

Chapter One

An overview of music professional learning for early childhood teachers and early childhood music education: introduction to the study

INTRODUCTION

This is an introductory chapter that provides the rationale and the context for the research study. It illustrates the holistic nature of early childhood music learning and teaching, which link inextricably to teachers' professional learning. This chapter aims to provide definitions of concepts and terms associated with the music professional learning for early childhood teachers. It also discusses the rationale, background, researcher, and research plan as well as concluding with an outline of the contents of the remaining chapters of the thesis.

1. Rationale for the study

Music is seen as a natural and important aspect of young children's holistic development and growth (MENC, 1991). Researchers have found that music provides young children with long-term benefits, such as emotional, cognitive, and intelligence development (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009; Gardner, 1983; MENC, 2000; Piaget, 1962). Music is also a means to facilitate children's learning and is an integral part of development in other learning areas (Kim and Kemple, 2011; MENC, 1991; NAEYC, 2001). Effective music teaching can contribute broadly to a child's development.

“Early childhood” generally refers to children from birth to eight years old (NAEYC, 1991) though it only focuses on three to six years old children in this study. The life span

of early childhood is considered to be the most effective period for children to begin developing their music potential and aptitude, as these abilities gradually decrease after this period (Campbell, Campbell, and Dickinson, 2003; Gardner, 1983; Gordon, 2003;). As declared by the Music Educators National Conference (MENC), young children should have access to a balanced and comprehensive program of music instruction in school (MENC, 1992).

Early childhood teachers are often the main facilitators and determiners of a child's meaningful music experiences and quality music education (EDB, 2008a). As early childhood teachers play an important role in this vital task, teachers' planning and guidance in musical activities help children develop their music abilities and these potentially lead to children learning music for their lifetimes (Hallam, 2010; Wetzel, 2006). According to researchers, teachers can help children explore and develop all kinds of musical knowledge and skills, that is, a general music literacy including musical concepts (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009; Jordan-Decarbo and Nelson, 2002). It is also important for teachers to create a music learning environment (Butler, Lind, and McKoy, 2007; Gordon, 2003; Lam and Wright, 2004; Willberg, 2002), such as setting up an area where children can readily explore various musical instruments and sounds, and express music through movement; as well as preparing music lessons and creating ample opportunities for children to explore listening, playing, and expressing musically (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009).

As early childhood teachers have a strong influence on the quality of music education, their continuing professional learning is a key mechanism for better equipping them to become the best assets for early childhood music education, enabling early

childhood schools to respond to the challenges of the new era of education. As there are mainly two types of early childhood program settings in Hong Kong, the term “early childhood school” is adopted in this study to refer to both kindergarten and child care centers or nurseries that provide early childhood education for three to six years old children.

This study sought to find out the most appropriate music professional learning to empower early childhood teachers with better music competence to facilitate higher quality music learning for children. Ideas were revealed through the lens of some stakeholders of early childhood education, including early childhood teachers, principals, and lecturers. Based on their professional views and lived experience in the field relevant information and suggestions were collected and explored. The background information of this study is presented in the next section.

2. Background of the study

In Hong Kong, as in other parts of the world, early childhood education promises to provide children with a relaxing and pleasurable learning environment that promotes their balanced development across social, cognitive, physical, emotional, and aesthetic domains (EDB, 2007a). With this mission, the Hong Kong Government provides early childhood education for children aged from three to six years old. In the early years of the twentieth century, there were only a few private early childhood schools and not many children received early childhood education. Currently, there are 148,940 children between the ages of three and six years attending early childhood schools (EDB, 2011). This is a big population of children and a potentially strong foundation for Hong Kong’s

future society.

In order to understand the background of this study, the following is divided into four sections that include: education system in Hong Kong; music learning and teaching; music professional learning for early childhood teachers; and education reforms.

2.1. Education system in Hong Kong

The Hong Kong educational system is usually geared toward academic excellence and success in examinations (Hui, 2000; Rao, Ng and Pearson, 2010; Salili, 2009) that can be traced back from the history of Hong Kong. Being an erstwhile province of China, Hong Kong has a population of almost 7 million people, of whom 95 per cent are Chinese (CSD, 2011). Heavily influenced by Confucius, Hong Kong (Chinese) parents believe that education is a path to social and career advancements (Li, 2010). Parents have very high expectations of their children's performance in education or academic excellence (Fung and Lam, 2011; Leung, Yeung and Wong, 2010). Today, Hong Kong is famous for its highly competitive and rigid examination orientation starting from early childhood education (Chan and Chan, 2003; Morris and Adamson, 2010; Sweeting, 2004). Early childhood education emphasizes the development of academic subjects such as literacy and mathematics. Rote learning of factual knowledge, spelling difficult English words, writing dictation from complex Chinese characters, and/or computing numbers do not necessarily help children develop creativity and problem-solving abilities, nor do they encourage personal interest in one's learning. However, achieving success in examinations and getting into a university are the ultimate long-term goals of parents for their children from this early age (Chan and Chan, 2002, 2003; Yuen, 2008). The early

