the specific excerpt: NF- not familiar; SF - somewhat familiar; VF – very familiar. On the preference scale in the
second column, please circle the abbreviation that most represents your
preference for the style of the specific excerpt: SD - strongly dislike; D - dislike;
N - neutral; L - like; SL - strongly like. In the preference factor column you see a
listing of musical factors upon which your preferences might be based. Please
check all that apply under both like and dislike columns. Please refrain from
answering the questions while the music is playing. You will be given 30 seconds
to answer each question following each excerpt.

5- Start the listening portion of the study. Read the following phrase:

“Now we will listen to excerpt number one” [Play excerpt]. [Following excerpt]

“Please respond to the questions in row 1”.

Continue with this procedure for each of the 12 excerpts.

6- After the last excerpt is played and students are done, instruct the students to pass the
questionnaire forward to the first person in each row.

7- Collect the questionnaire from the first person in each row.

8- Thank the students and exit the room.