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The use of recorded music in early childhood settings

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to seek out if there are certain styles of music generally used in early childhood settings and how practitioners make use of recorded music in their settings. Many researchers have conducted studies on aspects of young children's listening abilities. However, there is a paucity of research on the use of recorded music in early childhood education, suggesting that research into this area is in its infancy.

This is exploratory research to gauge if there are categories of styles of music used in early childhood settings. All participants involved in the research remain anonymous, along with the setting that they represent. The results of the study show that there is little variety in the styles of music used within early childhood settings. The results also suggest that music is very prevalent in the daily lives of children attending early childhood settings. Practitioners need to develop their understanding of children's listening abilities. The impact that recorded music is having on young children's listening skills and communication development is unknown.

Keywords: music, recorded music, listening, early childhood settings, audio.

The Use of Recorded Music in Early Childhood Settings

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at the University of Central England**

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Abstract

This paper reports on a study which investigated the use of recorded music in early childhood settings. The research involved looking at the styles of music that early childhood practitioner's use, for what purposes they make use of it and also examined if there were particular times that practitioner's utilise it. A total of 34 people working in early childhood settings completed a written questionnaire, 6 of those respondents also participated in telephone interviews. The findings show that there is a small range of styles of music used and that there are certain styles which are favoured in the sector. There were some common themes regarding how and when music was used and some shared thoughts from practitioners regarding music with some styles being considered to be 'inappropriate' for young children to hear.

The findings suggest that there is very little music listening within early childhood education and there is a lack of understanding regarding the development of children's musical preferences and children's listening skills. The results of the study show that there is a little amount of thought and consideration regarding the audio environment within early childhood settings. Knowledge and understanding within this area needs to develop to ensure quality provision for the young children attending early childhood settings today.

Keywords: Recorded music, music listening, early childhood settings.

Introduction

Many researchers have conducted studies on various aspects of young children's listening abilities (Cohen, Thorpe, & Trehub, 1987; Sims, 1995; Trainor & Trehub, 1992) and the development of children's musical preferences (Hargreaves, 1982; Hargreaves & Castell, 1987; Kopiez & Lehmann, 2008; LeBlanc, 1982). However, when surveying the literature there appears to be a paucity of research on the use of recorded music within early childhood education suggesting that research into this area is in its infancy. As a visiting musician I have had the opportunity to work in a range of early childhood settings over the past 13 years and have first-hand experience of hearing recorded music played in settings. My aim was to seek out if there are certain styles of music generally used and how practitioners make use of recorded music in their settings. When I refer to recorded music I am referring to music which is played for auditory purposes, e.g. CD's, MP3's.

The research questions I posed were:

1. What percentage of early childhood settings use recorded music?
2. What styles of music are used?
3. Is there a relationship between the type of setting and the styles of music used?
4. Is there a relationship between the age of children in settings and the styles of music used?
5. Are there patterns of when recorded music is used?
6. Are there patterns of how recorded music is used?

In section one of this report I review the relevant literature regarding the development of children's musical preferences and listening abilities. Section two offers details regarding

my research design and explanation of my methods. In section three I present my findings followed by section four where I have discussed the results of my study. Conclusions, implications for practice and suggestions for future avenues of research are drawn in section five.

Theoretical Background

Listening is an obvious important aspect of early childhood development and we know that a foetus is able to hear from around 20 weeks gestation. From the moment of birth babies are involved in what could be described as sound games particularly between parents and infants. Malloch (1999, p.31) coined the term 'communicative musicality' which referred to the musical interactions between parents and infants; the turn taking of sound exchanges. An important aspect of these musical interactions and of communication is the ability to listen. These musical interactions not only reassure the infant that they are being listened to but also encourage them to listen too. It has been suggested that newborns have auditory competencies adequate for discriminating individual speakers and are sensitive to rhythmicity, intonation, frequency variation and phonetic components of speech (DeCasper and Fifer, 1980, p.1176).

From my experience of working in early childhood settings, both with parents and with educators, I have become aware that children both at home and within early childhood settings are often encouraged to participate in listening games, listen to and join in with songs to support auditory development. When a framework for an early years curriculum was first introduced in 1996 titled 'Nursery Education: Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education' (SCAA, 1996), access to recorded music was a huge distance away from where we are today. Today one can access thousands of recordings of music of all styles, from all parts of the world via the click of a button. In terms of listening to music it seems that early childhood education has not embraced the ability to draw upon a range of styles of music that are so easily accessible.

There has always been a strong tradition of adult-led singing in early childhood music; more so than of other types of musical activity and this continues to dominate the field today. There is guidance and support for early childhood educators in the realm of listening activities for young children but there is little literature or guidance to be found on listening to recorded music. For this reason my review of literature includes material outside of the 0-5 year early childhood age bracket, focusing upon music preferences and listening abilities.

Music preferences

LeBlanc (1982) presented a theory of 'interactive music preference' to assist teachers and therapists in understanding how music preferences develop. LeBlanc produced an 8 tiered model which identified sources of variation in music preference. He suggests that peer groups, family, educators, maturation, the media and the quality of the performance through which music is heard all have an influence on the musical preferences of the listener. Although this theory is not specific to early childhood, he notes that maturation plays a part in the development of preference. Young children will have less information from the cultural environment to store in their memory in comparison to older people which will therefore affect young children's preference of music. When discussing the influence of family on music preferences he suggests that 'most musicians would affirm the power of this influence at least through early childhood' (p.33). He suggests that family influence dominates musical influences during the early years; this theory however, was produced in 1982. There has since been a huge rise in the number of children attending early childhood settings, with 96% of the 3 and 4-year-old population in England benefiting from some free early education during 2012 (Department for education, 2012a, p.2). It therefore may be possible that the music played within an early childhood setting may replace the influence

of the family depending of course on the amount that a child attends a setting and the amount that music is played.

LeBlanc, Colman, McCrary, Sherrill and Malin (1988) conducted a study to explore the tempo preferences of different aged listeners. Nine hundred and twenty six listeners were involved ranging in age from 7-to college age (19-21), the study found a general trend across all ages for a preference for music with an increasingly faster tempo. The study involved pieces of jazz music which were categorised as either slow, moderately slow, moderately fast or fast. The overall preference was highest at the youngest age. From this, LeBlanc et al. suggest that teachers who want to take advantage of a favourable response pattern that students already have, should use music with fast tempi when introducing new styles of music. They also suggest that more should be done to teach music listening to the youngest students as they are the quickest to accept a style of music that is not currently favoured by the popular culture. If so, early childhood settings could offer a prime opportunity to expose children to a range of styles of music that are not necessarily within popular culture.

Orman (2011) tested the effect of listening to specific musical genre selections on measures of heart rate variability. Male and female students aged 18-55 were asked to rate their preferences for specific genres of music by indicating which music they enjoyed listening to the most and the least. Results indicated that there were significant decreases in the rate of heart beats per minute whilst listening to both the music that they liked and they disliked. Orman suggests that the results of the heart rate study may indicate that participants were mentally challenged or engaged during the music listening task.

Although not central to the study, Orman suggests that if the students involved changed their preferences whilst listening to the music that they had previously disliked, it only took 2

minutes and 20 seconds of listening to influence this change. This would indicate that students are fairly open to different styles of music and corroborates with the study conducted by LeBlanc, Sims, Siivola and Obert (1996). This study was extensive involving 2,262 participants and investigated the responses of three different styles of music; art music, jazz and rock with listeners aged 6 to 91. The results show that the highest preferences were in the lowest grades and then again at college level. From this study LeBlanc et al. reaffirm the view that the years of primary school provide a favourable opportunity to teach music listening.

LeBlanc's view concurs with the notion of 'open-earedness', a term which Hargreaves (1982, p.51) created in his study involving 126 children ranging in age from 7 to 15. He predicted that younger children maybe more 'open-eared' to forms of music regarded by adults as unconventional. The children involved in the study were asked to write down in what way they thought that 2 extracts of music were the same or different from one another. The results of the study show that children's tendency to classify and label music such as 'pop', 'folk' or 'jazz' increases with age. The study set out to explore the aesthetic reactions to music but actually seemed to be more along the lines of testing the children's skills in their abilities to explain similarities and differences in music.

This study was similar in method to that of Gardner (1973) who studied 100 people ranging in age from 6 to 19. Gardner was exploring sensitivity to musical styles; sensitivity was defined as the ability to judge whether 2 extracts of classical music had come from the same composition. The study discovered an overall excellence of the subjects participating in the task including the 6 and 8 year olds who made 'reasonable judgements about the properties of musical works, in some way young children can discriminate cues in a musical stimulus'

(p.74). Similarly to Hargreaves (1982) who studied aesthetics, this study intended to focus on sensitivity but actually tested abilities. Both studies also relied upon the ability of the subjects to verbalise.

Gardner (1973) points out that it is important to consider that the perception of the arts is often about how works 'feel' and that subjects should not be penalised for not being able to articulate this. The findings of the study suggest that style recognition is a complex cognitive process and that primary aged children have some capacity to make similarity judgements involved in stylistics assessment. This study was conducted in the 1970's when technology was far less advanced and available than today and the ability to test children's abilities was based upon their ability to talk and or write. With the advancement of technology further experiments have been created and the ability to use a range of methods and involve younger children is now possible, I will discuss this later.

In a later study Hargreaves and Castell (1987) investigated the effects of age on musical likes and dislikes of sixteen subjects in each of 6 groups aged 4-5, 5-6, 8-9, 10-11, 13-14 and over 18. The liking ratings of the 6 age groups were compared using four types of melody with varying familiarity. Two 'real-life' melodies and two experimentally derived. The two real life included very common nursery rhymes and carols and little known folk song melodies and the two experimentally derived were categorised as near and far statistical approximations to music. The results show that there was an overall decline in liking with an increase in age. Interestingly, the 4-5 year olds did not distinguish in their liking ratings between familiar and unfamiliar melodies or between 'real' and approximations to music. This was in contrast to the 6-7 year olds who rated familiar melodies as preferable to all others. This suggests that 4-5 year olds seem to be happy to

listen to and be perhaps 'open-eared' to a range of music and that this seems to decline quickly with increase in age. This present study focuses upon the use of recorded music within early childhood settings and seeks to discover if a range of styles of music are used within settings which could perhaps encourage children to be 'open-eared'.

Kopiez and Lehmann (2008) conducted a study to explore the concept of open-earedness. One hundred and eighty six students aged 7-10 participated in the study which involved listening to 8 examples from classical, popular, contemporary and ethnic music styles of music. Students were asked to respond how well they liked the music. This study found an increase of dislike for unconventional music as the children increased in age and the change in preference was greatest from ages 7 to 8. Classical music was within the category of unconventional music and the researchers posed that perhaps classical music was not as unconventional as previously thought and repeated the analysis excluding the ratings for classical music. The significant preference differences between ages 7 and 8 years disappeared when classical music was excluded suggesting that differences in open-earedness from age 7-8 seem to be based mainly on ratings for classical music.

Music is played within day to day environments such as in shops, banks and restaurants, (Hargreaves, 2012, p.543) and children are exposed to music which would not typically be music *for* children. I would also argue that children are exposed to a great deal of music on the radio whilst travelling in cars and whilst watching television. The music that children may be exposed to from the television constitutes both 'children's' music from children's television programmes as well as music played on adult television channels. In an interview in 2012 Ellen Wartella refers to the term 'constant television household' (p.21), where television is a background to daily life for young children. This interview was regarding the

influence of general media and does not focus on music per se; however it is possible that a background could be an audio background. Where this is the case perhaps we could use the term 'constant sound environment'. Wartella suggests that the constant background of television interferes with children's natural play and their ability to focus. This is similar to the findings of the Orman (2011) study mentioned above. Orman found that participants were mentally challenged or engaged whilst listening to music. From an early childhood point of view, it could be argued that music used as background music could be detrimental to children's learning environment. If a child is mentally challenged whilst listening to music they may not be able to focus and or play whilst music is playing.

The aspect of background music is addressed within The National Early Years Framework, the EYFS, which was revised in 2012 (Early Education, 2012). The guideline regarding the use of recorded music is to 'keep background noise to a minimum, e.g. use music or radio briefly only for particular purposes' (p.15). It was also mentioned within the Every Child a Talker document set out by National Strategies in 2008 (DCSF, 2008). The document states that an enabling environment 'ensures that there is no continuous background noise such as a radio/music' (p.43). Both of these documents however do not offer a vast amount of guidance on how to use recorded music effectively and how to teach and or encourage music listening.

Sims (1990) suggests that there is a real danger in today's society that 'children are learning not to listen' (p.38) and refers to 'audiothrombosis'. This is a term which was created by the Foundation for the Advancement of Education in Music, referring to a 'disease' whose primary symptom is numbness to music. Sims argues that music is so pervasive in people's lives that it is often not noticed until it stops. This is similar to the earlier point by

Hargreaves (2012) that music is used in many everyday situations. Hargreaves also suggests that the creative aspects of music listening have been neglected. He discusses the idea that ‘individuals combine their networks of musical and cultural associations to include their corresponding associations with the people, situations and events that they have experienced in their lives’ (p.547). If we take Hargreaves’s perspective and use this from an early childhood point of view it is possible to argue that practitioners within early childhood settings construct these musical and cultural associations within the settings that children attend. Children may therefore become accustomed to associating a certain type of music to a certain type of environment from a very young age. On the other hand, looking at this from Sim’s point of view, if music is primarily used as background music, children may be learning ‘not to listen’.

Children under the age of 2 attending an early childhood setting are required to be within a ratio of one adult to three children (Department for Education, 2012b, p.18). It has been suggested that adults typically depend on the media for musical experiences whereas infants have access to daily, live performances from their primary caregiver (Trehub & Schellenberg, 1995, p.4). This perspective is based on infant’s music experiences largely constituting of playsongs and lullabies used within caregiving contexts. With a ratio of one adult to three children, perhaps it is possible that infants do not access daily, live performances from their primary caregiver; this will depend on the practice of any given practitioner. This present study explores recorded music and how practitioners make use of it. If young children are accessing musical experiences via sources other than live performances from their primary caregiver, perhaps they depend or are becoming more dependent on recorded music for their music experiences similarly to adults.

Lamont (2008) conducted a study to explore the everyday music listening experiences of 32 children aged 3.2 to 3.9 years. Modified mobile phones were given to each of the child's families and the child's main caregiver was telephoned at any given time to obtain information about the children's music listening. The information gathered from the call was classified as an episode. It is worth noting that as the respondents were the children's main caregivers reporting on the children's music listening, perhaps they were inclined to report positively.

Nursery settings reflected 27.4% of no-music episodes and 17% of music episodes. Home included 57% of music episodes and 51% of no-music episodes and only one car journey out of 49 was sampled without music. Most music heard was recorded and the most commonly experienced form of music was children's music, with pop music being the next most heard category. Classical music was less common, and other musical styles including folk, jazz, religious music, film soundtracks, contemporary music, world music and big band represented a very small proportion of the music episodes. There was only one episode of music listening without any other activity taking place which supports the notion that music is extremely prevalent in the day to day lives of young children.

Hargreaves, Marshall and North (2003) concur with the notion that music is prevalent, not specifically in children's lives but generally in people's lives. They also note that that one cannot control their exposure to music in shops, restaurants, and other environments. They do however point out that music can actively be controlled within the home, the car, and other everyday situations in order to create certain mood states, or to moderate levels of arousal (p.150). This however is not necessarily the case for children attending early childhood settings; the music played in settings may often be chosen and controlled by an

adult practitioner perhaps without realising and understanding that young children have preferences for music. Hargreaves et al. also indicate that music in these everyday environments can influence many aspects of behaviour and attitudes towards and liking for different environments. If this is so then the audio environment could play a significant role in the attitude of children towards the early childhood setting.

Hargreaves et al. go on to suggest that listening to pop music is such a central part of teenagers' lives that it becomes a 'badge of identity' for many of them. Perhaps it can be argued that 'children's music' is a part of young children's lives and that it becomes a badge of identity for them but one however that they have not chosen themselves. The influence of media and perhaps early childhood education may play major roles in young children's musical development, preferences and identity. Hargreaves et al. also point out that there is a distinction between 'music at school' and 'music at home' and this is much more so for secondary than for primary school pupils. There has yet to be a vast amount of research within early childhood on this subject matter; it may be possible that there is a distinction between 'music in a setting' and 'music at home'. Perhaps it is also possible that adults construct children's musical worlds for them; whether this is within a home environment or an early childhood educational environment.

Hargreaves et al. also highlight the increasing prominence of the 'third environment'; social contexts in which musical learning takes place in the absence of parents or teachers. This is also something which Young (2007) discusses with reference to 6 year old girl and her use of a karaoke in her bedroom. Young describes her bedroom as an 'imagined musical world' and suggests that the girl acts out the characteristics of a musical identity which in turn

supports her in defining her own identity as a young girl (p.337). Once again, this suggests that music plays an important role in the development of identity.

Listening Abilities

I will now go on to discuss the listening abilities of children and explore studies which have involved children aged 7 months to 6 years.

Cohen, Thorpe and Trehub (1987) conducted a study involving 104 infants ranging in age from 7 to 11.4 months old. They set out to determine whether infants were sensitive to precise frequency relations and whether they could differentiate between melodies on the basis of frequency ratios alone. The analysis of 30 nursery songs indicated 80% major triads within the music. Cohen et al. point out that even for very young listeners with limited musical experience there would be greater exposure to certain triads which could therefore lead to a priority in processing. Their study provided evidence for infants' ability to detect small differences in transposed sequences. The findings indicate that infants have the ability to perceive the smallest frequency relation significant in Western tonal music, the semitone (p. 45).

Perhaps it would therefore be possible to suggest that humans appear to be born with an acute sense of hearing; this however does not seem to be drawn upon in terms of early childhood education. As Sims suggests (1990) with the use of music being so prevalent in today's society perhaps we are teaching children not to listen. If young children are primarily surrounded by Western music and nursery rhymes which are 80% major triads this may not be nurturing their listening skills, it may actually be doing them a disservice. Taking

Hargreaves' (1982) theory of 'open-earedness', the early years offer a prime window of opportunity to teach listening and to expose children to a range of music.

As I mentioned earlier, with the advancement of technology, further experiments have been created and Trehub (2006) wrote a paper which highlighted some of these procedures and outlined evidence of infants' listening skills. Trehub refers to the Cohen et al. study (1987) which identified that infants can detect pitch differences of a semitone or less, even when such subtle differences are embedded in a melody. Trehub goes on to discuss infants' responses to rhythmic patterns and points out that adult like biases for culture specific meters emerge after relatively limited exposure to music. Trehub suggests that by 12 months of age, Western infants are no longer able to differentiate metre-preserving from metre disrupting variations in the context of complex metres, but they continue to make the differentiation in the context of simple metres.

Trainor and Trehub (1992) explored the development of children's ability to relate musical forms to extramusical concepts. They argue that listeners, whether trained or untrained, seem to extract meaning from music and the purpose of their study was to explore children's understanding of referential meaning in natural, complex music. Children aged 3, 4 and 6 were asked to match animal pictures to musical excerpts. Children as young as aged 3 were able to assign extramusical meaning to music and performance became more accurate with increasing age. The principle goal of the study was to determine whether children could associate an object such as an animal with a piece of music. The researchers point out that the circumstances in which the children were asked to match was highly constrained; they only offered 4 pictures to the children to choose from. Trainor and Trehub do however suggest that children do have the ability to understand that concrete meaning can be

transmitted by music. Another interesting aspect of the study was the verbal justifications that the children aged 6 were able to offer such as the music ‘sounded like summer’ (p.467).