childhood project that compared the world's early childhood school experiences conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) (Weikart, Olmsted and Monite, 2003) found that young children in Hong Kong were mostly engaged in “academic” activities such as writing English and Chinese characters, doing worksheets or counting and developing mathematical knowledge. Early childhood children spent half or more of each afternoon doing these kinds of “academic” homework in their homes (Weikart, Olmsted and Monite, 2003). These kinds of learning and teaching approaches are considered inappropriate for young children by many professionals in the field; they may result in loss of interest in learning (Chan and Chan, 2002; Elkind, 2001; Yuen, 2008). Thus, greater consideration should be given to children achieving their optimal development by providing more opportunities to experience, explore, and discover through different learning areas and activities, such as music.

2.2. Music learning and teaching

Music, as one of the arts, is an integral part of human communication and develops a lifelong appreciation of the creative process (HKADC, 2006a). It is also believed that the arts may enhance people's critical and analytical faculties and enliven creativity. These qualities are becoming increasingly important to Hong Kong as an information and knowledge-based economy (HKADC, 2006b). Music, as an important part of aesthetics, plays a vital role in children attaining their all-round development and full potential (EDB, 2006a). However, music has always had a very low profile within Hong Kong's education system (Kan, 2002). Chinese people generally see education solely as a means

to social advancement, which has significant implications for music education starting from early childhood. Moreover, music education is neither on the agenda of education planning bodies nor a compulsory subject in the public examination system in Hong Kong. Parents and the public do not give much attention to either learning or teaching music, when the public examination and university entrance requirements only focus on rewarding excellence in “academic subjects” (Rao, Ng and Pearson, 2010). As music is not a compulsory subject in the public examination system, less effort has been made in terms of curriculum development and teacher guidance even for the early childhood level in music education. However, it has been commonly believed that in Hong Kong, as in other parts of world, early childhood teachers are trained as generalists and in early childhood education and almost all these teachers regularly plan and implement music activities with young children (Kilgallon and Maloney, 2003).

2.3. Music professional learning for early childhood teachers

Music professional learning is seen as the key to offer effective music teaching and quality music education for children (Haston, 2007). There are two different sources for early childhood teachers to receive music professional learning: music in formal professional teacher training and music in other informal professional learning settings (Richter, Kunter, Klusmann, Lüdtke and Baumert, 2010).

Music training in formal professional early childhood teacher training institutions

Formal professional teacher training refers to the required qualification of early childhood teachers, offered by Government-accredited teacher training institutions.

Previously, all early childhood teachers were required to possess a Qualified Kindergarten Teacher (QKT) qualification. Music is a core subject but as little as 20 hours are allocated, regardless of teachers' music background and experience. As a result, teachers have only basic music competence for music teaching before they enter the field. In contrast, the language learning component includes more than 60 hours. Starting from 2006, all early childhood teachers were required to complete a Certification of Kindergarten Teacher (CE) to become a qualified early childhood teacher. However, music in CE teacher training programs is similar to the previous QKT and offers very basic and limited music during their pre-service teacher training (see Chapter Four) regardless of teachers' music background. As a result, early childhood teachers are not sufficiently qualified to teach music effectively.

Music learning in other informal professional teacher training sectors

Informal professional learning refers to the music professional learning offered in other non-government organizations or private sectors, which does not lead teachers to receive recognized qualifications as early childhood teachers obtained in government-accredited teacher training institutions. In Hong Kong, there are eight government-funded universities, one publicly –funded, and six self-financing institutions. They offer open learning programs at postgraduate, degree, and sub-degree levels, either on their own or jointly with overseas universities (EDB, 2007b). However, except for the comprehensive courses geared towards teachers' formal professional qualifications offered by four institutions (see Chapter Three), there are very few informal professional learning courses offered by these institutions. Also, few short courses offered by non-government

organizations or private sectors are available for practicing or working early childhood teachers seeking to improve their knowledge and skills in music. Most of the short courses are fragmented and not systematic enough.

2.4. Education re-structures

In order to change the educational culture and give the new generations of Hong Kong a better education, the Hong Kong Government initiated education reforms and followed up with reviews starting from 2001 (EC, 2001). Education reform and early childhood education reviews are two important backgrounds for early childhood music professional learning.

Education reform

Education reform implemented in 2001 by the Hong Kong Government covered the scope of curricula and assessment mechanisms, as well as admission systems for different stages of education, including early childhood education (EC, 2001). The Education Commission completed a review and released its proposal that recommended drastic changes and affirmed the value and importance of early childhood education, which was given greater status for the first time in Hong Kong's history (Chan and Chan, 2002). Early childhood was acknowledged as laying the foundation for lifelong learning (Chan and Chan, 2003). As part of the education reform of 2000, the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) conducted a holistic review and concluded that music, as part of the arts education, contributes significantly to students' aesthetic development, which is one of the five essential learning experiences for whole-person development (CDC, 2002; EDB,

2006a). Based on this view, beyond social, cognitive, physical, and emotional development, music as part of aesthetics provides children with a relaxing and pleasurable learning environment and promotes their balanced development (EDB, 2006a). In addition, to build a new culture for quality early childhood education, it was recognized that work needs to be done in four main areas: enhancing the professional competence of early childhood teachers; enhancing the quality assurance mechanism; unifying the regulatory mechanism; and enhancing the interface between early childhood and primary education (EC, 2001). Raising the professional competence of early childhood teachers became the key to achieving the reform goals. In the longer term, the target was set at a three to four year degree level qualification for early childhood teachers if the higher education system expands and diversifies sufficiently (EC, 2001: 50).

Early childhood education review

Five years after implementation, the Government conducted a review of early childhood education and policy to further look into the needs of early childhood education (EDB, 2006b). The main focus of this review was a quality assurance mechanism for the field, which included training teachers, teaching quality, potential pressures on teachers to upgrade their qualifications, and so on. This review was supported by the Chief Executive's Policy Address (Hong Kong SAR Government, 2006), which announced a major financial commitment to further enhance the quality of early childhood education. The early childhood education suggestions in the policy address were to be achieved by:

- Preprimary Education (ECE) Voucher Scheme – the Preprimary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS) to be implemented from the 2007/2008 school year.

- Professional Upgrading – from 2007/2008 to the 2011/2012 school year, Education Bureau to provide financial support for early childhood principals and teachers to upgrade their professional qualifications.
- One-off School Development Grant – to all kindergartens to enrich their teaching and learning resources.
- One-off Facilitation Grant – with financial grant support to those private independent kindergartens to turn to nonprofit-making status, so that they are eligible for children to apply for the preprimary education voucher system.
- Quality Assurance – a quality assurance mechanism would start from the 2012/2013 school year for all kindergartens to join the preprimary education voucher system. (EDB, 2007c)

As teachers' professionalism was one of the highest concerns in this education review, the Hong Kong Government supported principals and teachers financially to upgrade their professional qualifications within these five years. The Government also provided "education vouchers" worth up to US\$1600 per year for each child aged three to six years starting from the school year 2007–2008. The investment in the professional learning of current teachers was to be 23 per cent of the costs, whereas the remaining funds were to be used to subsidize children's school fees (EDB, 2006b; Hong Kong SAR Government, 2006). The Government allowed flexibility for schools to use the funding of professional learning as they deemed fit. It becomes possible with the financial support from the Government to provide a more effective and higher quality professional learning, especially for the subjects where teachers need further training, such as in music.

In summary, in a competitive and commercially oriented city such as Hong Kong, people regard education as a means for achieving upward mobility (Ho, Morris and Chung, 2005). Moreover, people in a Chinese society such as Hong Kong accept the value of education as an investment for career advancement and success in life (Kwok, 2009). Lifelong learning in Hong Kong has moved from the margins to the mainstream and has become the center of Hong Kong's education reform agenda (Cribbin and

Kennedy, 2002). Professional competence plays a significant role in broadening the knowledge and improving the skills of teachers in the classroom, especially in subjects that they were not initially well equipped to teach. For early childhood teachers, music is one such area. Continuous music professional learning is necessary for all teachers to keep pace with change, to review and renew their knowledge, skills, and visions for best teaching practices, and to nurture children's wholesome development.

3. The researcher

In this study, the researcher is trained both as a music specialist and as an early childhood educationist. The researcher has been involved in different career development, which includes: an early childhood teacher, a principal in an early childhood school, and a lecturer in an early childhood teacher training institution. Therefore, the researcher has substantial understanding of early childhood education and music education in Hong Kong, which is also the lifelong career and commitment for the researcher. Being actively associated with these important roles in the field of early childhood education, the researcher believes that early childhood education is the first stage of life and learning for children to lay the foundation for their lifelong learning (EDB, 2006a). Music education is one of the important areas that help children develop their entire personality (Hallam, 2010). Teachers play a crucial role in actualizing authentic educational opportunities in children's learning process (Brown and Danaher, 2008). As vital implementers of the curriculum, teachers should be well prepared with essential knowledge, both in practical and pedagogical skills, for helping children construct knowledge through continuous learning (Gruenhagen, 2008).