To erase the need of verbal description and lengthy experiments with young children as in previous studies (Gardner, 1973; Hargreaves, 1982) Marshall and Hargreaves (2007) conducted a study which involved the use of cassette tapes with excerpts of music recorded onto them. Children aged 3 to 4 were asked to match one piece of music with the same piece of music on another cassette by playing them themselves in a cassette player. Extracts of classical and popular music were utilised and the results indicated that participants gained a higher percentage of correct matches for the popular music in comparison to the classical music. The results of the study show that participants were able to make accurate stylistic discriminations at a much earlier age than predicted by the results of previous research. They also suggest that this may be due to the use of popular excerpts which young children would be familiar with from the influence of media and the social environment as discussed above.

Marshall conducted further research regarding stylistic discrimination (Marshall & Shibazaki, 2011) with children again aged 3 to 4. The findings suggest that young children are not only able to make accurate discriminations between musical styles but an unexpected result was that they also associated ‘categories of people’ with styles of music. This included children associating bikers with grunge and blues music and teachers with classical music. As Marshall and Shibazaki point out, an intuitive assumption is to suggest that children may often experience classical music within the school environment and therefore associate teachers with classical styles. This concurs with the notion of ‘music at home’ and ‘music in setting’ and also that music plays an important role in identity.

The use of classical music is prevalent within the studies highlighted above. It is also used within early childhood education; maybe it is possible that the hype surrounding ‘The Mozart Effect’ is a contributing factor for this. ‘The Mozart Effect’ was a term which attracted media attention during the 1990’s due to research conducted by Rauscher, Shaw and Ky (1993). The results of the research suggested that listening to the music of Mozart temporarily raised spatial IQ test scores. Rauscher has since brought attention to the fact that that the research involved college students and not children and has also classified that ‘there is very little research to suggest that children who listen to Mozart score higher on ability or intelligent tests than other children’ (Rauscher, 2009, p.244).

The use of classical music within early childhood education is not limited to recorded versions; there have been many programmes created to introduce young children to live orchestral performances. The London Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Symphony Orchestra all have an early childhood educational programme. In his paper regarding the Sydney Symphony Orchestra’s concerts for children aged 5-8, Suthers suggests that ‘live performance adds a dimension to a program of musical listening that is not possible through sound recordings’ (1993, p.55). Although this may be the case and live performances add another dimension of music listening, this may influence children’s thinking and suggest to children that orchestral music is an important style of music and perhaps one that is more important than others. This would support the thought that classical music is considered to be ‘high art’ in comparison to pop music which is sometimes considered to be ‘low art’ and subservient to classical music. If these orchestral performances were within an educational programme that included a range of live performances of diverse styles of music then the breadth of musical exposure to children would be rich. As discussed above, these music listening experiences may then

have an impact on both the development of the listening preferences and listening abilities of young children.

This present study explores the use of recorded music in early childhood settings. The music that children hear whilst attending early childhood settings may contribute to the development of the listening preferences and listening abilities of young children as highlighted within the studies above.

Methods

In this section I discuss my methods and the reasons as to why I adopted these approaches. I outline my research design, reliability, validity, data collection methods, data collation methods and reflect on ethical issues.

Research Design

Written Questionnaire

This study is a qualitative piece of research which also draws upon numerical information. My aim was to seek out if there were patterns of the use of recorded music in a range of early childhood settings and I decided to adopt the method of a survey. The reason that I adopted the survey method was because I intended to gather information from a larger sample than is possible with other methods. I wanted to explore the data to see if there were any relationships between the type of setting and the type of music used. I therefore gathered data from a range of settings such as preschools, children's centres, childminders, schools, without excluding any type of setting. This enabled me to build up a picture which was widespread across settings. I decided to create a written survey in both paper and electronic formats to allow for a higher distribution of the survey. Creating the survey electronically would allow for the survey to be circulated in higher numbers than the paper format alone. An advantage of the survey approach is that it allows data to be collected from a number of sources without the need for the researcher to be present. There are many advantages and disadvantages of written questionnaires, both paper and electronic formats. Written questionnaires allow for anonymity and can be completed in the respondent's own time, on the other hand respondents may misunderstand questions, may lose or disregard the

questionnaire and respondents may choose to respond minimally or in a way that they feel they *should* do (Robson, 2002 p.233). Electronic questionnaires include the same advantages and disadvantages but also allow the researcher the ability to create mandatory questions and are easy to distribute but are however easy to disregard and delete. There are pros and cons of all research methods; the survey approach was the best method in the most logistical way possible to gather data for my research. I also felt that as the subject matter was not sensitive or intrusive that respondents would be fairly inclined to be objective and accurate in their responses.

Reliability & Validity

An important consideration when adopting the survey method is the reliability of the data produced. One major disadvantage of the survey method, as listed above, is the possibility that respondents can misunderstand questions, particularly when the survey is a written one. Respondent involvement is very important to consider and I felt it important to take steps to ensure that the survey was clear, comprehensive and not too lengthy. If the survey was ambiguous or unclear this could have in turn produced answers which were not reliable and therefore invalid for the purpose of the research. As Robson points out ‘uninvolved respondents’ answers owe more to some unknown mixture of politeness, boredom and a desire to be seen in a good light than to their true feelings, beliefs or behaviour’ (Robson, 2002, p.231). I intended to design a clearly written questionnaire which presented the same standardised questions for all participants to obtain high reliability of response.

Written Questionnaire Design

To design the written questionnaire, initial data was collected via questions which I posed to 226 members of an Early Years Music group on Facebook. The questions asked were: *How have you witnessed recorded music being used within early childhood settings and what kind of recorded music have you heard?* The responses enabled me to gauge whether the style of questions asked were clear and comprehensive. The range of answers also provided information which enabled me to design the survey questionnaire and the questions included. As mentioned above I wanted to create a questionnaire which would not be too lengthy and was clear and concise. I therefore kept the questions short and the language simple.

The questionnaire consisted of 11 questions, 5 fixed responses and 6 open-ended responses and I anticipated that it would take no longer than 5 minutes to complete. The fixed responses were questions which sought facts such as the type of setting and age of children that the respondent worked with. This would enable me to gather factual information needed to answer my research questions. The open-ended responses included questions such as 'please list the types of music that are played'. I felt that it was important to include open-ended questions due to the nature of my research. I did not want to list fixed responses of styles of music as this would create a bias. Leaving them open-ended ensured that I didn't place a bias on the styles of music that are used within settings generally. As I mentioned above, this study is a qualitative piece of research which drew upon numerical information. I therefore wanted the questionnaire to include a high proportion of open-ended questions to gather the qualitative data. Throughout the process of designing the questions for the survey I regularly revisited my research questions to ensure that the survey questions would seek the data to answer my research questions. The questionnaire was piloted on family

members and colleagues, 5 people in total. Feedback from the pilot studies enabled me to refine my questions further and the questionnaire was revised 4 times before it was finalised.

To increase the likelihood of a high response rate I carefully designed the invitation to participate in the survey. This invitation was included on the top of the first page of the paper questionnaire and was within the email which was used to invite respondents to participate electronically. I ensured that the invitation included the aim and importance of the survey, indicated that all participants would remain anonymous, tailored it to the audience by indicating that it was about early childhood settings and I advised participants about the nature of the forthcoming questions (Robson, 2002, p.250).

Telephone Interviews

Following the completion of the written questionnaire, I conducted telephone interviews with a small number of the respondents. The interviews not only enabled me to carry out a reliability and validity check by ensuring that they had understood the questions but they also enabled me to gather further detailed information for my research. As with the written aspect of the survey, telephone interviews have a set of advantages and disadvantages. Telephone interviews allow the interviewer to clarify questions and enable the interviewer to gauge the reliability of the answers. However respondents are not anonymous and may be inhibited to speak honestly and may also be affected by the interviewer's responses (Robson, 2002, p.233).

Telephone Interview Design

Respondents were asked to specify if they were willing to be interviewed further on the telephone. The questionnaire stated that each interview would take no longer than 15 minutes and if respondents were happy to be contacted to leave their relevant details. I decided that the interviews would involve a combination of both structured and semi-structured questions. Structured questions would enable me to clarify answers and seek further information from their questionnaire, they included questions such as ‘why do you use classical music?’ Unstructured questions would allow respondents to speak more freely if they chose to do so; questions such as ‘you indicated that you feel that music is a powerful tool, can you tell me more about this please?’ were included. Each interview was tailored to each interviewee; I decided upon specific questions for individual respondents prior to the interviews. This therefore meant that there was not one set of standardised interview questions.

Data Collection

Details of the choice of research subjects

As the return rate for written questionnaires is known to be low (Robson, 2002, p.233), I carried out various procedures to ensure completion and return of questionnaires. Paper versions of the questionnaire, with self-addressed envelopes, were distributed to fellow students who were asked to complete and distribute to colleagues in other settings. An email was sent to the same fellow students asking them to forward the electronic survey to other colleagues. I also emailed colleagues within early years departments of local authorities asking them to forward the survey to settings in their areas.

Nursery Chains

From my personal experience of working in early childhood day nurseries I have had the ability to work within a setting which was part of a chain of private day nurseries. Whilst working there it became apparent that the chain had a set policy regarding the use of recorded music within their nurseries. As part of my data collection I decided that it may be useful and informative to gather information regarding music policies across chains of nurseries. I sought out chains of nurseries which had high volumes of settings across the country and I endeavoured to contact the head offices of the 5 with the highest amount. I contacted each chain individually firstly to ask if they were willing to liaise with me regarding the topic of recorded music usage in their settings. If they were willing to communicate with me I was then able to ask via email if they had a music policy in place and if so, could they offer me further details. I was then able to ask specific details about the policies.

Data Collation

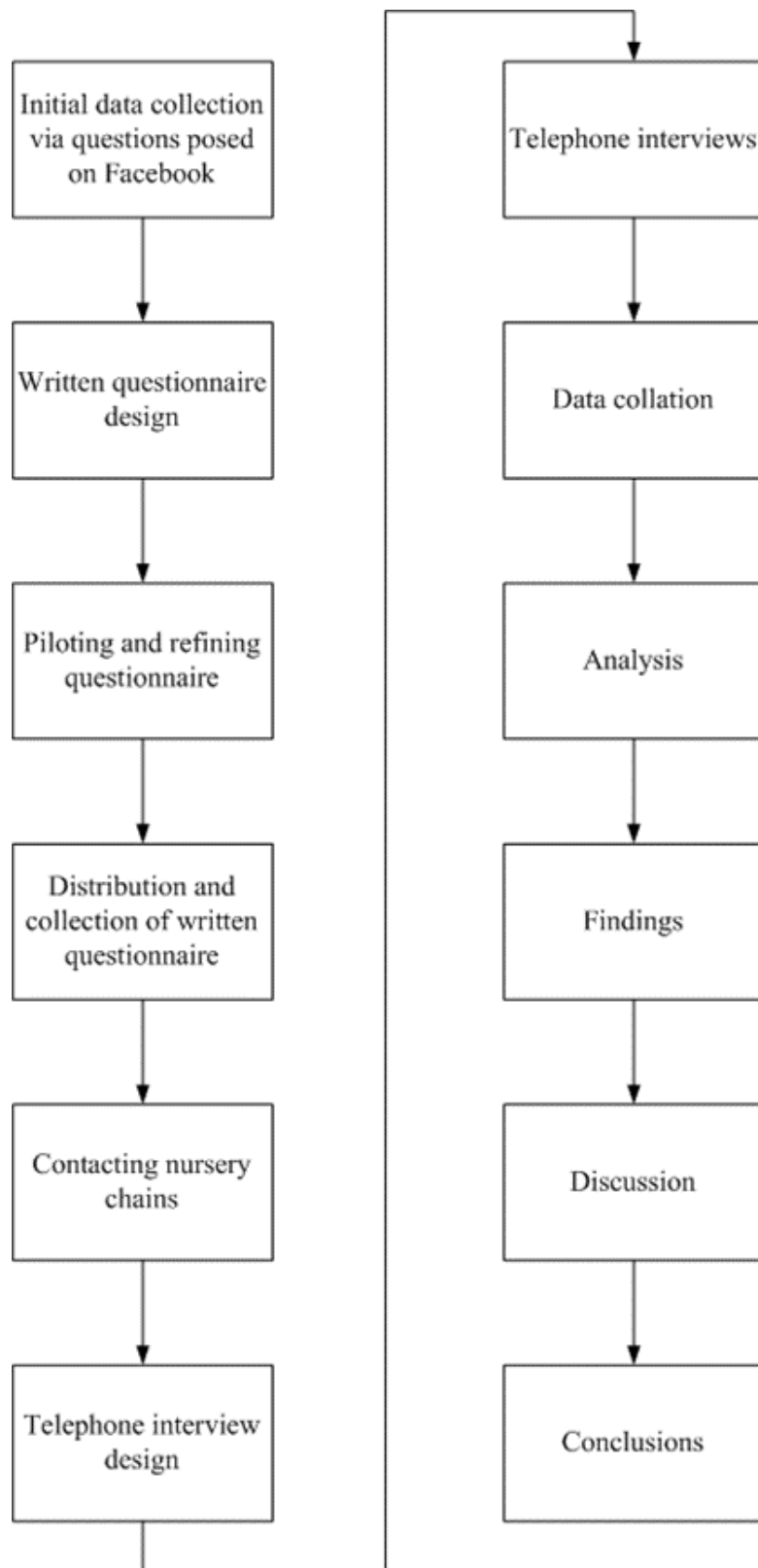
I collated the responses of the written questionnaires by using spread sheets in Excel. I input all of the answers from both the paper and online versions of the survey into one spread sheet, creating one row per respondent and one column for each of the 11 questions. This enabled me to not only look at all of the data collectively but also enabled me to easily look at respondent answers column by column, i.e. question by question. I was then able to extract columns of answers 1 by 1, paste them into another spread sheet and look at them in isolation to other answers. This gave me 11 spread sheets containing the list of different answers. The telephone interviews were recorded via Dictaphone and were immediately transcribed following each interview.

Reflection and evaluation of the research process

The combination of a written questionnaire and telephone interviews enabled me to gather data which I was able to analyse for patterns in the use of recorded music in early childhood settings and practitioner's views and thoughts about this. The written questionnaire enabled me to gather data from a range of settings and the electronic format enabled a wider distribution of the survey than the paper format alone.

On reflection, I could have targeted research subjects more carefully to gather data from a range of settings; I could have contacted specific types of settings directly. This may have increased the chances of gathering data which was not weighted to a particular type of setting. The open-ended questions within the written questionnaire enabled respondents to answer freely however, they also allowed for ambiguous and unclear answers. The analysis procedure is presented in the following chapter together with the findings.

Research Procedure



Ethics

All participants involved in the research remained anonymous along with the setting that they represented. The questionnaire gave clear details regarding the research and asked participants to give consent for their responses to be used within the study. All participants taking part in the telephone interviews were emailed prior to the interview to ensure that they were happy to be telephoned, to again seek their permission to use their responses in the study and to schedule a time for the interview to take place.

I prepared a short script which I read before each telephone interview which explained to each participant what the research was about. I also informed participants that the report detailing the findings would be available for them to read via a website and I gave them the relevant information to enable them to access this if they wished to do so.

Analysis Procedure & Findings

My study consisted of 6 research questions which were explored via the written questionnaire, telephone interviews and contacting the nursery chains. The analysis procedure is presented in this chapter together with the findings. I considered using analytical software such as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) but due to the size of the sample of data and my lack of experience of this software I decided not to use such an advanced and complicated analytics tool.

Styles of music used

1) What percentage of settings use recorded music?

All but 1 respondent, 97%, indicated that they use recorded music within their settings. The 1 respondent who did not use recorded music had indicated on their questionnaire that this was due to ‘music having offensive language or sexual scenarios’.

2) What styles of music are used?

Using the spread sheet containing the answers which indicated the styles of music that respondents had written, I was able to create one overall, concise list of styles. For example, nursery rhymes were one style, pop music was another. This not only gave me a summary of styles but also enabled me to count how many styles had been specified in total. Five respondents indicated styles such as “all”, “anything” or “various” and 1 respondent indicated story tapes. I withdrew these from my results as they were ambiguous and unclear and could not be categorised as a style of music. There were 24 styles of music indicated in total across all completed questionnaires.

Table 1 below provides a concise list of all styles indicated.

Action songs	Classical	Original children's music
Bhangra	Disney	Reggae
Beat it collection for re-energising etc.	Exercise music - wake up and shake up	Relaxing Music
Calming	Festival related sounds, music, songs	Sensory Sounds
Chatter matters (Communication music)	Meditation sounds/ natural sounds for relaxation	Soothing music
Children's songs	Nursery Rhymes	Sounds of the orchestra / instrumental music
Chinese	Pop	Sticky kids cds
Christmas	Radio	World

Table 1: Styles of music indicated

Percentage of styles indicated

I calculated the percentage of the styles indicated; the survey indicated that there were 5 styles of music most predominantly used. Bar chart 1 below shows these 5 styles with nursery rhymes being the most indicated.

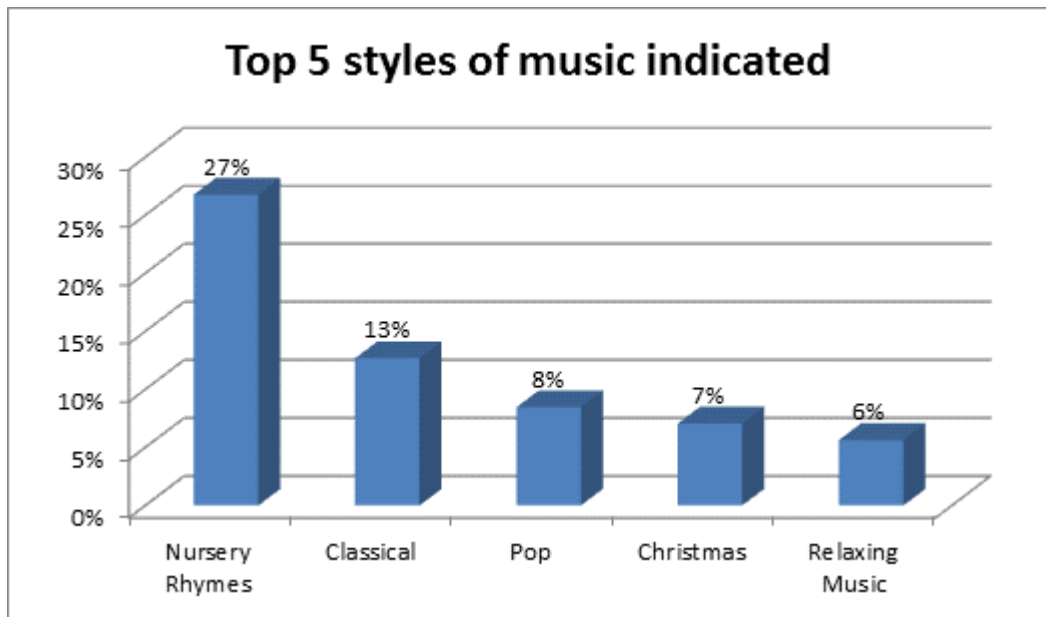


Figure 1: Percentage of top 5 styles of music indicated

The remaining 39% not shown in the above figure consisted of the other styles of music listed in table 1. The percentage of these remaining styles was very small ranging from 1-4% of the overall styles indicated.

Percentage of the respondents who had used a style of music

As a top 5 of music styles had emerged I was able to determine the percentage of the respondents who had indicated these 5 styles.

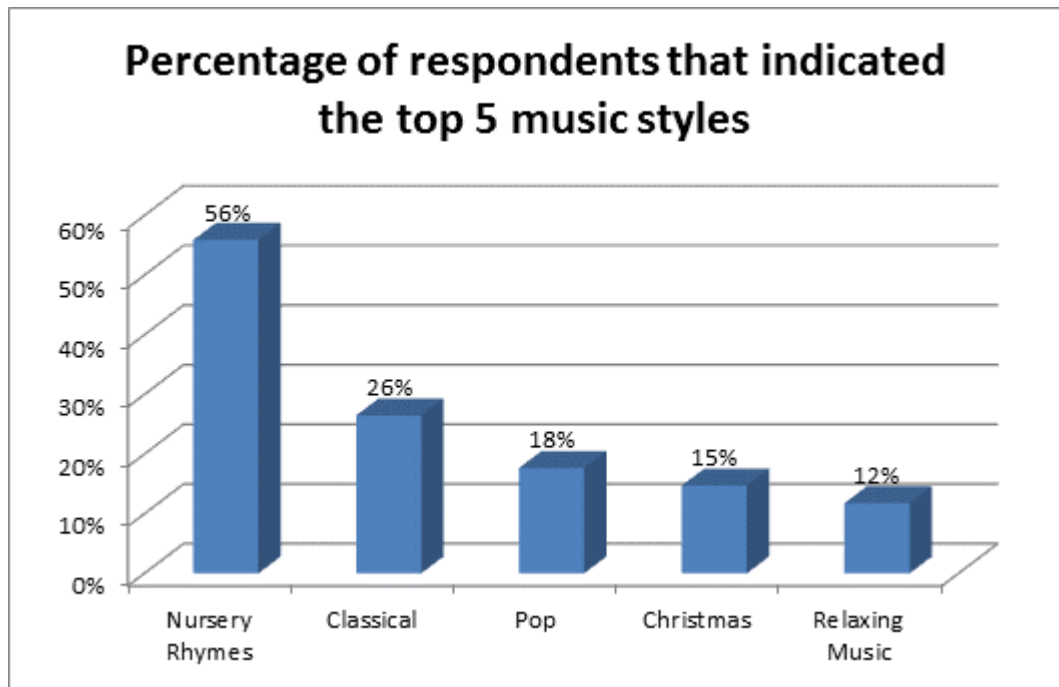


Figure 2: Percentage of respondents that indicated the 5 top music styles

Nursery rhymes were not only the most indicated style across the survey but also, over half of the respondents, 56%, indicated that they use this style of music in their setting.

Styles of music used by types of settings

3) Is there a relationship between the type of setting and the styles of music used?

There were 34 respondents from 8 different types of setting. By calculating the percentage of respondents per setting type the following was seen.

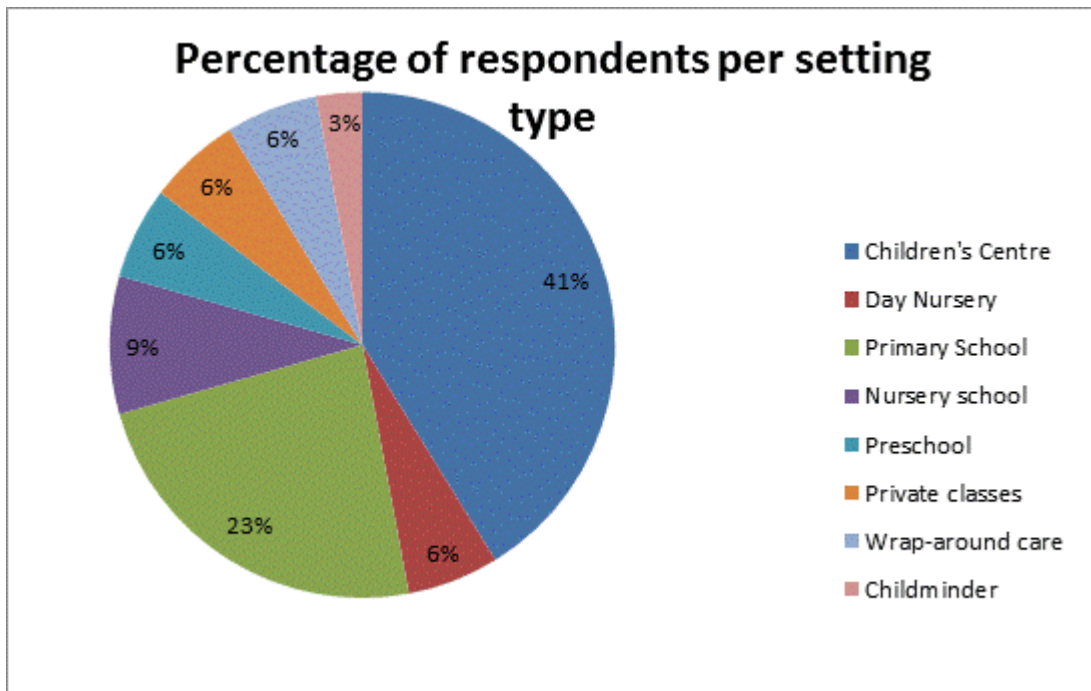


Figure 3: Percentage of respondents per setting type

The above figure demonstrates that the majority of the respondents worked within a children's centre. I had decided not to analyse my data whilst I was still within the data collection process due to the risk of interference effects; noticing something interesting in the analysis, and then becoming subconsciously biased towards looking harder for that in the rest of the data (Rugg & Petra 2007, p.68). I was therefore unaware if the data collected had provided a range of setting types during the data collection phase of my research.

Figure 4 below portrays the amount of styles of music that respondents per setting type had indicated.

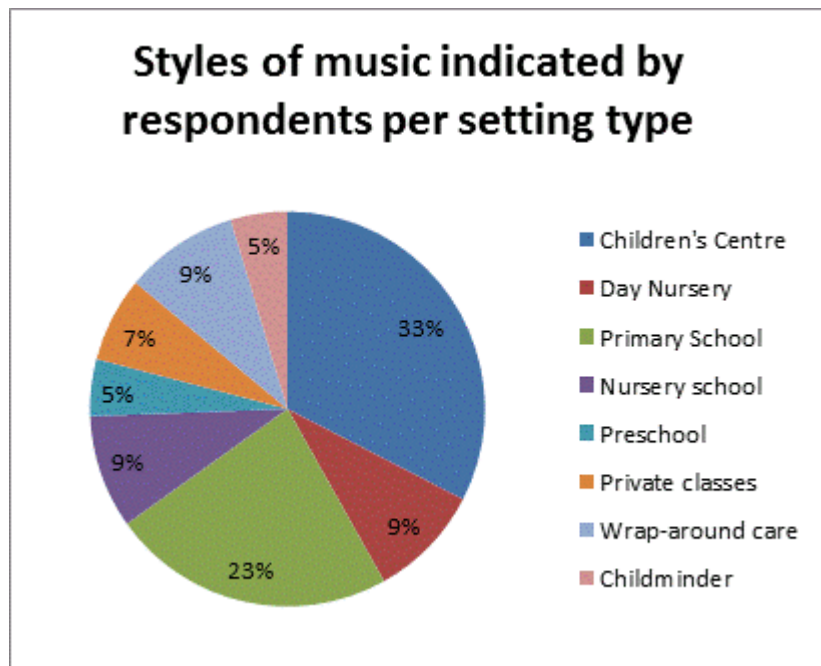


Figure 4: Styles of music indicated by respondents per setting type

Respondents from children’s centres and primary schools had indicated most of the styles with those from children’s centres indicating 31% and those from primary schools indicating 24%. The above 2 figures show that the setting types with the higher amount of respondents provided the highest number of styles of music indicated.

The results show that there were 7 styles of music that were used in more than one setting type; the remaining 17 styles were only used in one setting each. Table 2 below lists these 7 styles in rank order.

Styles of music	Number of times indicated out of 8 setting types
Nursery rhymes	7
Pop	5
Christmas	3
Relaxing	3
Classical	2
Soothing	2
World	2

Table 2: Styles of music that were used in more than one setting type

The following figures represent these 7 music styles and depict the percentage of answers given by respondents per setting type. The styles are listed in order starting with nursery rhymes as the most common style being indicated by respondents from all but 1 type of setting.

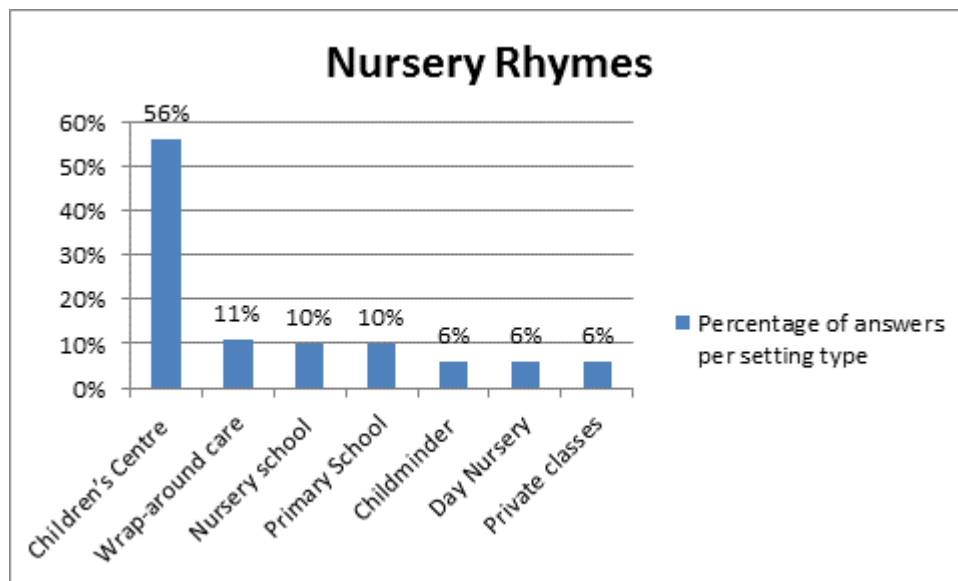


Figure 5: Respondents from setting types that indicated nursery rhymes

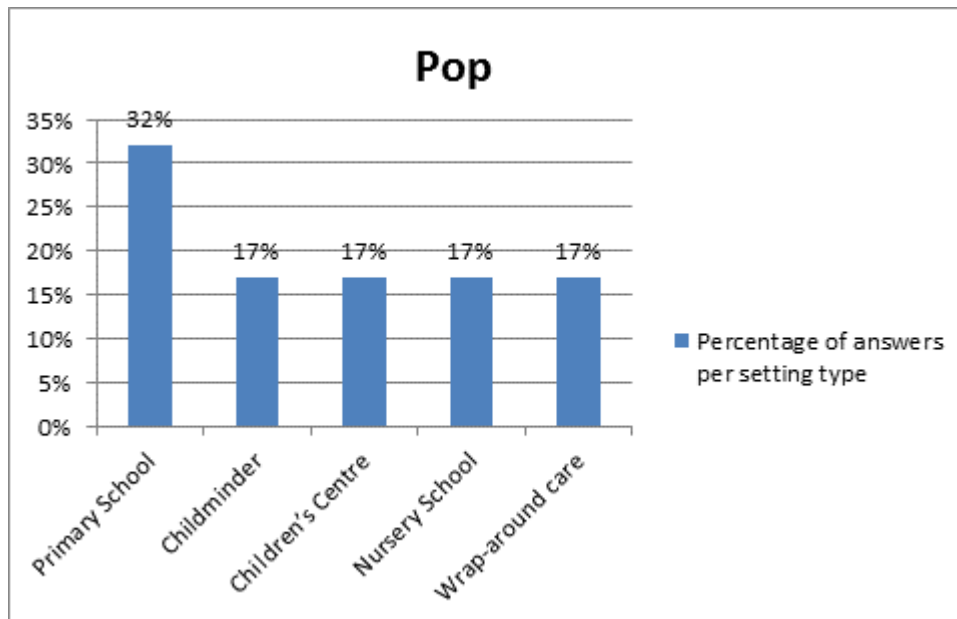


Figure 6: Respondents from setting types that indicated pop

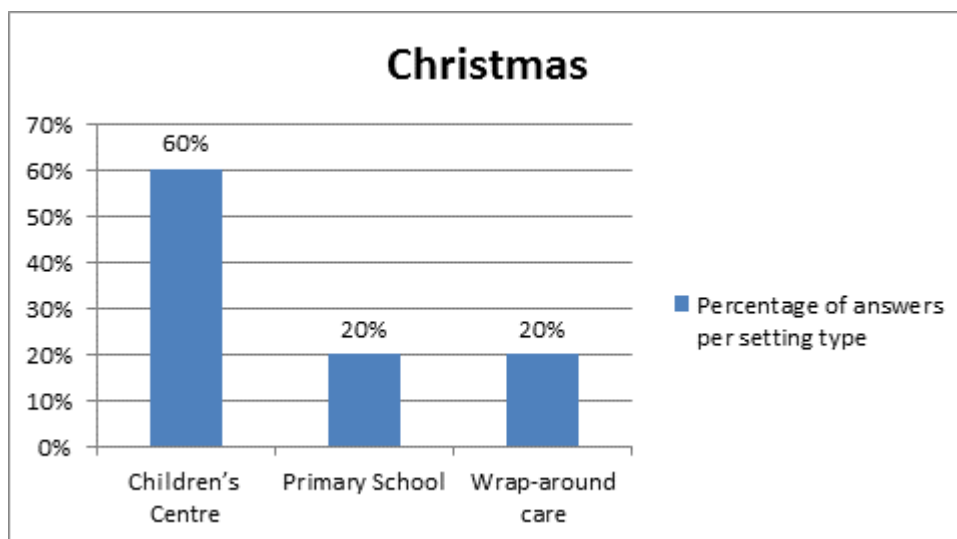


Figure 7: Respondents from setting types that indicated Christmas

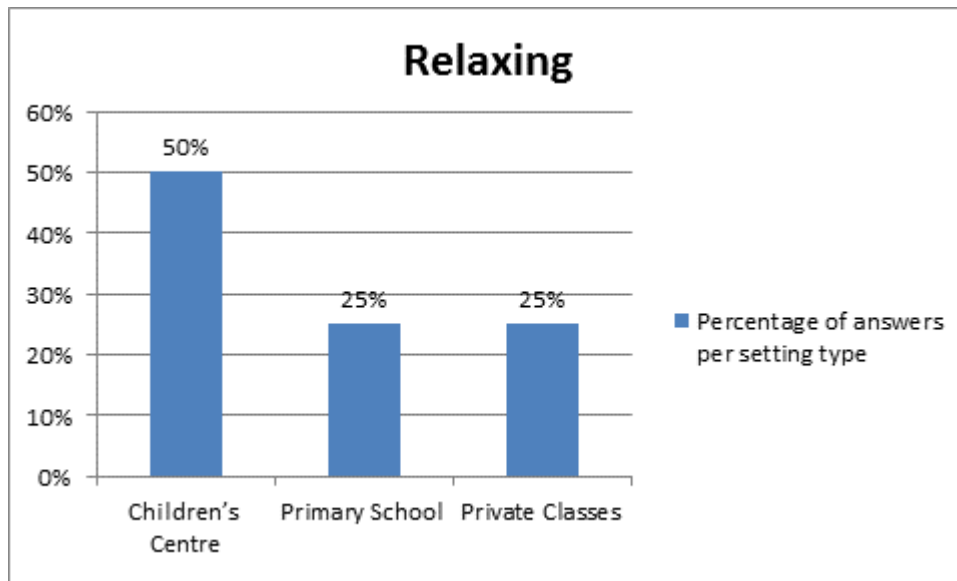


Figure 8: Respondents from setting types that indicated relaxing

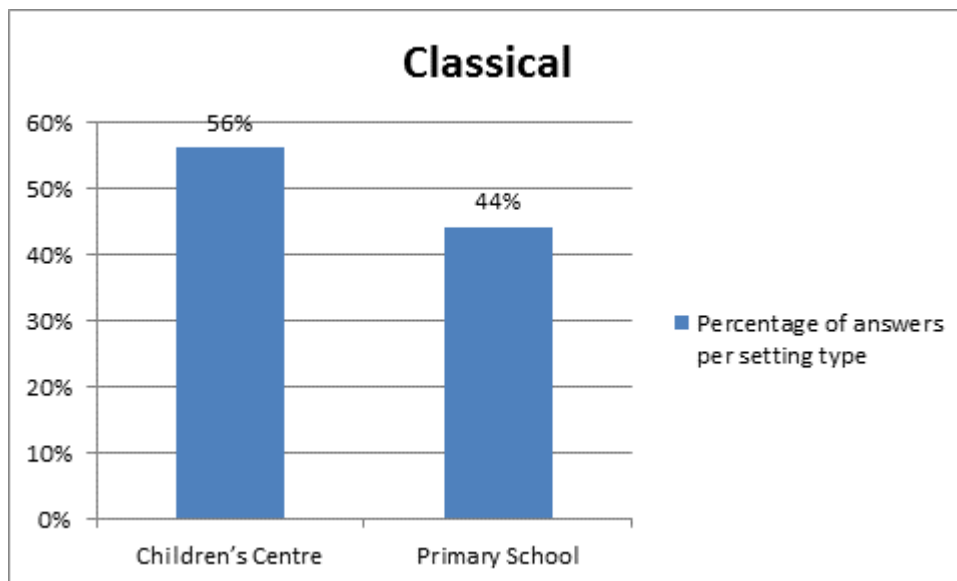


Figure 9: Respondents from setting types that indicated classical

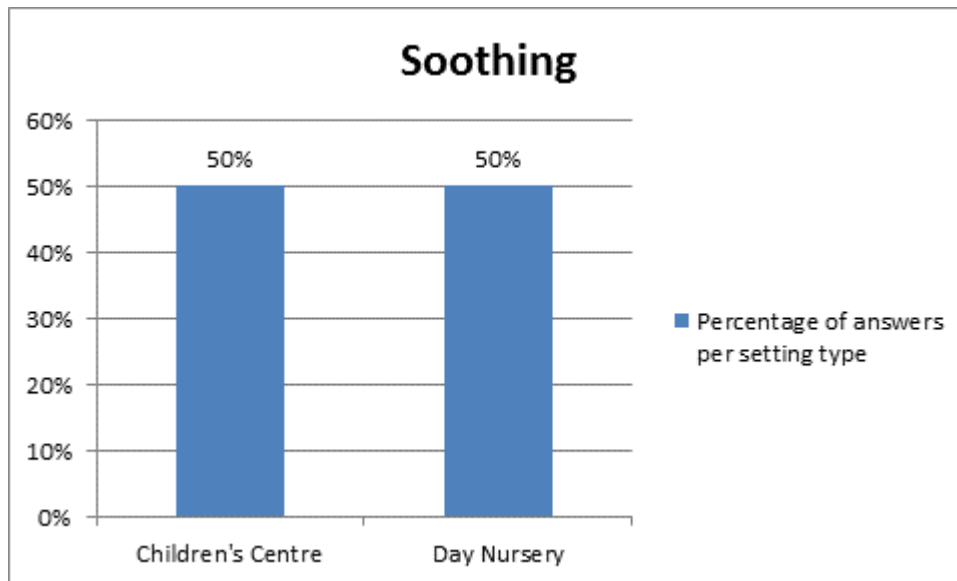


Figure 10: Respondents from setting types that indicated soothing

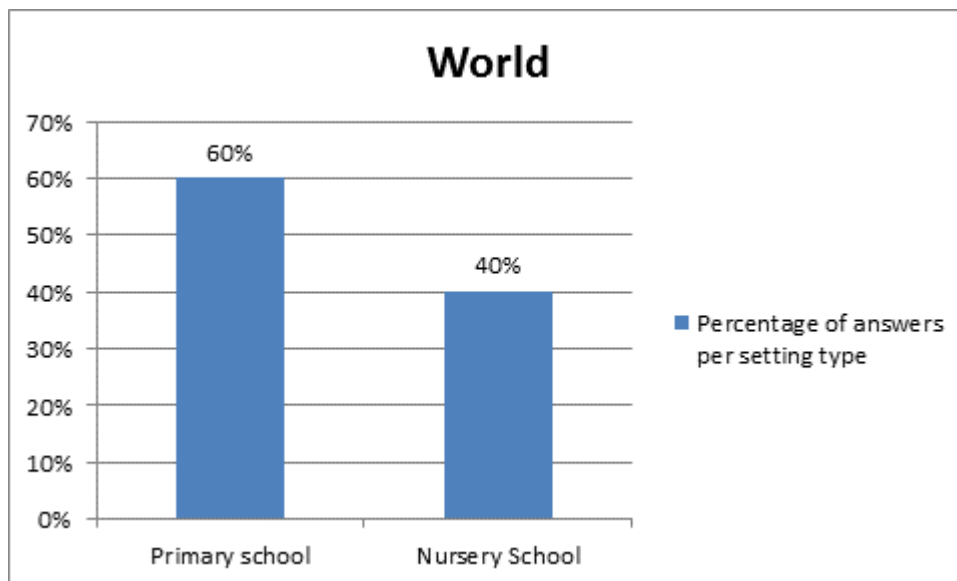


Figure 11: Respondents from setting types that indicated world

The above figures show that respondents from all types of setting indicated that they used nursery rhymes except for those from the preschool setting type. However, there were only 2 respondents from preschools, 1 of which had listed “all” when asked about the styles of

music they played which could therefore have included nursery rhymes. Unfortunately this respondent was not willing to be interviewed on the telephone so it was not possible to establish if this was so.