According to the researcher's lived experience in the field of early childhood education, there have been unsatisfactory music teaching and learning events, as well as examples of inadequate music teacher education; these have not adequately prepared teachers to contribute to children's wholesome development. Moreover, with increased demand for higher quality education as a result of the local and global educational trends, it seems to now be urgent to provide teachers with meaningful professional learning opportunities that support their growth professionally. The researcher's intent was objectively to carry out this study in order to more fully understand music learning and teaching, music teacher education provision, and the necessary music competence for early childhood music teachers. Then, these understandings would help inform the development of a professional learning framework for different stakeholders of early childhood education in Hong Kong.

As a result of working in one of the biggest early childhood teacher education institutions in Hong Kong, plus previous field experience, I as the researcher already had extensive connections with early childhood pre-service student teachers, practicing teachers, early childhood school principals, and teacher training faculties. During this study, I worked interactively with early childhood teachers, principals, and lecturers to review current music teacher education programs in terms of their structure, contents, and effectiveness (see Chapters Four and Six), and to rethink the needs for specific and suitable professional learning for the benefit of early childhood music teaching that would, most importantly, wisely inform children's learning (see Chapter Two). Moreover, this research process was also a learning process for both the stakeholders within early childhood education and the researcher, which resulted in us constructing new knowledge

about the topic as well as reflecting on the value and mission as early childhood educators.

4. The research study

As discussed above, the rationale and background of the study, as well as the researchers' background and position within this study, have set the scene for the following sections, beginning with exploring the significance and purpose of the study, including the research questions. This is followed by an overview of the researcher's philosophical position and educational conceptual framework of professional learning for early childhood music teacher education (see Chapter Two) that informed and shaped methods (see Chapter Three). Finally, the limitations and organization of the thesis chapters are explained.

4.1. Significance of the research

Quality education is highly related to quality teachers and their effective teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Quality teachers greatly depend on their initial teacher training and recurrent or ongoing professional learning (EDB, 2006c). Because initial professional teacher education in Hong Kong with regards to music teaching – for both pre-service and practicing early childhood teachers – as well as other music professional learning offered by informal sectors are viewed as insufficient, the ongoing need for

extending teachers' knowledge and practices intertwines with their lifelong learning, professional work, and identities. On the other hand, the Hong Kong Government has taken the initiative to rethink and redefine the value and ways of undertaking professional learning through both educational reforms and reviews as one of the vital forces to enhance the quality of early childhood education (Pearson and Rao, 2006). This study was designed to discover what forms of music professional learning could best empower early childhood teachers to maintain their music professional competence, broaden teachers' knowledge, and improve their skills in the classroom (Smith and Haack, 2000). The study explored useful guidelines, such as learning context, approaches, and other related factors combined to serve as the blueprint for designing music professional learning for practicing early childhood teachers.

This study contributes in several ways to current knowledge and practice of meeting the music teaching needs of practicing early childhood teachers in Hong Kong. It is the first attempt to combine both general early childhood teacher education and specific music education in Hong Kong. This is also the first Hong Kong study that attempts to explore a professional learning direction for the ongoing support of and continuous learning for practicing early childhood educators in the area of music learning and teaching. This is especially important for early childhood music education to help bridge the gap of inadequate provision of early childhood music teacher education and meet many teachers' learning needs over their professional careers.

4.2. Purpose of the research

The principal aim of this study was to explore the opinions and suggestions from the

frontline experience of Hong Kong early childhood stakeholders: practicing teachers, principals, early childhood education educators/lecturers, and several prominent leaders of early childhood education. Secondly, stakeholders' views on music professional learning needs of practicing teachers were sought. The study also explored different aspects of: the everyday provision of music education in early childhood schools; early childhood teacher training for music teaching; and teachers' expectations and their desired professional learning of music. All these data sources and findings were analyzed and integrated with the view to understanding the most appropriate music professional learning required to meet the music learning and teaching needs of early childhood teachers.

Research questions

Broad research question:

What kinds of professional learning would empower Hong Kong early childhood teachers and facilitate their higher competence of quality music teaching for young children?

Guiding questions:

1. From the perspective of Hong Kong practicing early childhood teachers, principals, and teacher educators, what kinds of music training already exist in the professional teacher training institutions or private sectors for early childhood teachers? What are the implications for their continuous professional learning of music?

2. From the perspective of Hong Kong practicing early childhood teachers, principals, and teacher educators, what kinds of early childhood music education programs for young children already exist in early childhood schools? What are the implications for early childhood teachers' continuous professional learning in order to provide quality music learning for young children?
3. What are the ongoing music professional learning needs of Hong Kong early childhood teachers?