The most popular music styles indicated by respondents from each setting type

I was able to establish most popular styles of music indicated by respondents per setting type.

Below are 8 figures which show the most popular styles of music indicated by respondents from each setting type.

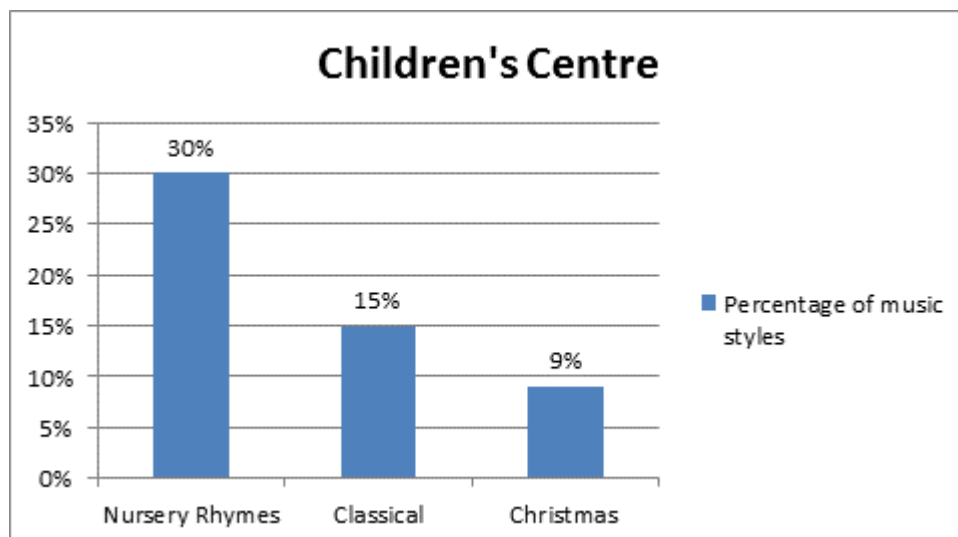


Figure 12: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working in children's centres.

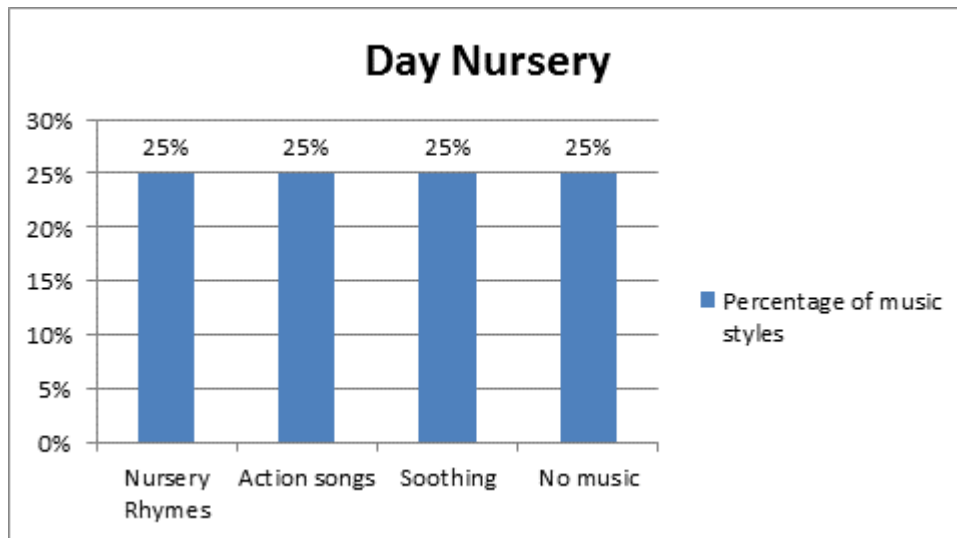


Figure 13: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working in day nurseries

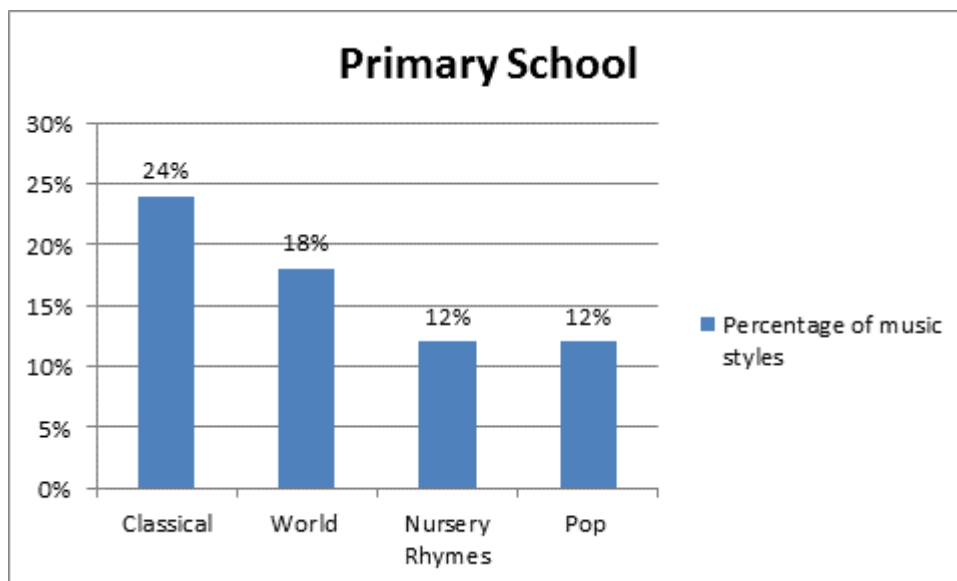


Figure 14: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working in primary schools

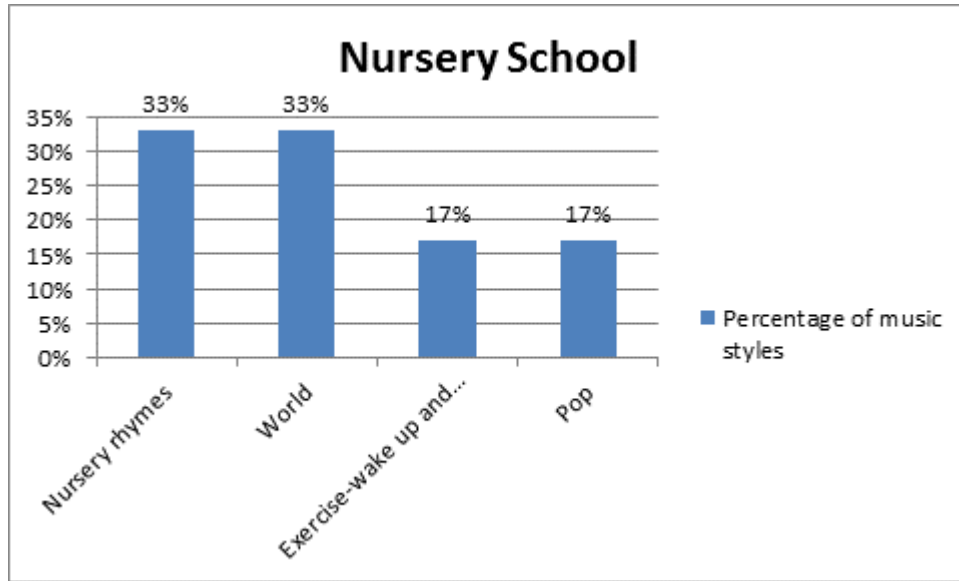


Figure 15: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working in nursery schools

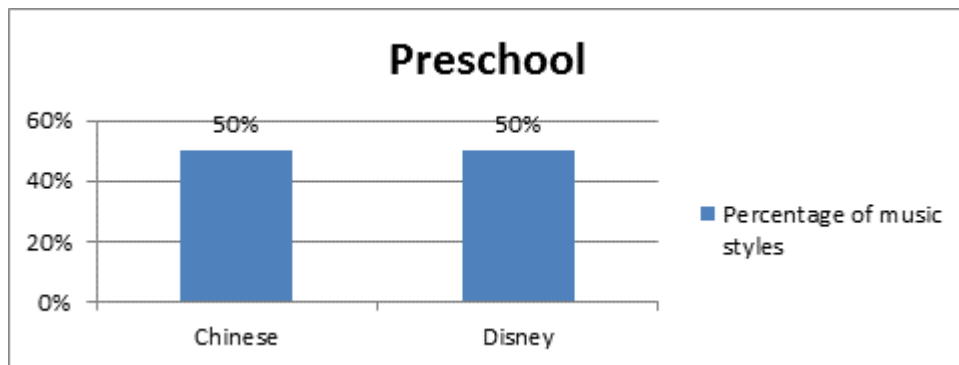


Figure 16: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working in preschools

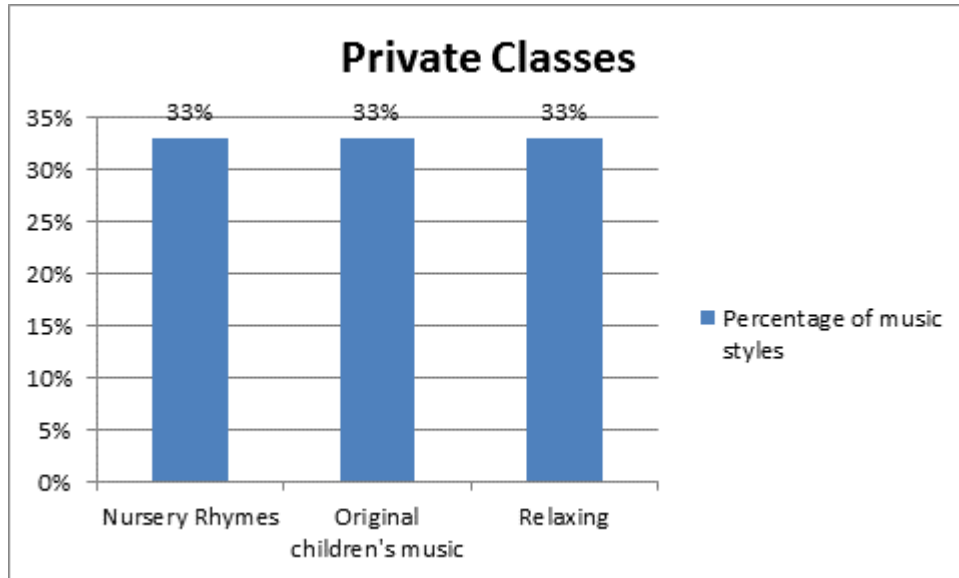


Figure 17: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working in private classes

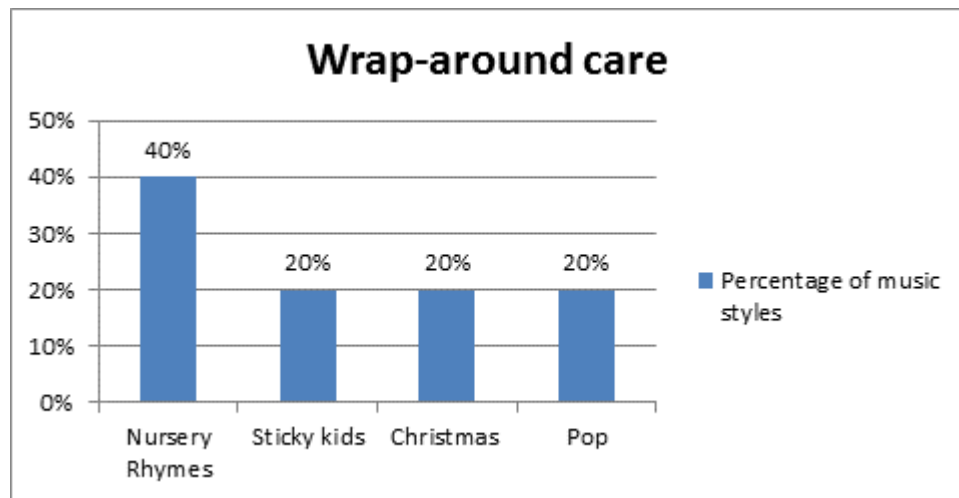


Figure 18: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working in wrap-around care

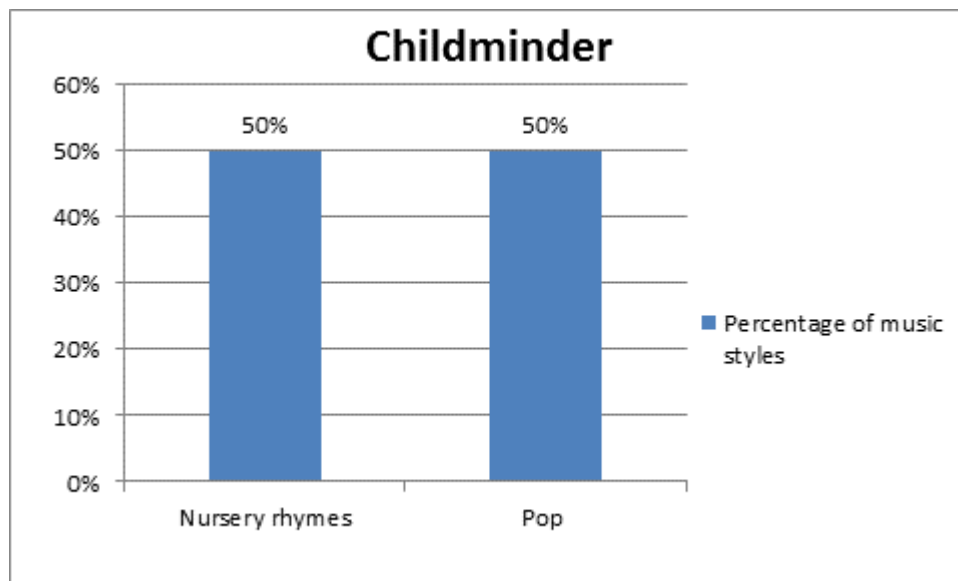


Figure 19: Most popular music styles indicated by childminders

The above results show that there were 13 styles of music which were most used in total by respondents working in all types of settings. Even though there were 24 styles listed in total across the survey, 11 of those styles had minimal usage by respondents across the settings. The results also show that nursery rhymes ranked first in six out of the eight setting types. It appears that there is not a wide range of styles of music drawn upon on the whole by respondents per setting type. Respondents from 4 of the setting types indicated 4 music styles in their most popular, respondents from 2 of the setting types indicated 3 music styles and respondents from 2 of the setting types indicated 2 most popular music styles. The findings clearly show that a wide range of styles of music is not utilised within early childhood settings.

Styles of music used by practitioners with specified age ranges of children

4) Is there a relationship between the age of children in settings and the styles of music used?

The procedures that I used to establish if there was a relationship between the type of setting and the styles of music used were repeated exactly to seek if there were relationships between the age of children in settings and the styles of music used.

The 34 respondents worked with 8 different age ranges of children. The age ranges were specified by the respondents as I did not offer a selection of age ranges to choose from on the questionnaire. There are overlaps within the ranges but to group them together would have meant losing the ability to explore my question.

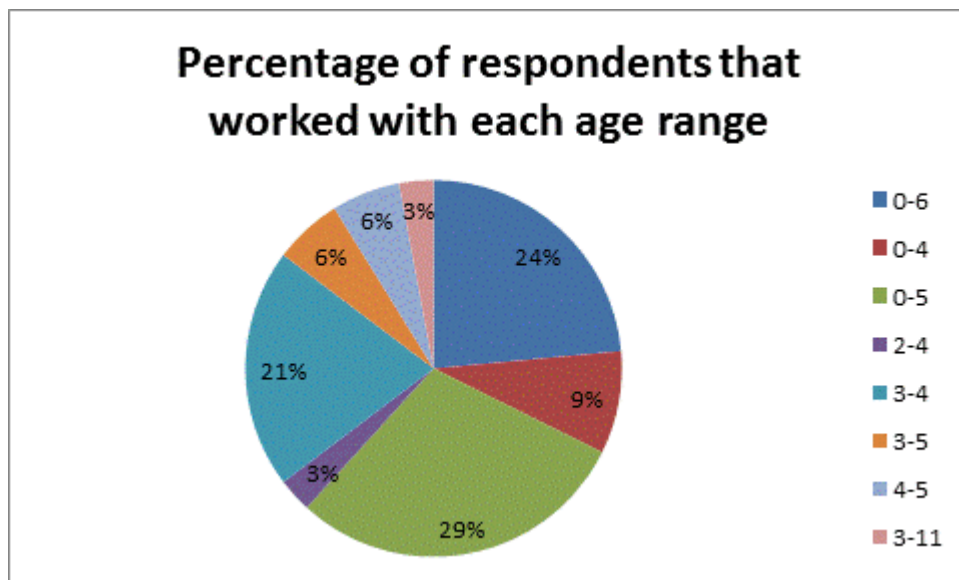


Figure 20: Percentage of respondents that worked with each age range

The above figure demonstrates a fairly even distribution of respondents that worked with the 0-6, 0-5, and 3-4 age ranges with the remaining 5 age ranges each taking a smaller percentage, age 2-4 and 3-11 being the smallest age range that respondents worked with at 3% each.

Figure 21 below portrays the amount of different styles of music that respondents working with each age range indicated.

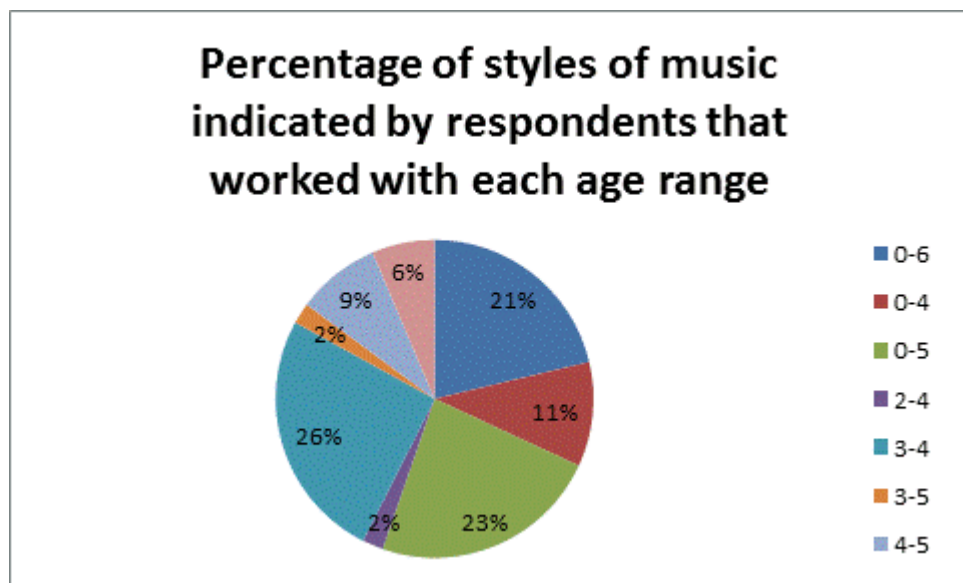


Figure 21: Percentage of styles of music indicated by respondents that worked with each age range

The results show that there were a top 3 of age ranges of children which were exposed to the most amounts of styles of music. Those working with the 3-4 age range indicated 27% of the styles, 0-5 indicated 23% and 0-6 indicated 21%. Collectively, those who work with the 0-5 and 0-6 age ranges indicated 44% of the styles. It is worth noting that those working with these age ranges also completed a significant proportion of the questionnaires. However, the findings could suggest that a wider range of styles of music are used by those

practitioners working with a wider age range of children compared to those working with a smaller age range.