4.3. An overview of methodology and methods

In order to gain a full understanding of music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers, a range of empirical data were collected and analyzed. From the methodology stance, this was a mixed method research study that involved use of both quantitative and qualitative tools (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007; Punch, 2005; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). A mixed method can combine strengths from both qualitative and quantitative approaches, and minimizes the weaknesses of each. As early childhood education is an underexplored research area in Hong Kong, the mixed three phase design was especially suitable for exploring perspectives and ideas in more depth and breadth, with a stronger potential for some generalizing via richer data (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; McMurray, Pace, and Scott, 2004). An overview of the three research phases follows; these phased methods are explored and expanded fully in Chapter Three.

Phase 1: Initial focus group interviews

Phase 1 involved three separate focus group interviews: the first group included three early childhood teachers, the second group comprised four principals, and the third group involved four lecturers. The purpose of the focus group interviews was to understand overall music professional learning needs of early childhood teachers. Three themes from the research guiding questions were used to explore early childhood teachers' music teaching in early childhood schools, music learning in formal and informal institutions/sectors, and music professional learning needs and music competences for early childhood teachers in Hong Kong. Professional views, opinions, suggestions, or even feelings regarding the topic were explored during interviews. The first focus group interviewees also helped the researcher develop a questionnaire for the next phase. The pilot questionnaire items were developed through the discussion process during the first focus group interviews.

Phase 2: Pilot and full-scale questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaires was to collect and interpret more comprehensive data about music professional learning needs. The themes used in phase 1 were also adopted in this phase to present the findings: music teaching in early childhood schools, music learning in formal and informal sectors, and professional learning needs and music competences for early childhood teachers.

Phase 3: Interviews: second focus group interviews and one-on-one interviews

To begin analyzing results of phase 2 and also to further research the topic of this study,

individual interviews with previous focus groups members were arranged and these conversations were followed by three one-on-one interviews with prominent Hong Kong leaders of early childhood education; these were semi-structured interviews that allowed for deeper investigation and cross-checking of previous responses (Creswell, 2007). The themes used in phases 1 and 2 were also adopted in phase 3 to present and discuss the findings.

4.4. Definition of terms

The aim of this section is to define the important terms used in this study, which help set the scene and clarify the parameters of this research. The important terms include: “professional learning” and “competence”.

Professional learning

Several terms related to the professional learning of teachers are found in the literature, such as, professional development, teacher development, in-service education and training, staff development, career development, human resource development, continuing education, and lifelong learning (Bolam and McMahon, 2004). These terms often have overlapping meanings. At a fundamental level, professional learning covers both formal and informal training and resources for teachers (Boud and Middleton, 2003; Hodkinson, Colley and Malcolm, 2003; Richter, Kunter, Klusmann, Lüdtke and Baumert, 2010). As teachers’ professional learning journey is or can be an ongoing process, it reflects on their practice, punctuated by learning activities and programs designed to enhance their professional knowledge, skills, and attitude (Morrissey, 2000). Effective

professional learning for adults recognizes individual needs, different motivations for learning, prior knowledge, and experience. It should be related to and make explicit the intended purpose and nature of what is to be achieved (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

In this study, professional learning has been used to describe a variety of formal or informal learning opportunities for practicing early childhood teachers to grow continuously in music. The purpose for a teacher to learn, update and improve her/his knowledge and skills is to increase one's professional potential and capacities. The ultimate goal for improving teaching practices through professional learning is to enhance young children's music learning and contribute to children's development. The provision of quality professional learning should be the essential link to improve teacher practice and student learning outcomes.

Competence

Competence refers to the specification of knowledge, skills, pedagogy, and understanding that are expected in an educational workplace and to a person's ability to possess and apply the appropriate competence to perform tasks effectively on different occasions at a desired standard (Eraut, 1994). In this study, "competence" was specially focused on practicing music teachers' education competence in early childhood schools. It refers to teachers' abilities to integrate and conceptualize their music knowledge, skills, and pedagogy so that they can authentically guide children to experience, know, and understand music.