The results show that there were 8 styles of music that were used with more than one age range of children; the remaining 16 styles were only used with one age range each.

Table 3 below lists the 8 types in rank order.

Styles of music	Number of times indicated out of 8 age ranges
Nursery rhymes	6
Classical	5
World	5
Relaxing	4
Christmas	3
Pop	3
Children's songs	2
Soothing	2

Table 3: Styles of music that were used with more than one age range

The 8 figures below are listed in order of most commonly used styles that respondents used across the age ranges.

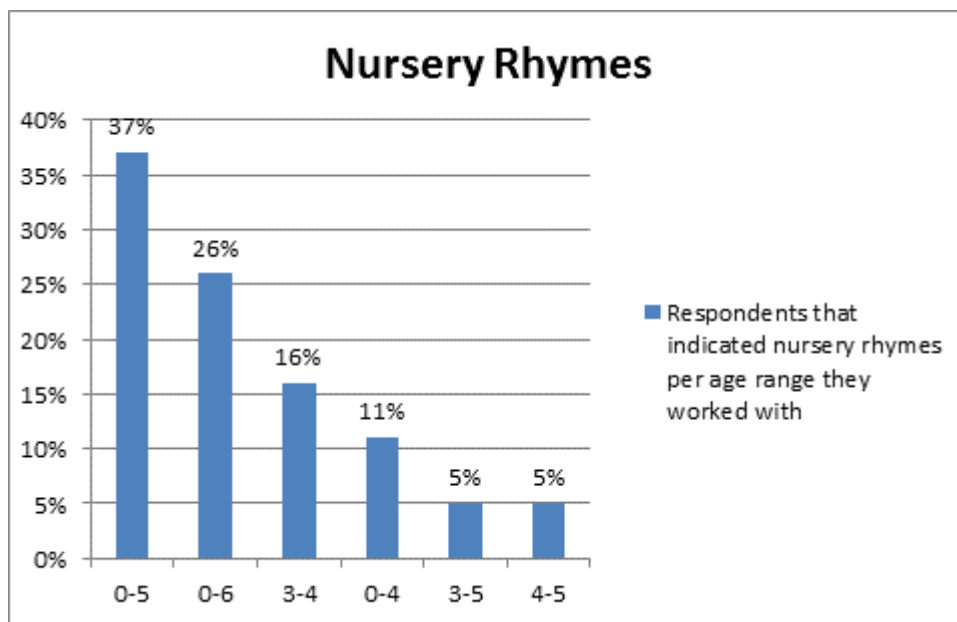


Figure 22: Percentage of respondents that indicated nursery rhymes per age range that they worked with

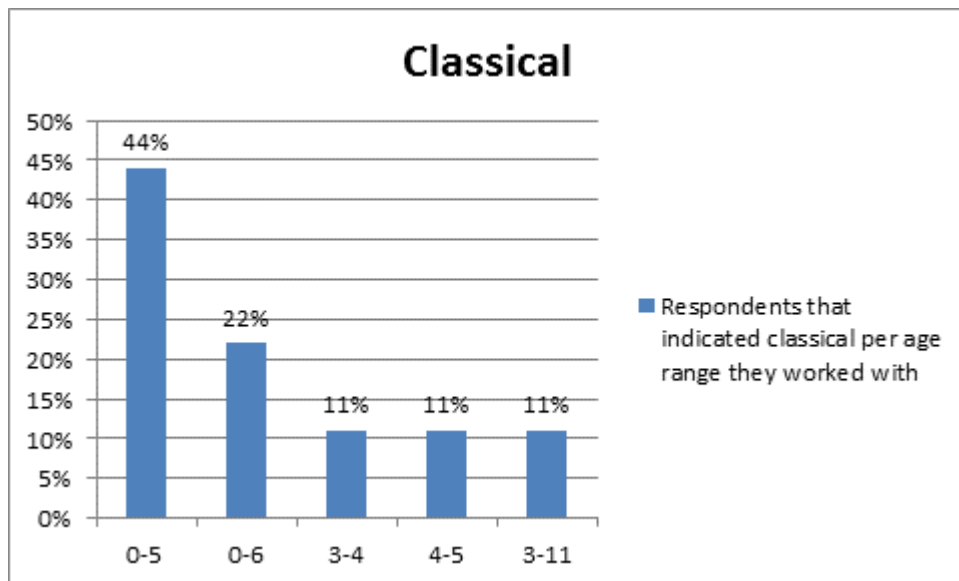


Figure 23: Percentage of respondents that indicated classical per age range that they worked with

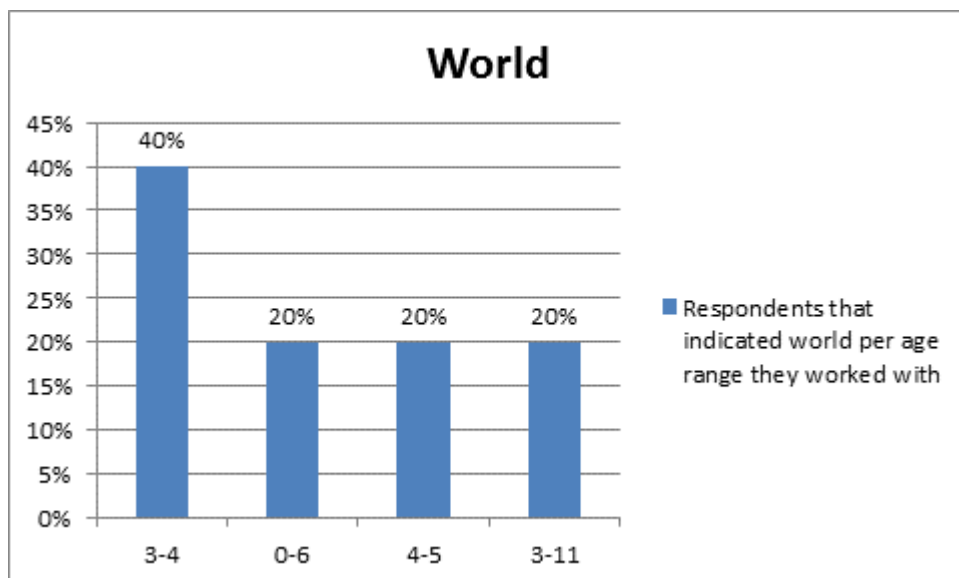


Figure 24: Percentage of respondents that indicated world per age range that they worked with

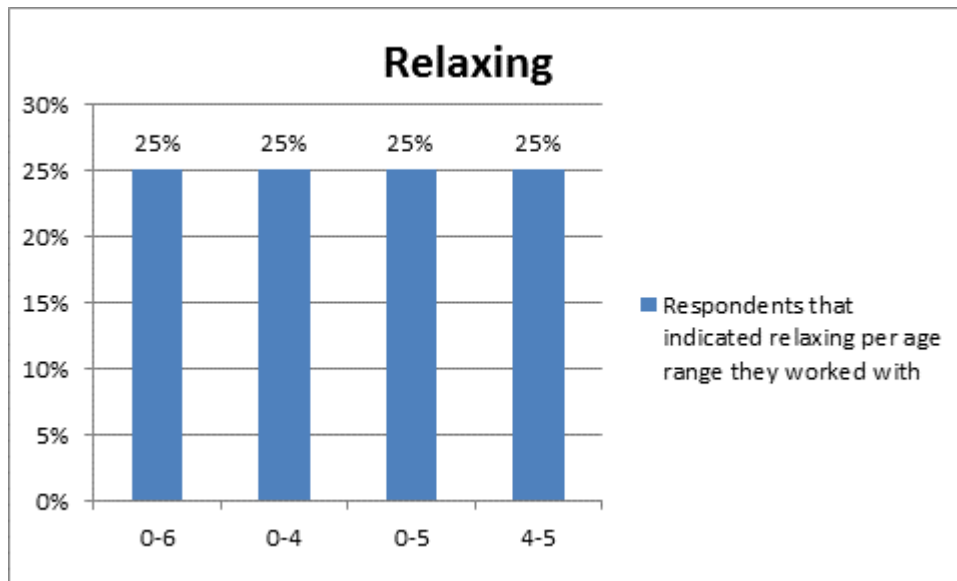


Figure 25: Percentage of respondents that indicated relaxing per age range that they worked with

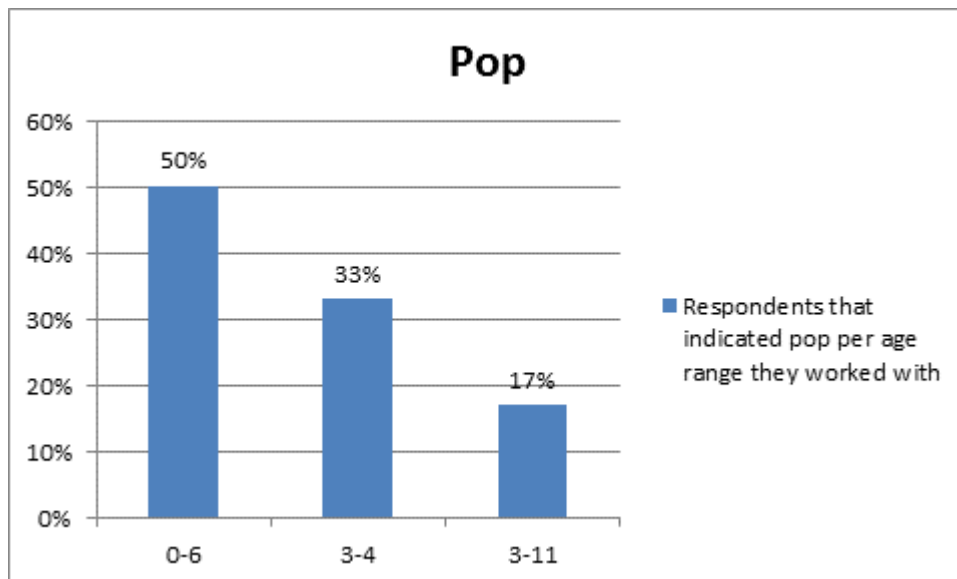


Figure 26: Percentage of respondents that indicated pop per age range that they worked with

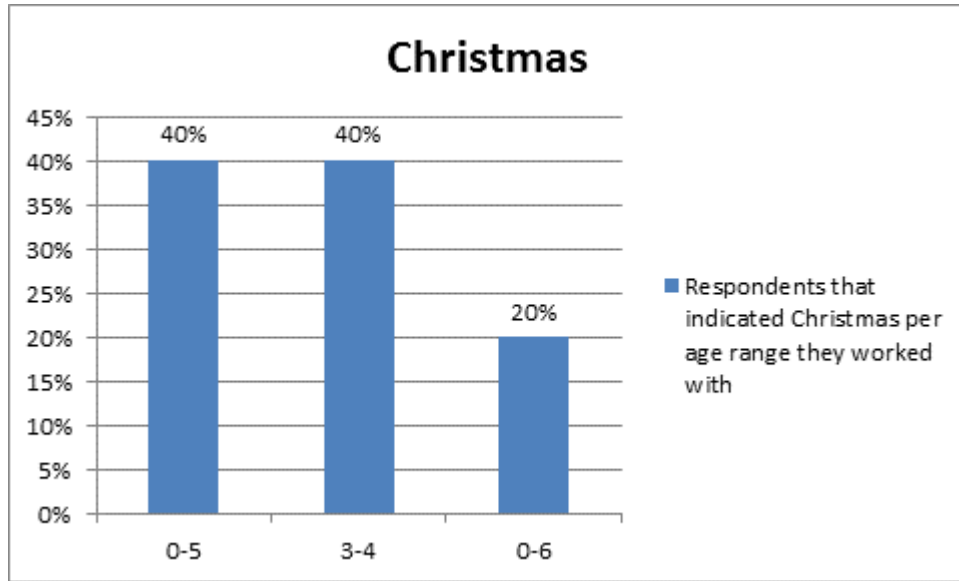


Figure 27: Percentage of respondents that indicated Christmas per age range that they worked with

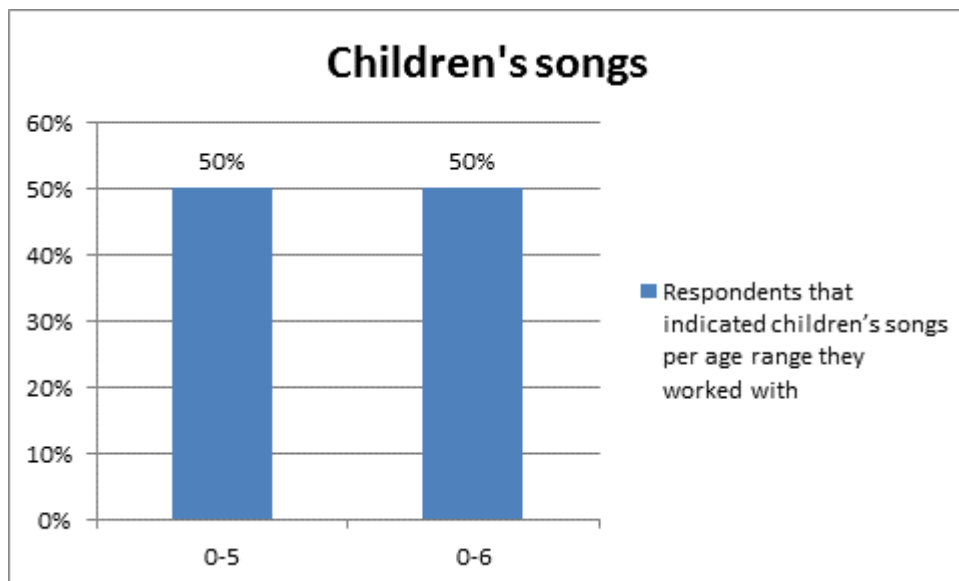


Figure 28: Percentage of respondents that indicated children's songs per age range that they worked with

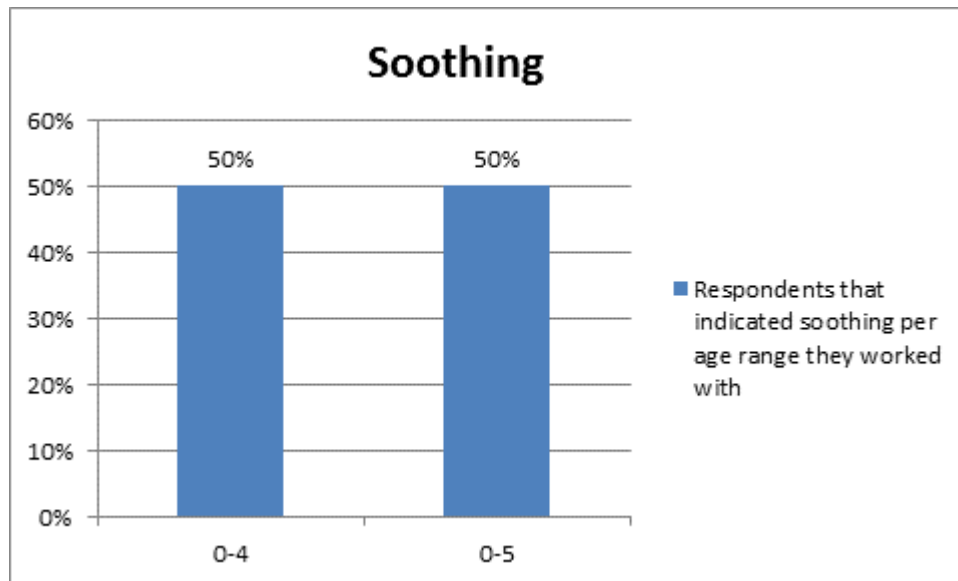


Figure 29: Percentage of respondents that indicated soothing per age range that they worked with

Classical music was indicated by those working with 5 of the 8 age ranges and nursery rhymes were indicated by respondents who worked with all ranges starting at birth and not with ranges aged 2-4 and 3-11.

The most popular music styles indicated by respondents per age range that they work with
 Below are 8 figures which show the most popular music styles indicated by respondents per each age range that they work with. There is not a figure for the 2-4 age range; only 1 respondent worked with the 2-4 age range and this respondent indicated that they did not use recorded music.

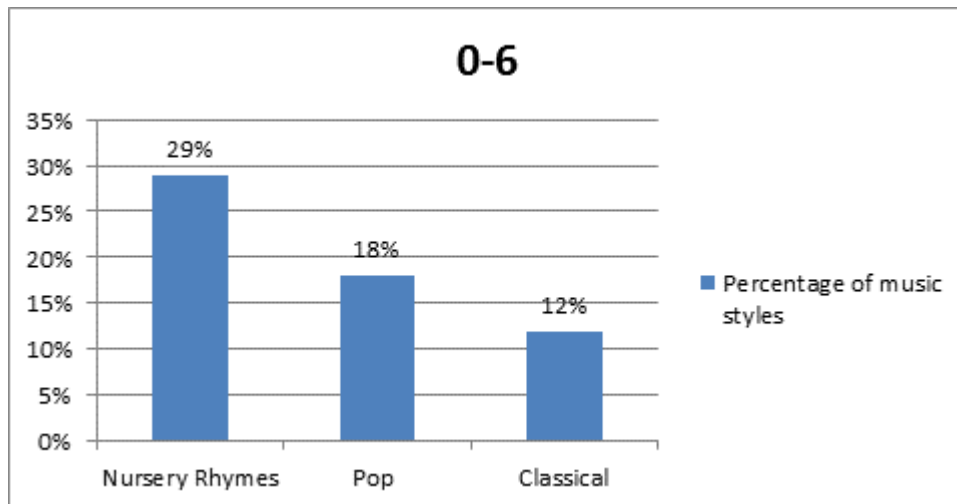


Figure 30: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working with the 0-6 age range

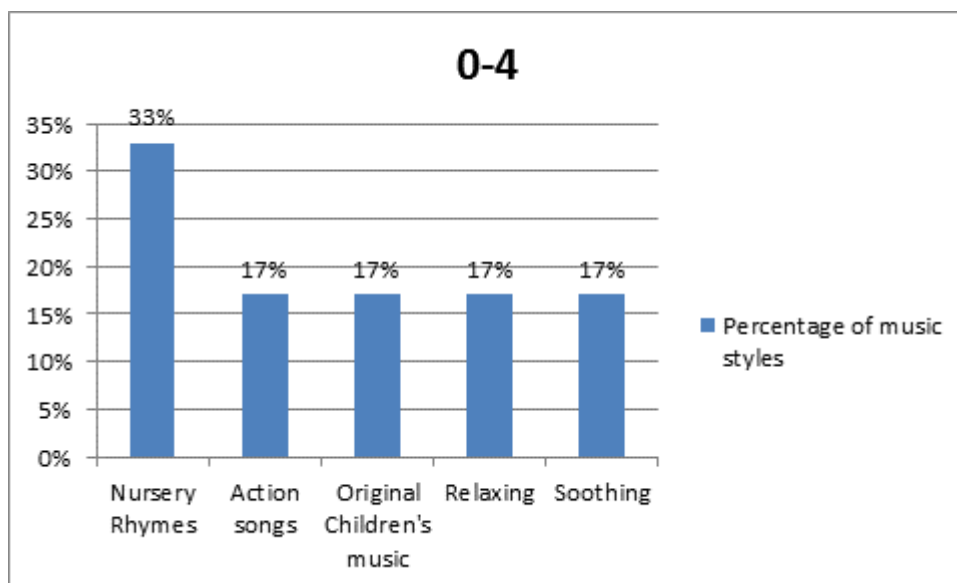


Figure 31: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working with the 0-4 age range

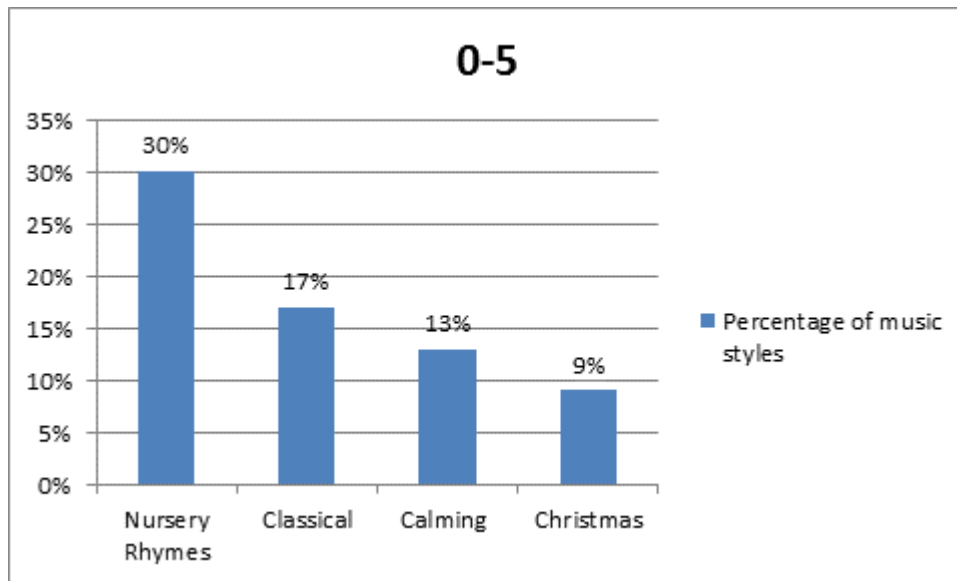


Figure 32: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working with the 0-5 age range

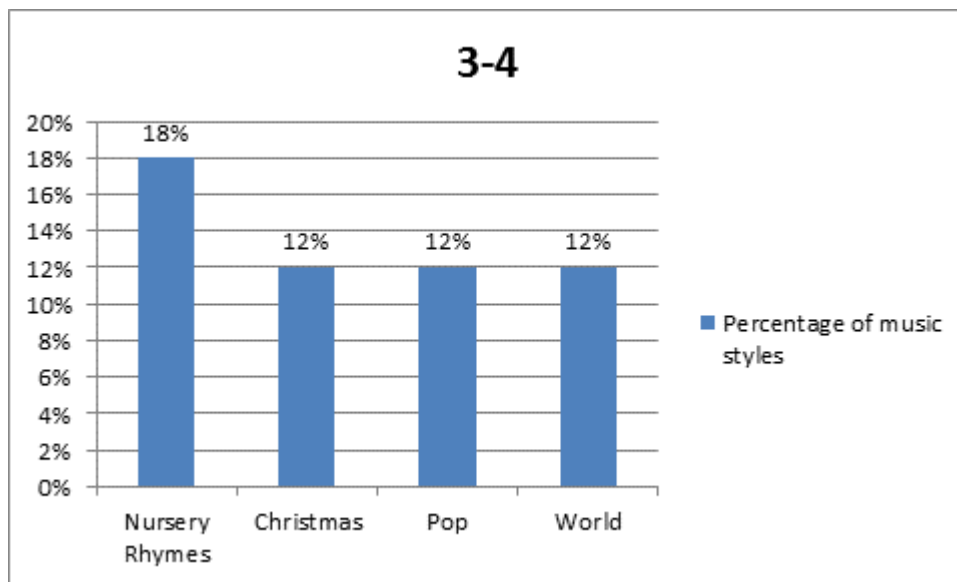


Figure 33: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working with the 3-4 age range

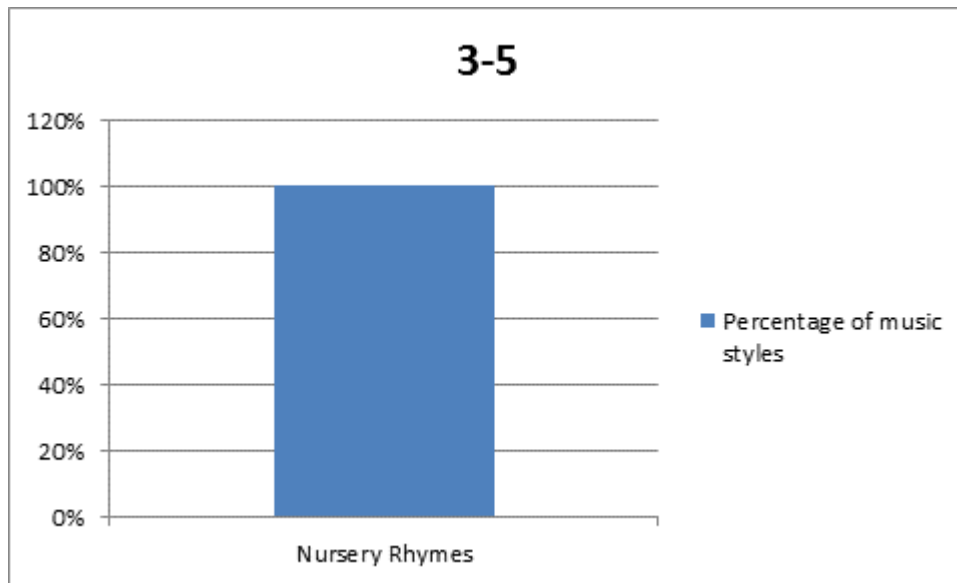


Figure 34: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working with the 3-5 age range

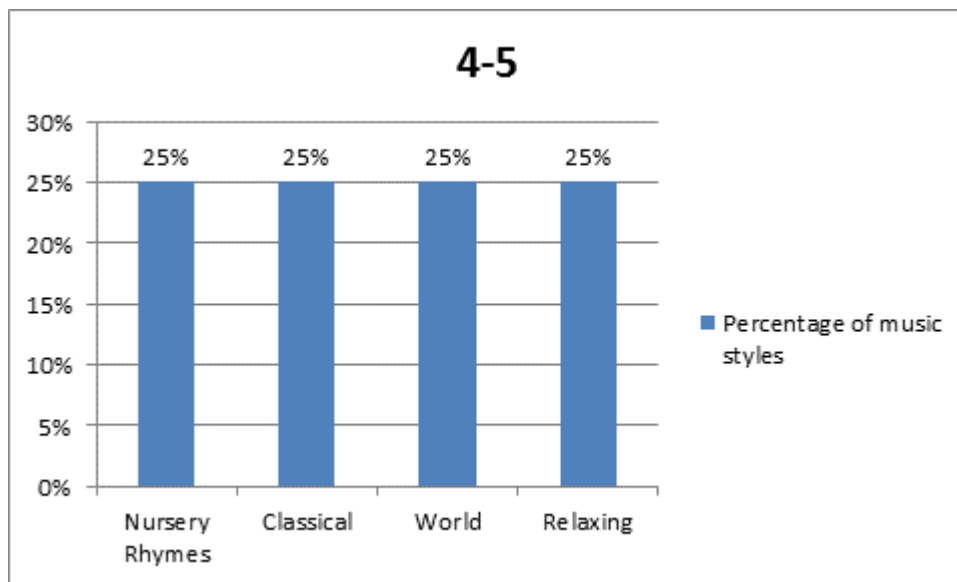


Figure 35: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working with the 4-5 age range

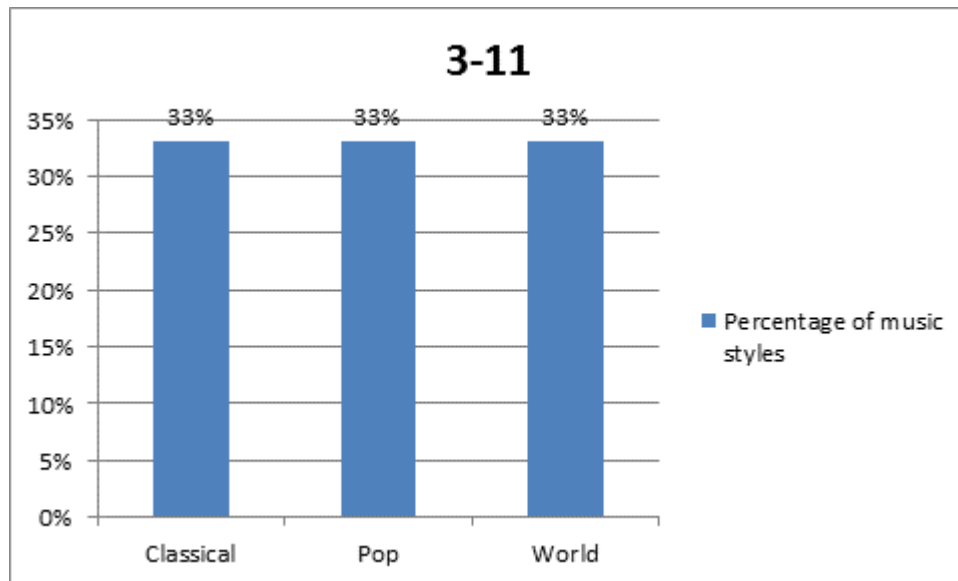


Figure 36: Most popular music styles indicated by respondents working with the 3-11 age range

Nursery rhymes ranked first in six out of the eight age ranges that respondents work with.

The above results show that there were 10 styles of music which were most used in total across all age ranges that respondents worked with. Even though there were 24 styles listed in total across the survey, 14 of those styles had minimal usage within the age ranges.

Similarly to the results of the music indicated by setting type, it also appears that there is not a wide range of styles of music drawn upon on the whole by practitioners working with each of the age ranges. Those working with birth-4 had 5 styles in their most popular although 2 of these styles were relaxing and soothing which may be very similar in style.

Two age ranges had 4 styles in their most popular and 3 age ranges had 3 styles in their most popular. Those working with the 3-5 age range only indicated nursery rhymes and the 2-4 age range were not exposed to recorded music at all.

Findings from the interviews

The results of the written survey show that there was not a wide range of styles of music used within the settings. I was able to ask about this in more detail within the telephone interviews. Six out of 34 respondents had indicated that they were willing to be interviewed.

The most prominent finding from the written survey was the use of nursery rhymes which was not only the most style indicated taking 27% of the overall styles indicated but was also used by 56% of respondents in 7 out of the 8 setting types and with 6 out of the 8 age ranges.

One interviewee from a children's centre explained that they:

‘Use nursery rhyme CD's in the background within the sessions that we run for families. They are on low in the background for familiarity for the families; we hope that this will create a familiar environment for families to help to make them feel comfortable and welcome’. (See Appendix C, Interviewee F).

The second most prominent finding from the survey was the use of classical music; it was the second most indicated style, 13%, by 26% of respondents in 2 out of the 8 setting types and with 5 out of the 8 age ranges. Classical music ranked high in both primary school settings (rank 1) and in children's centres (rank 2). I was unable to speak with a respondent from a primary school but was able to ask a children's centre respondent about this, they said that classical music was used in their baby massage sessions and that:

‘One of our team had training on baby massage and was told that classical music is the best music to use for baby massage and actually there was a book which accompanied the training which stated that Mendelssohn's music was the best music to use for calming babies’. (See Appendix C, Interviewee F).

The third style of music out of the top 5 indicated was pop at 8%, by 18% of respondents in 5 out of 8 setting types and with 3 out of 8 age ranges. There were some comments from the interviewees regarding pop music:

‘We don’t really use pop music and I don’t really know why. I don’t know whether it’s because at work we feel it is high art/low art, we will have classical music on and not pop music.’ (See Appendix C, Interviewee C).

‘We have the *Now* CD’s in the setting for older children which is used for the out of school club with children aged 5 plus’. (See Appendix C, Interviewee B).

When I asked if pop music was used in the nursery provision the interviewee said:

‘No, they are in completely separate rooms and away from that.’ (See Appendix C, Interviewee B).

A theme within the interviews was the use of world music, although this style was not within the top 5 styles indicated overall there was some interesting data gathered from the interviewees.

‘We use songs from other cultures; we use music from the children’s culture to represent the children and to help children settle’. (See Appendix C, Interviewee C).

‘We use a lot of Bollywood, Bhangra and African drumming music to cater for the ethnic minorities in our setting’. (See Appendix C, Interviewee E).

When I asked Interviewee E if this was because they knew that the children heard this music at home they responded:

‘No, to be honest we think that we are catering for their cultural background but in fact this is fairly presumptuous as we don’t actually know if this music is actually part of the individual children’s culture’.

On the whole the findings show that there is not a wide range of music used in the settings.

When I asked why there was not a wider range of music available, two of the interviewees answered the following:

‘Any type of music should be available really’, ‘I can’t think of any that would be unsuitable for young children’, (See Appendix C, Interviewee A).

‘I think it is just part of our regime-I don’t really know why.’(See Appendix C, Interviewee F).

Findings from interviews with Nursery Chain Managers

(See Appendix D for the full response)

I contacted the 5 chains of nurseries which had the highest volumes of settings across the country. Two out of the 5 chains were willing to talk to me. The Education Manager of one of the chains stated that they had no specific policy in place and that the use of recorded music was at the discretion of each manager within their settings.

The other chain willing to communicate with me did have a set policy in place. I was able to communicate via email with the Deputy Childcare and Curriculum Manager. This particular chain has over 200 day nurseries across the country. In terms of my data collection the results of this discussion were therefore very significant as each of the other 34 respondents of the survey represented 1 setting each.

The Deputy Childcare and Curriculum Manager stated that their policy involved details about the use of radio and the style of music that is allowed within the rooms of their settings. The policy states that 'Classical FM is the only station allowed'. The reason that no other station is allowed is 'due to the nature of the music, conversation and even the news reports that are aired regularly'. The policy also states that 'pop music is not allowed'. The reason for this is that 'some of the pop music is not appropriate for the children to listen to'.

The styles of music that they recommend to be played are classical, relaxing, children's nursery rhymes and children's music from around the world; this however is not in their policy. When asked why these styles of music are recommended they answered 'to provide the children with a variety of music to encourage discussion about different cultures. The relaxing music is to help children feel calm and relaxed in our environments. The classical music is also to provide the children the opportunities to hear different musical instruments; the children's music is to help develop the ability to sing the songs and rhymes'.

When and how music is used

The results of the answers provided from the written questionnaire show that there are clear themes regarding both when and how music is used; these results are presented first. There are overlapping themes which cannot be separated into how and when, for example some respondents indicated that they use music for routines and that this would take place at set times during the day. I have therefore presented the findings from the interviews regarding when and how music is used collectively following the results of the written questionnaire.

5) Are there patterns of when recorded music is used?

Using the spread sheet containing the answers which indicated when recorded music was used, I was able to establish if there were patterns within the answers and create a summary. I repeated the same analysis procedure that I followed for styles of music used for analysing both when and how music was used.

Of the 34 respondents 17 indicated that they used music at particular times. There were 13 different times that were indicated. Table 4 and figures 37 and 38 below demonstrate this.

Within sessions for families
Lunch time and Assembly time
Different types of music throughout the day
All of the time
Tidy up time
Anytime
1 st hour before snack time
Entrance and Exit
When children enter
In response to children's choice

After snack time
Throughout the day
End of the day

Table 4: Particular times that music was indicated as being used

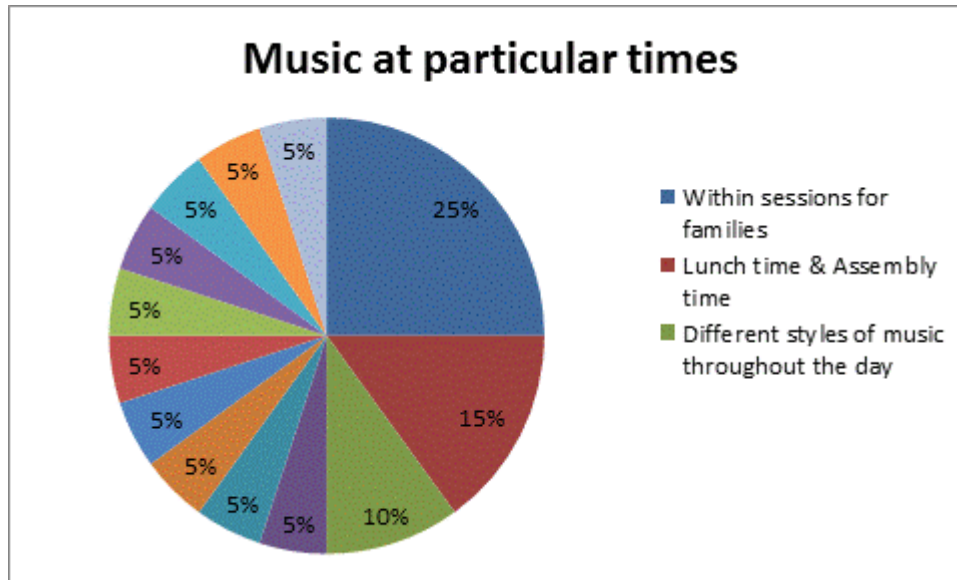


Figure 37: Percentage that music was indicated for particular times

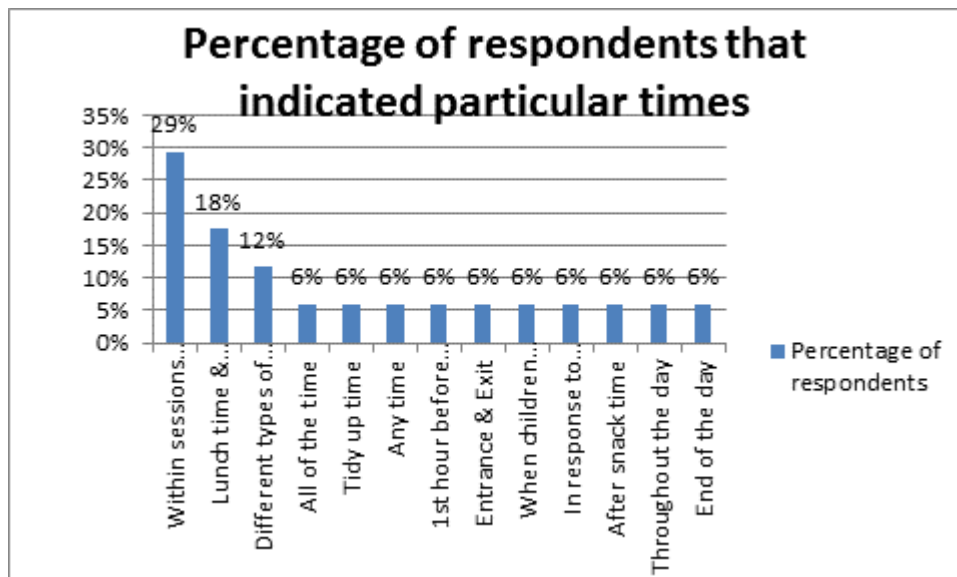


Figure 38: Percentage of respondents who indicated use of music at particular times

The 29% who indicated that they used music within sessions for families were all respondents from children's centres. Lunch time and assembly time was indicated by 18% of respondents all of whom were from a primary school setting, suggesting that music is used as background music during lunch time and perhaps for listening during assembly or during entrancing and exiting. I was unable to establish the exact usage as the respondents were not willing to be interviewed. These 2 findings show that the type of setting has an impact on when music is used within the day to day activities. There was no pattern in relation to the age range of the children and when music was used. When looking at the individual 17 responses, apart from those that had indicated 'any time' and 'all the time' there was not a range of times that music was used in each individual setting. There was only ever a maximum of 2 different times used per respondent. Interestingly, of the 17 respondents who had indicated that they use music at particular times, not one respondent indicated that they use music during music sessions, music time or during listening activities.