4.5. Limitations

The following factors are considered the limitation of this study:

1. There are limited studies in the literature about early childhood teacher education and music education in Hong Kong.
2. The participants completing the questionnaire were Hong Kong early childhood school practicing teachers. Thus, the results may not be generalized to other countries or regions in this area.
3. The Chinese transcripts of focus group interviews and individual interviews were not completely translated into English except the quotations in this thesis. The decision was made that it was better to preserve original nuances rather than to edit for fluidity of language.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

This section outlines the structure of this doctoral thesis. Following this chapter, Chapter Two provides a conceptual, theoretical, and philosophical literature review, which covers adult learning theory and musical knowledge, skills, and practices. It explores early childhood music teaching competences and professional learning for music education. Chapter Three discusses the methodology and methods of the studies. The perspectives and views about professional learning needs from early childhood stakeholders are presented in Chapters Four to Six. The findings and meanings of Phase 1 (initial focus group interviews) are presented in Chapter Four. The findings and meanings of Phase 2 (pilot and full-scale questionnaires) are presented in Chapter Five; whereas, Chapter Six provides the findings and meanings of the second focus group interviews and individual

interviews from Phase 3. In Chapter Seven, a synthesis of various findings, similarities, and differences are further integrated, critiqued, and discussed for broader implications. In Chapter Eight a framework of music professional learning is proposed for early childhood teachers in Hong Kong and potentially beyond. Finally, Chapter Nine concludes with overarching research issues and ideas, and potential options for future research are noted.

Chapter Two

Early childhood teachers' music teaching and music professional learning needs: a review of literature

INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to provide academic and research background on professional learning for early childhood teachers with a specific focus on early childhood music teaching. The chapter begins with the elaboration of the researcher's conceptual framework to connect different aspects of inquiry and build the theoretical foundation of the study. The literature review starts with adult learning theory and particularly relates to early childhood teachers' music learning in light of their current and future music teaching. It also focuses on teachers' music knowledge and skills, as well as their teaching approaches and practices that relate to their music teaching to inform potential needs for professional learning. The last part focuses on literature related to teachers' professional learning, especially professional learning about music teaching and learning. In order that a more holistic picture is presented, the literature pertinent to this study incorporates various points of view, and ideas are compared, contrasted, and critiqued.

1. Researcher's conceptual framework

Early childhood teachers play a crucial role in actualizing the mission of early childhood education (EDB, 2006a). As early childhood teachers face this changing society, they are expected to be knowledgeable and have abilities for mastering new concepts and skills to upgrade and provide quality teaching. As such, teachers should consider themselves as

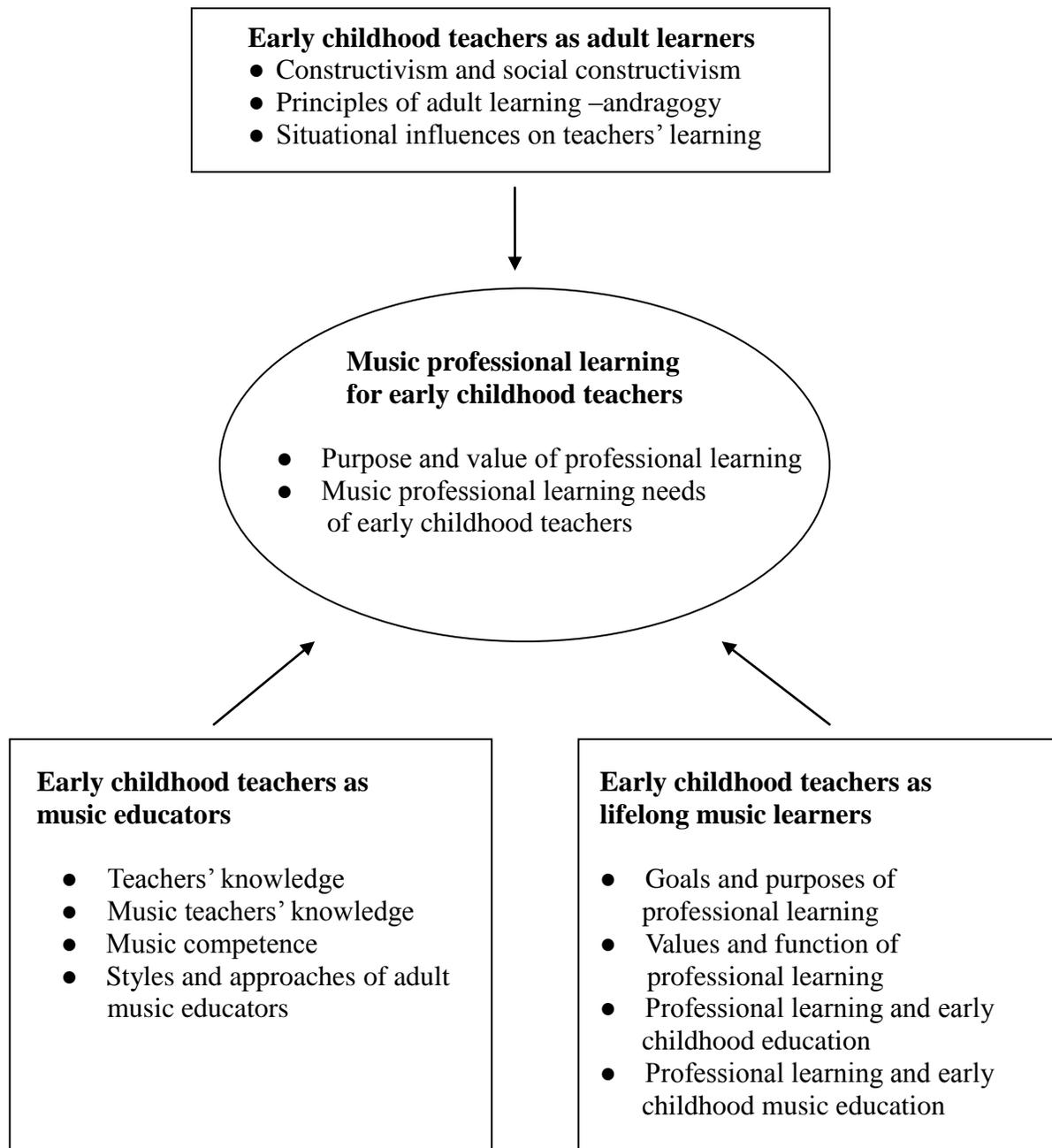
learners aiming to improve and enrich themselves in the pursuit of knowledge. There has been a long history where early childhood educators espoused constructivism as epistemology and this view has been applied as the learning foundation for this conceptual framework (Brownlee, Petriwskyj, Thorpe, Stacey and Gibson, 2011; Bullard, 2003). Also, andragogy as an important theory of adult education encompasses the major principles for adult learners with similarities to constructivism (Harris, 2011). Andragogy is also a central model of adult education that has been followed for many years in western countries, and it has been applied in many Asian studies too (Holton, Swanson and Naquin, 2001; Wang and King, 2008; Wilkins, 2008). I will attempt to take these views from literature and compare the concept of andragogy or adult education to constructivism. Bridging adult education principles and early childhood teacher education may help readers and the researcher gain insights for preparing suitable learning for early childhood teachers and it will certainly enhance our understanding of professional learning for early childhood teachers as adult learners.