6) Are there patterns of how recorded music is used?

Thirty two of the 34 respondents indicated how they made use of recorded music. There were 8 types of usage which are shown in figures 39 and 40 below.

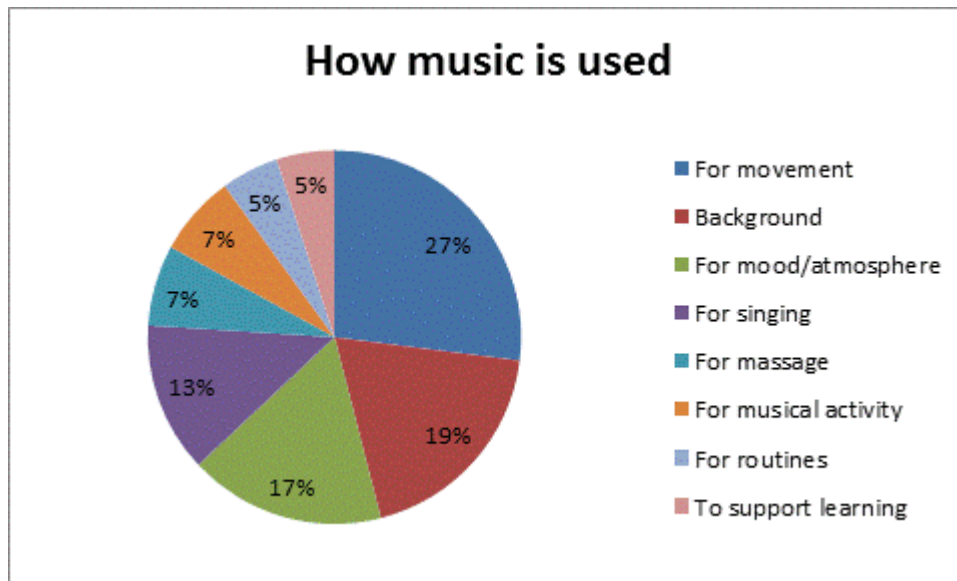


Figure 39: Percentage that music was indicated for particular purposes

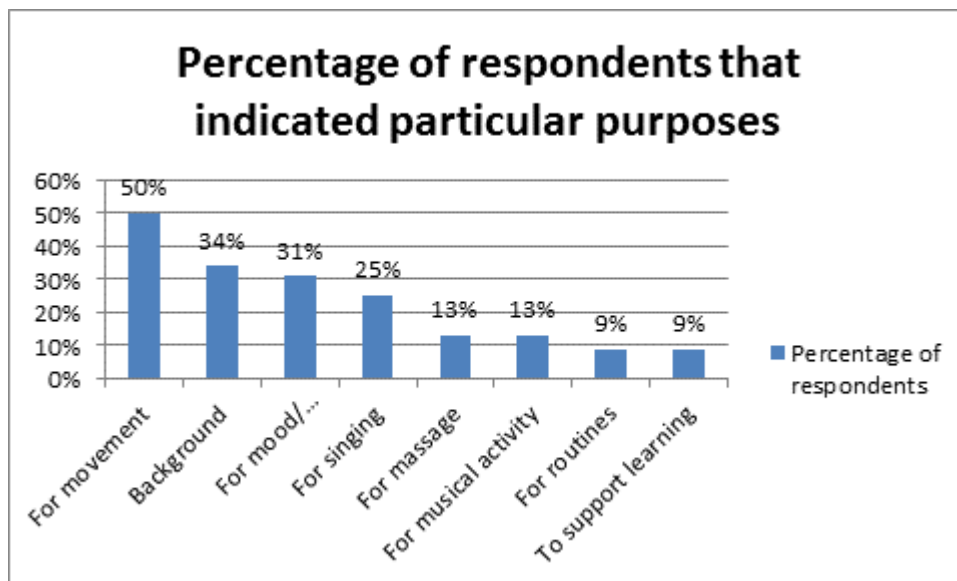


Figure 40: Percentage of respondents that indicated for particular purposes

Twenty seven per cent of the purposes indicated was for movement and was indicated by 50% of those who responded. Seven respondents indicated that they use music ‘in the background’; however there were other purposes indicated which would suggest that music

is in the background; responses such as in 'free-flow', 'when the children choose', and 'generally around the environment.' I decided therefore that these responses would be best fitted within the background music category which then equated to 19% of the type of purposes indicated by 34% of respondents. The atmosphere/mood category equated to 17% of the purposes indicated by 31% of respondents and consisted of responses such as 'calming music for babies', 'mood music', 'to relax' and 'to set mood'.

Singing was 13% of the usage indicated by 25% of respondents and those responses included singing with songs as well as singing with music to accompany songs. Only 7% of the purposes were specifically for musical activities other than purely singing to or with a CD and was indicated by 13% of respondents. These activities included karaoke sing along, as a stimulus for children's own compositions and to show a concept, for example using speed to demonstrate fast and slow.

Seven per cent of the purposes were for massage and was indicated by 13% of respondents. Three were from children's centres who offered baby massage and 1 was from a nursery school where they include peer massage within their setting. The 5% of the purposes for routines by 9% of respondents stated that the routines included those such as tidy up time, lining up for playtime and for transition times. The 5% of purposes by 9% of respondents who indicated that they use music to support learning clarified this by stating that they used CD's which contained number songs and phonic songs.

Findings from interviews

A prominent finding from the written questionnaire regarding when music was used was that it was not used at specific times. Five of the 13 times specified were not specific times;

responses such as ‘in response to children’s needs and choices’ and ‘anytime’. When asked about this one interviewee said:

Obviously there are routines for the day and we use music but we do take account of children’s moods and who is there. If the weather is bad and we can’t go outside then we might use music for more activity inside. (See Appendix C, Interviewee A).

A prominent finding from the answers provided from the written questionnaire was that music is very much used in the background. Five out of the six interviewees said that they use music in the background. One interviewee expanded on the use of background music in their setting:

‘Sometimes we use nursery thymes and songs and we put them on so that they are on in the background. If the music is on when the children come in they don’t really notice and its background music whereas if we put it on they notice a change and will start jumping up and down and dancing. The background music adds to the atmosphere and helps their learning by helping them learn words and language and it’s nice to have on in the background, we usually try to have something on the radio or CD is generally on. We generally have the radio in in the morning and it is left on’. (See Appendix C, Interviewee D).

Twenty five per cent of respondents who indicated how they used music in the written questionnaires indicated that they used recorded music for singing. This was in contrast to one interviewee who said:

‘I would expect counting songs to be sung by practitioners although there is a place for recorded music, particularly for teaching practitioners new songs; they can learn new songs by listening to recorded versions. It is very difficult for children to keep pace with recorded music when they are doing other learning so you need to be able to stop and the best way of doing that is to sing it yourself’. (See Appendix C, Interviewee A.)

Four of the 6 interviewees said that they used music as a tool or vehicle for other learning and I was able to ask them to expand on this:

‘It’s not about music as such, it’s about the learning, with using classical music or non-word music for teaching moods – you can talk about music that makes you feel happy and music that makes you feel sad and that is PSED’. (See Appendix C, Interviewee A).

‘It does promote language and literacy skills’. (See Appendix C, Interviewee B).

‘We use songs on a CD for phonics to reinforce with a song’. (See Appendix C, Interviewee B).

Discussion

This study involved 34 people who work within early childhood education, each representing a different early childhood setting. The findings of the study are very clear and the discussion offered below has been written with certainty in relation to my sample. Given the size of the sample and given that the respondents offered a representation of different types of settings, I believe that the findings could be generalisable to all early childhood settings.

Styles of music used

The results of the study show that there is little variety in the styles of music used within early childhood settings and that there are specific styles of music generally used. The study found that the widest range of music styles are used by practitioners working with a wide age range of children. It is worth noting that those working with these age ranges also completed a significant proportion of the questionnaires. However the findings could also suggest that those practitioners use specific music for the different ages of children they work with. The findings also suggest that there are preferred types of music for certain age groups; nursery rhymes were used with all groups starting from birth and not with the 3-11 age range.

Respondents from children's centres indicated the most amount of styles. It is worth mentioning that 41% of the respondents worked within a children's centre and this could perhaps explain this finding. However, children's centres generally offer a range of services which are delivered by a variety of skilled workers and professionals with a range of skills

and expertise. The services provided are for adults and children and can range from antenatal sessions, baby massage, play sessions for families, to smoke cessation groups for adults. Children's centres are therefore different to the other setting types involved in the study; the focus within the services offered is not necessarily always on children. Perhaps this is why the range of styles of music drawn upon is more diverse, suggesting that the wider the age group, the wider the styles of music used.

The most common use of recorded music was nursery rhymes. This was not a particularly surprising finding as nursery rhyme audio material is produced specifically for young children and it seems that it would make sense to be playing this style of music within settings. The interesting data regarding the use of nursery rhymes music was actually regarding how and when it was used which I will address later in this chapter.

Classical music was a prominent style within the study and as one interviewee said perhaps this is because of the view point of classical music being 'high art.' Another possibility for this is that people perhaps consider classical music to be educational as it exposes children to instruments which they don't necessarily hear day-to-day within popular music. The nursery chain Deputy Childcare and Curriculum Manager indicated that they used classical music for this reason. Classical music is also safe in terms of content in that one does not have to worry about there being explicit lyrics or sexual content. Another possibility could be related to the idea of 'The Mozart Effect' (Rauscher, Shaw & Ky, 1993). Even though this did not come up within the study it is possible that this theory has infiltrated through into settings and early years educators via the media and hearsay. A respondent from a children's centre said that classical music was used as a result of training and being given

information regarding this style of music. This implies that there are some existing opinions which have influenced the use of music within early childhood settings.

The fact that classical music was so prevalent within this study is interesting in relation to the study conducted by Kopiez and Lehmann (2008). Their study originally classified classical music as unconventional. Once the researchers posed that perhaps it was not an unconventional style and repeated their study, they found that differences in open-earedness (Hargreaves, 1982, p.51) were specifically related to classical music. Perhaps this was because children are actually exposed to classical music from a young age.

Classical music may also be apparent due to the nature of our education system in England. It is very common when taking instrumental music lessons in England within schools that the style of music taught will be classical. If classical music is the most prominent form of instrumental learning on instruments in schools perhaps this is diluted for early childhood by encouraging young children to listen to it.

Pop music was in the top 5 of styles used but there were some contrasting opinions about the use of it in settings. The Deputy Childcare and Curriculum Manager of the chain of nurseries was clear in that they felt that some pop music is not appropriate for children to listen to and so they forbid the use of it. An interviewee also made it clear that pop music was used for the 5 plus age group and that it was kept separate from the nursery provision. In these instances it is very clear that settings are constructing an audio environment which they feel is appropriate for young ears. Perhaps this is in line with Young's (2007) suggestion that this viewpoint is often associated with constructions of children as 'innocent, pure and vulnerable' (p. 333). One can question that if children are exposed to pop music elsewhere

in a range of situations such as in the home environment, in shops, restaurants and so on, then is there a need to use this music within early childhood education? Are settings intending to create a different audio environment to that of the children's home or are they creating a similar environment? There are suggestions that discontinuities between the home environment and the early childhood setting may have negative consequences, on the other hand it has also been suggested that different experiences outside of the home may have a positive influence (Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart, 2004).

Practitioners clearly construct audio environments for children and as Hargreaves (2012) suggested, individuals associate music with people and events. It is therefore likely that children may associate certain types of music with early childhood settings. Hargreaves et al. (2003) also indicate that that music in these everyday environments can influence many aspects of behaviour and attitudes towards and liking for different environments. If this is so then the audio environment could play a significant role in the attitude of children towards the early childhood environmental setting. Hargreaves et al. also point out that there is a distinction between 'music at school' and 'music at home'. Interestingly when comparing the study of Lamont (2008) and this present study it would suggest that there may perhaps be a culture of 'music in settings' and 'music at home'. Lamont's study involved 32 children; this study involved 34 adults who work with children. When looking at children's experience of music in everyday life Lamont found that most of the recorded music that children were exposed to was at home and included folk, jazz, religious music, film soundtracks, contemporary music, world music and big band. Classical music was less common.

When looking at the data regarding world music it is very clear that some practitioners intend to use world music to represent the cultural background of some of the children

attending their settings. There is a clear theme regarding creating a similar audio environment within the setting to that of the home environment for children of 'ethnic minorities' and in some cases the home musical experiences of these children is completely assumed. This is what Vandebroek (1999) would refer to as a tourist approach to multiculturalism; this is when it is assumed that 'the 'others' form one monolithic block' (p.135).

It appears that the same practice does not seem to apply to children who appear to come from traditionally white British backgrounds. Such children *may* be exposed to pop music at home; children attending a setting from the nursery chain would not hear pop music whilst attending the setting as it is banned. This would imply that music from children's individual cultures is intended for the use of settling and supporting children from ethnic minorities but not necessarily so for those that appear to come from a British background. Young and Street (2009) suggest that tailoring musical activities to the cultural individuality of a child may have consequences for the child's musical experience and may contribute as to whether those experiences have a positive or negative influence on the child (p.63). The findings of this study suggest that there is very little, if any, of tailoring of music listening for the individuality of children.

It appears that there is little in the way of discussion regarding styles of music used as when interviewed some respondents were not really sure as to why there wasn't a wider range of music used. Taking all of the above into consideration and the concept of open-earredness coined by Hargreaves (1982) it appears that the early childhood settings are not offering a wide enough range of music to support children's listening skills and to 'keep their ears open'. As mentioned in the theoretical background chapter, Trehub (2006)

highlighted the abilities of infants' listening skills and went as far to call infants 'Musical Connoisseurs'. If the listening skills of infants are so acute then perhaps the limited range of music played in early childhood settings is a disservice to young ears as they are able and competent to listen to so much more than what is currently provided.

This study clearly shows that young children attending early childhood settings are exposed to a very limited amount of styles of music. Other researchers have emphasised the importance of exposing young children to a wide range of styles in order to increase acceptance or liking for unfamiliar music or music that is not currently favoured by the popular culture (Hargreaves & Castell, 1987; LeBlanc et al., 1988). My discovery that practitioners within early childhood settings limit the styles of music that they use is contrary to this which perhaps suggests a lack of thought or understanding on the part of early childhood practitioners.

When and how music is used

The results of the study strongly suggest that music is very prevalent in the day to day lives of children attending early childhood settings and that there are clear patterns of when and how music is used. The largest indication of how music was used was for movement and this was not a particularly surprising finding as music and movement are so intrinsically related (Glover, 2000). The second most indicated use of music was background music. This is alarming, particularly if we take Sim's (1990) point of view that children are learning not to listen; perhaps background music is contributing to children developing 'audiothrombosis'. This is also concerning in light of the findings of Orman (2011) which suggested that whilst listening to music one is mentally challenged; if children are therefore

unknowingly listening to music they may be distracted by it which could therefore be detrimental. This would also concur with Wartella (2012) who suggested that background television interferes with children's ability to focus.

The study shows that recorded music is used to help children learn songs and rhymes and that therefore children are learning songs via media sources. Looking at the findings of the written questionnaire alone one may get the impression that the recorded version of nursery rhymes is replacing the live, oral version but the data from the interviews tells us otherwise. Nursery rhymes are both sung and played; this multi-use of nursery rhymes may therefore offer a range of musical listening experiences for children which may actually be enhancing this type of song.

The recorded version of the nursery rhyme may include a range of sounds in addition to the vocal line such as instruments and synthesised sounds. With the abundance of technology and media available today perhaps young ears will become expectant of this range of sounds within traditional nursery rhymes. This finding is in contrast to Trehub and Schellenberg (1995) who suggested that adults typically depend on the media for musical experiences whereas infants access daily live performances. Although infants may be accessing daily live performances from the practitioners in settings this study shows that they are also experiencing music via media sources.

Young (2007) points out that one may view technological developments as causing live music-making to decrease; offering children versions of children's music which is of lesser quality. Conversely, Young also suggests that one may embrace these advances as exciting changes (p.333). The findings here suggest that children today experience nursery rhymes

in many ways and that one format is not necessarily replacing the other but perhaps enhancing this musical experience. On the other hand if these nursery rhymes are primarily used as background music then perhaps children may not actually be listening to them.

Music was used within family sessions in children's centres and one interviewee mentioned that nursery rhymes were used for the benefit of families to create a feeling of familiarity. Would this be familiarity for the children or for the adults? Either way there is an assumption that this type of music would be heard or sung outside of the centre environment. As mentioned earlier it has been suggested that discontinuities between the home environment and the early childhood setting may have negative consequences (Sylva et al., 2004). Perhaps some practitioners are aware of this and endeavour to create a similar environment to that of the home, albeit this is based on assumption.

There was a strong theme within the findings regarding the use of music for atmosphere, mood and for the influence on emotional states for example to calm children, to relax children. This finding was evident when looking at the data regarding both style of music used and how it was used. Relaxing music was even classified as a style and was in the top 5 used indicated within the completed questionnaires. This is interesting as it appears that there is an assumption that all children will respond the same or similarly to styles of music. A particularly interesting finding was from one practitioner who had attended a training course and was told that 'Mendelsohn's music is the best music to calm babies for baby massage' (See Appendix A, Interviewee F). Gardner (1973) points out that it is important to consider that the perception of the arts is often about how works 'feel' and that subjects should not be penalised for not being able to articulate this. Young children often do not have the ability to verbally communicate how they feel about a piece of music. Perhaps by

using this type of music to provoke specific feelings there is an element of conditioning; encouraging children to relax or be calmed by certain types of music. From my personal experience I know that certain music that I find calming, others find very irritating and it does nothing at all to relax them, quite the opposite in fact.

A surprising finding was that recorded music was rarely used for musical purposes apart from singing, music listening was not mentioned. Only 7% of usage was indicated for musical activity and 4 of the 6 interviewees stated that they use recorded music as a tool for teaching but not one of them said for teaching or supporting listening. The findings of both this study and that of Lamont (2008) is that there is a lack of music listening without any other activity taking place.

Young (2011) discusses the human senses and how reliant we are visually; she suggests that if the hearing sense was more dominant along with the visual then perhaps 'the immediacy and contact of sound and listening may be stronger' (p.177). From my personal experience of working in early childhood settings I have found that the visual and tangible environment is of high importance and takes precedence over the audio environment. Educators will discuss how to lay out resources and how the environment should look but the audio environment does not seem to be given the same priority or thought. Even though some respondents of the survey indicated that they use music for mood and atmosphere some respondents simply used music in the background and did not indicate why.

The use of recorded music is discussed briefly within The National Early Years Framework, the EYFS, which was revised in 2012 (Early Education, 2012). There is however very little guidance on styles of music to be used, how to use recorded music effectively and how to

teach and or encourage music listening. The document offers suggestions regarding the use of recorded music to move to or to create moods with, which, not surprisingly was evident in the findings in this study.