As music is one of children's important learning areas (EDB, 2006a), there is a challenge for teachers to gain professional knowledge on the subject, including music skills and teaching practices, and how it relates to the rest of early childhood education. Thus, reviewing ideas about appropriate music knowledge, skills, teaching practices, strategies, and approaches for early childhood teachers could help professional learning providers promote teachers' music learning and help them grow professionally.

Moreover, when guiding children to become lifelong learners, as is the current global expectation (EDB, 2006b; OECD, 1996), teachers should also set themselves as good role models and have the awareness to support and implement lifelong and

continuous learning themselves. Researcher's conceptual framework for literature review reflects the intention to create a music-oriented professional learning model for early childhood teacher education in which teachers act as adult learners, music educators, and lifelong music learners. These three different but interrelated roles for early childhood teachers are collaborative, therefore requiring research to explore the most suitable and relevant professional learning approach for early childhood music education. Thus, the literature review is organized around early childhood teachers as adult learners, as music educators, and lifelong music learners. These roles, concepts, and relationships are initially presented and elaborated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Researcher's Conceptual Framework of Literature Review



2. Early childhood teachers as adult learners

Constructivist theory was developed by Piaget (1952), and applied not only to teaching young children but also to teacher education (DeVries, 2002). Early childhood teachers as adult learners also construct knowledge similar to children. However, the way adults learn is different. If pedagogy describes the art and science of teaching children, andragogy describes teaching adults. Andragogy is the most popular model of adult education, not only in western countries but also worldwide (Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005; Merriam, 2004). This section attempts to link andragogy literature with constructivism and then apply those principles to early childhood teachers in the Hong Kong music professional learning context. Also, the possible factors that influence adults' learning are discussed below. The following literature encompasses constructivism and social constructivism, principles of adult learning, and individual and situational influences on teachers' learning.

2.1. Constructivism and social constructivism

Constructivism is a learning theory that is based on the premise that individuals create their own new understandings based on interactions with prior knowledge, beliefs, environments, and others (Loyens, Rikers and Schmidt, 2009; Richardson, 2003). Constructivist theory was developed by Dewey (1916) and Piaget (1952), which involved cognitive development ideas that have a major, powerful, and long-lasting influence both on learning and teaching toward education (Berk, 2008). Constructivists believed that a learner is an “inquiring knower” in which knowledge is constructed through interaction with physical and social environments evolving from an internal psychological core

(DeVries, Zan, Hildebrandt, Edmiaston and Sales, 2002). The Hong Kong Education Bureau (EDB, 2006a) in the *'Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum'* proclaimed that “early childhood teachers have to take up the roles of facilitator, motivator and supporter to help children learn and grow” (EDB, 2006a: 7). Therefore, the epistemological position of Hong Kong early childhood education is based on constructivist learning theory as well as professional learning for early childhood teachers.