Conclusions

Within this study, I set out to explore the use of recorded music within early childhood settings. From my experience of working in early childhood settings I have heard music played and have always been interested in practitioner's choices of music to be played and their views on this. As stated earlier, studies have been conducted into young children's preferences for music (Hargreaves, 1982; Hargreaves & Castell, 1987; Kopiez & Lehmann, 2008; LeBlanc, 1982) and listening abilities (Cohen, Thorpe, & Trehub, 1987; Sims, 1995; Trainor & Trehub, 1992) and the findings suggest that exposing young children to a range of styles of music would be beneficial. There is a void in research regarding the styles of music that young children are exposed to whilst attending early childhood settings. My discovery that early childhood settings limit the styles of music that they use suggests a lack of understanding on the part of early childhood practitioners.

Within the National Early Years Framework, the EYFS, (Early Education, 2012) there is a theme titled 'Enabling Environments' but there is little guidance on how to create an enabling *audio* environment. The results of this study clearly show that practitioners need to develop their understanding of young children's development of preferences and listening abilities and need to be provoked to think about the audio environment within their setting. The audio environment in some settings may be having a very detrimental effect on children's learning particularly when music is played in the background.

The impact that recorded music is having on young children's listening skills, communication development, musicality and creativity is unknown. Children's emotional well-being may also be being impacted; music can be very emotive and the music played

could be having an instant effect on children and how they feel. In order for practitioners to offer quality provision there needs to be courses and/or accessible information available on this subject. This would enable practitioners to create an enabling audio environment which could be conducive to young children's learning and development. My personal experience of working in settings tells me that there is little in the way of discussion about the use of recorded music and the data from this study confirms this.

‘We don't really use pop music and I don't really know why’. (Appendix C, Interviewee C).

From my own experience of playing with young children in early childhood settings I have found that when I ask children if they would like to sing a song they more than often respond with a nursery rhyme. When children are asked if they would like to sing within an educational establishment my feeling is that they sing what they think the person would like them to sing or what they *should* sing. As Hargreaves (2012) suggested individuals associate music with people and events. This study shows that nursery rhymes are the most prominent style of music played to children in settings and not only that, practitioners also sing nursery rhymes to children. It is likely that when children are not within a setting they are exposed to a wider range of music and it is therefore likely that children know many other types of songs. Practitioners place precedence on nursery rhymes and they are therefore aurally significant in children's lives.

There was little use of recorded music specifically for or within music activities which begs the question why is there such little music listening in music activities? Early childhood music making involves a strong tradition of adult-led singing, more so than other types of musical activity and perhaps this is why recorded music was only minimally indicated as

being used within music making activities. Children need to be offered a range of musical activities to enable them to have rich and varied musical experiences. Technological advances enable recorded music to be very accessible and there is a great deal of music available for practitioners to easily acquire. Perhaps practitioners are unsure as to how they could make positive use of it within their settings. Recorded music was indicated as being used for routines such as tidy up time, lining up for playtime and for transition times. This saddens me slightly as this demeans music and is perhaps used as a form of control. On the other hand it can be argued that music for these instances enhances the routines that take place.

The findings demonstrate that some practitioners seem a little lost when it comes to using music which is representative of children's cultural background. One interviewee was honest enough to say that they were presumptuous with the music that they chose to represent the individual children's individual culture. Perhaps practitioners are uncomfortable about discovering more about the cultural background of children or perhaps the use of recorded music is not a priority and not discussed within their reflective practice.

There was a clear stream of thought regarding the use of pop music and that it is inappropriate for young children to listen to, even to the extent that the chain of nurseries involved in the study prohibited the use of it. Of course, one has to be careful about the lyrical content of songs played to children, some pop music does contain expletives and sexual content but there is definitely pop music available which does not contain either. Perhaps the nursery chain has this policy in place to ensure that there is no possibility that pop music which does contain expletives can be used. As the chain has over 200 settings perhaps it is 'safer' to have a blanket policy to eradicate any risk of children hearing

expletives whilst attending a nursery. There is a clear construction of children's musical worlds within early childhood settings which is very different to everyday situations. Pop music is regularly played in shops and on the radio which children are more than likely exposed to.

One interviewee said that they had pop music on site for children aged 5 plus and that this was kept separate from the nursery provision which suggests that there has been a decision made that pop music is inappropriate for children under the age of 5; this is in line with the findings from the nursery chain. The findings also suggest that practitioners use different styles of music for the different ages of children they work with.

Avenues for future research

A strength of this study is that it offers an insight into the styles of music that young children are being exposed to whilst attending a range of types of early childhood settings. The findings have evoked further questions for future research:

- To explore styles of music used for specific age groups. What styles of music do practitioners use with specific ages of children and why? Why do some practitioners view pop music as inappropriate for young children?
- Twenty nine per cent of those who answered the written question regarding how they used music indicated that they use it for movement purposes. An area for future research would be to explore the style of music used for movement activities and practitioner's definitions of movement. Do practitioners actually mean action songs

where children literally create the actions to words of a song? Do they mean music as a stimulus for expressive movement or do they mean choreographed dance movements?

- Respondents from children's centres provided the most styles of music used indicating 31% of all styles. As children's centres are substantially different to the other setting types involved in this study it would be useful to analyse the data withdrawing the data offered by respondents from children's centres. This would offer a set of results more specifically regarding the use of recorded music within early childhood education.
- There was a theme in the findings that music was used to create atmosphere and for mood. This could be explored further; do children feel calmed or relaxed by the music that is played to encourage them to relax?
- The study shows that classical music is used within baby massage; this study did not go into depth regarding the relationship between styles of music and how these styles are used. Are there are styles of music used for particular purposes? What style of music is played in the background and why? Why is classical music used for massage?

Personal reflections

This study has provoked me to think and reflect on my own childhood and the musical memories that I have. Listening to music is the strongest memory of my own childhood and involved listening to music with family. Access to early childhood provision has vastly developed over recent years with 96% of the 3 and 4-year-old population in England benefiting from some free early education during 2012 (Department for education, 2012, p.2). Early childhood provision is far more accessible than it was during my early childhood and we do not know what affect the music that young children hear whilst attending settings is having.

LeBlanc (1982, p.33) suggests that family plays an important role in the influence of musical preferences and I can say with certainty that my family influenced my own. Early childhood settings are perhaps replacing time that children would otherwise be with family and perhaps today settings play an important role in the influence on musical preferences.

When well-known musicians are interviewed, interviewers will often ask which musicians and music influenced their own music making and composing and I have never heard a musician unable to answer. The young musicians of today who are currently attending early childhood settings are being exposed to a very small range of styles of music. It is currently unknown what influence this has on their musical tastes, preferences and music that they create now and in the future.

This study has enabled me to gather interesting information regarding the music that young children are exposed to whilst attending early childhood settings. I have always endeavoured to play a range of styles of music to young children whilst working in early

childhood settings and this research has allowed me to explore the benefits of doing so. I will continue to develop the use of recorded music in my own practice by exploring ways of using music effectively for music listening purposes.

I regularly deliver training sessions for early childhood practitioners and the findings of this study will enable me to inform early childhood practitioners about the value of music listening with young children and the importance of considering the audio environment in their settings. I also intend to share the findings of this study with a wider audience and will be contacting the relevant people with regards to publishing in journals and early childhood educational magazines and websites.

This study has inspired me to carry out further research into music listening with young children and I am currently in the process of applying for funding to continue my research further.

Appendices

Appendix A - Written Questionnaire

This survey questionnaire is part of a Masters Research Dissertation. Your participation is very important to me and your opinions will contribute to a greater understanding of the part that music plays in the lives of young children attending early childhood settings. Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

Please tick the box below to indicate that you consent for the information given to be used within the dissertation. All participants will remain anonymous.

This survey is about the use of recorded music within early childhood settings; for example CD, Radio, MP3, Internet streaming.

Please indicate your level of qualification

Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
QTS	EYPS	Postgraduate	No early childhood qualifications	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please state the type of setting that you work in (e.g. Private day nursery, School, Children's Centre, Childminder etc.).

Please state the age range of the children that attend your setting.

Do you play recorded music within your setting?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered yes, please list the types of music that are played.

If you answered yes, please describe how recorded music is used within your setting.

Do you use recorded music at particular times of the day in your setting?

(If so, please state when)

Are there certain types of music that you are not allowed to play?

Yes

No

If you answered yes, please could you list the types of music that you are not allowed to play.

If you answered yes, could you please comment further regarding why particular music is not allowed.

Do you have any other comments which you feel are relative for my research?

I would like to gather more detailed information and would like to talk to participants further.
I will be carrying out telephone interviews. **Each interview will take no longer than 15 minutes.**
If you are happy to be involved in a telephone interview then please tick here.

Yes, I am happy to be contacted.

Please leave your name, email address and/or telephone number below and I will contact you before the end of March 2013 to schedule a convenient time to telephone you.

Name:

Email:

Telephone:

Thank you for taking the time to complete my questionnaire.

Appendix B - Prepared script for the telephone interviews

Thank you once again for taking the time to be interviewed. As I mentioned on the questionnaire – all participants will remain anonymous. This interview is being recorded to enable me to transcribe it later for my research. Are you happy to go ahead now?

Appendix C - Transcripts of interviews

Interviewee A) Learning & Development Manager of a children's centre which has a nursery on site for children aged 0-4.

When asked about if you used recorded music at certain times of day you mentioned that it is in response to children's needs and choices – can you tell me more about that please?

I was thinking more general and not specific, obviously there are routines for the day and we use music but we do take account of children's moods and who is there. If the weather is bad and we can't go outside then we might use music for more activity inside. The children often request the jolly phonics songs as a treat at the moment, they may choose to get this out and this can be supervised and unsupervised and operate the CD themselves.

With regards to the selection of CD's that the children can choose from – what would be included in this selection?

A lot of stories, generally nursery rhymes & action songs. There isn't really any classical music played here and if I was a practitioner in the room then I would introduce more of it. There could be more scope for introducing more choosing gentle music, more lively music without singing on it. Any type of music should be available really.

Apart from music with obvious bad language – do you think that there is other music that is unsuitable for young children?

No, I can't think of any that would be unsuitable for young children.

You wrote that if the impact on learning is clear then any music would be encouraged – can you tell me more about that please?

It's not about music as such, it's about the learning, with using classical music or non-word music for teaching moods – you can talk about music that makes you feel happy and music that makes you feel sad and that is PSED. Obviously there is lively music which makes you dance quickly and music which makes you dance slowly so that is using music as a vehicle not just for music.

Is music primarily used as a vehicle as opposed as music for music?

I would say so with recorded music. Our instruments would be used for teaching rhythms and following instructions- your stop and your start, to teach listening through using musical instruments. Recorded music is not my first choice and I would expect counting songs to be sung by practitioners although there is a place for recorded music, particularly for teaching practitioners new songs; they can learn new songs by listening to recorded versions. It is very difficult for children to keep pace with recorded music when they are doing other learning so you need to be able to stop and the best way of doing that is to sing it yourself.

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

I am not actually a practitioner in the room but these are my views as an Early Years teacher. There is always more that you can do with music, you can teach such a lot.

Interviewee B) Children's Centre Teacher within a children' centre which has a nursery for children aged 0-5 and out of school club provision for children aged 5-8.

One of your answers on your questionnaire was regarding the types of music that you use and you mentioned children's songs and rhymes — what do you mean by children's songs?

It tends to be things like underwater songs, songs about fish and whales that sort of thing and Disney songs so not just traditional rhymes and songs.

The answer that you gave regarding how you use music you stated in group time, circle time and in free flow. In terms of group time – what does that mean?

This is a small group time for around 5-10 minutes. It depends, it can include poems and rhyme sacks, like 10 fat sausages frying in a pan, we have that on CD , we play that and then we will stop it and encourage the children to sing it themselves. There is the important thing of rhythm and steady beat so we and to encourage them to tap their feet, clap their hands, use different parts of their bodies to tap to whilst singing.

In terms of circle time – what would that involve?

With older children, we would use this time for them to learn a completely new, simple songs with a steady beat on a CD. With the babies this would be more using action songs and rhymes.

You mentioned in free flow –can you tell me more about that?

That can vary; we could have traditional songs and rhymes in background, classical music –for a calmer atmosphere. We have the Now CD's in the setting for older children which is used for the out of school club with children aged 5 plus. This is for pop music which may be familiar for them to enjoy.

Is this pop music used in the nursery provision?

No, they are in completely separate rooms and away from that. It is not used massively, unless there is a particularly project or reason then we don't normally play that and we certainly don't play music with lyrics which may be harmful in any way.

Do you use music primarily as a tool to teach other topics?

It depends on age, sometimes we have music in the background and this isn't linked to a direct activity or learning, this isn't all the time. We have used songs and rhymes on recorded music for transition times at the end of sessions to get people together and they tend to be action songs-marching or tapping and clapping. It does promote language and literacy skills.

Do you use music without lyrics for teaching moods?

Classical music is used but not as a teaching tool this is more for atmosphere in the room. We have used music to calm children down.

Have children been invited to bring music in from home?

No, not recorded music.

Interviewee C) Nursery Teacher in a nursery within a children's centre with children aged 0-5

When you answered about the types of music that are played you mentioned cultural music and songs – can you tell me more about this?

We use songs from other cultures, Polish nursery rhymes for example; we use music from the children's culture to represent the children and to help children settle. I had a Polish girl recently who was not settling very well so I bought some Polish nursery rhyme CD's and this helped to settle her. We also use it as a provocation in free flow to see if it affects movement and mood. We use lots of diverse music such as Bollywood and Irish to represent the minority of children and we use number songs, nursery rhymes in the background. We don't really use pop music and I don't really know why. I don't know whether it's because at work we feel it is high art/low art, we will have classical music on and not pop music and we of course have to be careful about explicit lyrics.

You said that you used music to calm-what type of music do you use to calm?

We use ambient music, water music for mood and atmosphere. I find classical music soothing but I am aware that it can get under some people's skin.

You said that you use music at tidy up time – what is the music that you use?

This was a recorded song that a musician we have worked with sung. She used to sing it within the class and we asked her to record it so that we could use it when she wasn't there.

You mentioned that you use music to consolidate lessons through song – can you tell me more about that?

We use songs on a CD for phonics to reinforce with a song.

You said that won't play sexually explicit songs and that you have had discussion about some Bollywood music-can you tell me more about that?

WE had a big conversation about Bollywood music and belly dancing, we used you tube clips because music and movement is innate, you can't help but move, we don't need to teach children to dance or move, it's natural, they do it anyway, but when we observed the Bollywood dancers and the way that the ladies were dressed we had lots of conversations. As a British English speaking person I can't translate so I have to be careful about what I put on and that is when I look to my colleagues to translate. When I buy music and songs

from other cultures that is not my language I always buy music which is obviously branded and aimed at children or school so that know that what I am buying is safe.

When asked if you had any other comments you said that music is powerful – can you expand on this?

Music is important, it can be engaging for children and just as human beings it can have an impact on mood, atmosphere on the place. It is very important particularly in Early Years in terms of setting the scene for learning. Acoustics are very important and it is important not to have the volume too loud.

Interviewee D) Nursery practitioner in a private day nursery with children aged 0-4

You stated that you used nursery rhymes and children's songs in your setting; can you please expand on how these are used?

Sometimes we use nursery thymes and songs and we put them on so that they are on in the background. If the music is on when the children come in they don't really notice and its background music whereas if we put it on they notice a change and will start jumping up and down and dancing, we sometimes use torches to sing along as microphones. The background music adds to the atmosphere and helps their learning by helping them learn words and language and it's nice to have on in the background, we usually try to have something on the radio or CD is generally on. We generally have the radio in in the morning and it is left on.

Which radio station?

Radio 3

Is there a reason that it is radio 3-has someone said that if the radio is on then it can only be radio 3?

No, it's just how the radio is set. When children hear songs from the radio they talk about it.

Are the nursery rhyme CD's and children's songs only used as background music?

No, we use Busy Feet which is a CD of action songs that is used as an adult led activity. We also have a Song Sack and we use this with children, they hold up the picture of the songs that are being played on a CD. The main use of it is for teaching purposes-language, counting, learning to dance, learning to sing is learning words and because they like it and develop preferences.

Are the nursery rhymes that are played in the nursery on CD sung without a CD?

Yes, we sing a lot at circle time without a CD and at snack time so the CD is an addition to the songs that we sing. We definitely sing more nursery thymes without the CD than sing with the CD.

You stated on your questionnaire that there is music which you are not allowed to play and that some music is unsuitable – what is unsuitable and is there a set policy about this in the nursery?

Music with offensive language or of a sexual nature, there isn't a set policy, it is just each person's own discretion and judgment and obvious what we shouldn't play.

Interviewee E) Nursery practitioner in a nursery school with children aged 0-4

When you answered about the types of music that are played you mentioned pop music, cultural music and songs – can you tell me more about this?

We use a lot of Bollywood, Bhangra and African drumming music to cater for the ethnic minorities in our setting. We have observed children reacting differently to this music in comparisons to the British nursery rhymes that we have played. The children move differently and some children have said that they have heard this music in the car or at home.

You chose Bollywood, Bhangra and African drumming-was this because you knew that the children heard this at home?

No, to be honest we think that we are catering for their cultural background but in fact this is fairly presumptuous as we don't actually know if this music is actually part of the individual children's culture.

You stated that you use pop music-how is this used?

We use this in free-flow as background music or within movement sessions to explore music physically. We have recently been playing One Direction and Gangnam style on the whiteboard as this was requested by the children.

You mentioned nursery rhymes earlier – do you regularly play nursery rhyme CD's?

We tend to sing nursery rhymes more than play them.

Interviewee F) Receptionist/Administrator in a children's centre

You stated that you play calming music in the setting – what is calming music?

We use classical music in the background during our baby massage sessions.

Is there a reason that classical music is used and no other types of calming music?

Yes, one of our team had training on baby massage and was told that classical music is the best music to use for baby massage and actually there was a book which accompanied the

training which stated that Mendelssohn's music was the best music to use for calming babies.

You also stated that you use nursery rhymes – how are they used?

We use nursery rhyme CD's in the background within the sessions that we run for families. They are on low in the background for familiarity for the families; we hope that this will create a familiar environment for families to help to make them feel comfortable and welcome.

Are the nursery rhyme CD's used instead of practitioners singing them?

Absolutely not, all of the practitioners sing at the end of each family session

You stated that there is not any type of music which is not allowed to be played – is there a reason why there is not more variety of music played?

I think it is just part of our regime-I don't really know why.

Appendix D - Response from the Deputy Childcare and Curriculum Manager of the Nursery Chain

Do you have written policy regarding the use of music in Busy Bees nurseries? If so, please could you tell me more about the policy? E.g., what does the policy involve, when was it set and what was the role of the person(s) who set it?

We only have a radio policy and the use of it and then what music is allowed in the rooms.

Are there certain types of music that are recommended to be played?

Yes- Classical, relaxing, children's nursery rhymes and children music from around the world, this is not in a policy.

If you answered yes, could you please comment further regarding why these types of music are recommended?

To provide the children with a variety of music to encourage discussion about different cultures. The relaxing music is to help children feel calm and relaxed in our environments. The classical music is also to provide the children the opportunities to hear different musical instruments, the children's music is to help develop the ability to sing the songs and rhymes.

Are there certain types of music that are not allowed to be played?

Yes - Pop music

If you answered yes, could you please comment further regarding why particular music is not allowed?

Some of the pop music is not appropriate for the children to listen to.

Do you have any other comments which you feel are relevant for my research?

It is great to see that you are looking into this and we will look more into our policies to reflect our thoughts about music.

You mentioned that you only have a radio policy and what music is allowed in the rooms. Is the radio policy a ban on the use of radio or certain specific stations? The music that is allowed in the rooms - would that be the classical, children's nursery rhymes and children's music from around the world that you referred to?

Yes the radio policy states about only having classical FM on they are not allowed any other station due to the nature of the music, conversation and even the news reports that are aired regularly.

Thanks again. The fact that pop music is not allowed - is that within the policy too?

Yes.

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