A constructivist sees teaching as stimulating the learner’s interest and encouraging active experimentation and cooperation (Cunningham, 2006; DeVries, Zan, Hildebrandt, Edmiaston and Sales, 2002). Interest would help a learner to make constructive effort to make sense of information and experience, even as experimentation is considered to be an essential part of active mental learning, which motivates people to learn by the trial and error learning process (Pritchard, 2008; Wlodkowski, 2008). With the above guidelines from the beliefs of constructivism the goal of teachers’ education should be for them to facilitate children’s knowledge construction; this happens by engaging teachers with real objects, questioning, and making sense of knowledge (Payne, 2009). It is believed that teachers could better facilitate children’s construction of knowledge (Brown, Care and Deans, 2007; Caldwell, 2006).

Social constructivism is a further development which emphasizes the importance of learning through a socio-cultural context (Lemke, 2001; Powell and Kalina, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978). Based on Piagetian and Vygotskian views, the social constructivist perspective focuses on the interdependence of social and individual processes in the co-construction of knowledge (Palinscar, 2005). The idea of “the “zone of proximal development”” (ZDP) becomes one strategy to solve problems collaboratively (Huang,

2002). Vygotsky believed that it is an area between actual development level and potential development level for every human being (Vygotsky, 1978: 86). “Scaffolding” refers to providing assistance and enabling learners to accomplish tasks and develop understandings to reach the potential areas that they would not be able to manage on their own. It also represents the cognitive support that adults provide for a child’s learning, which anticipates the child’s own internalization of mental functions and fills the zone of development (Berk, 2008; Bruner, 1983; Palmer, 2005). This idea also applies to adults, such that early childhood teachers as learners may need scaffolding to develop their knowledge and skills while making connections with other teachers, mentors, or peers through interactions and co-constructions.

Constructivists believe that the subject being studied is a content or discipline, which is contextualized and embedded within a society and formed through a dialectical relationship with the cultural milieu (Powell and Kalina, 2009; Richardson, 1997). In this study, the content and discipline is early childhood music teacher professional learning. According to Vygotsky (1986), social context is mediated through sign systems, such as language and number classifications. Music has its own special language, which has a long-standing history for teachers providing children with opportunities for hands-on musical experiences, by adopting such methods as playing, singing, creating, listening, and moving (Blair, 2009). A constructivist music classroom exemplifies learning when teachers and children work together toward collaborative learning through questions, developing and implementing plans for investigating questions, and reflecting on the outcomes (Scott, 2006). To make this happen, early childhood educators may balance direct instruction with relevant information about music, with opportunities for teachers

to apply knowledge toward musical results as independent performers, creators, and listeners. Details are discussed in the next section.

In views of the above, constructivism and social constructivism are associated with many contemporary theories, most notably in relation to Piaget's (1952) and Vygotsky's (1978) theories of cognition development and the impact of social factors. It is the growing consensus that adult learners may have more skills and experiences than children, as well as an ability to deal with more abstract concepts. Adults like hands-on activities and concrete experiments. Social connection with peers or mentors can have a positive impact on adults' learning. In views of the above, constructivism and social constructivism can help explain early childhood teachers' learning with a focus on music. Applying constructivism and social constructivism together with the following principles of adult education – andragogy – can provide further direction for setting effective professional learning for practicing teachers.

2.2. Principles of adult learning

The purpose of this section is to explore a set of interrelated concepts that help to explain the phenomena of adult learning. Constructivists believe that learning is searching for meaning as well as a learner's effort to construct it (Applefield, Huber and Moallen, 2001). Andragogy refers to “the art and science of helping adults learn” (Knowles, 1980: 43). It is different from pedagogy, which implies helping children learn (Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005). Six assumptions or characteristics of adults in the course of learning were established in andragogy, which are explained below (Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005).

First, adults need to understand the purpose and function of learning (Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005). There is a need to explain why specific things are being taught, such as ‘child development’ in early childhood education or ‘music theory’ in music education. With understanding of the purpose of learning, adult learners are more convinced to learn and are more able to take responsibility for their continuous improvement of knowledge.

Second, self-directed learning helps adults to take control of their learning. Adults’ self-concepts direct their own learning independently. When adults are involved in the decision-making processes, this affects their learning. Their investment in the educational activity increases. They seek to learn when they have recognized it as important by themselves (Conner, 2000). Adults’ value and belief systems determine largely what will be learned and retained. Therefore, professional learning for early childhood teachers should be directed by teachers’ own decisions, either motivated by their own interests or by a desire to improve their own teaching as well as upgrade their qualifications.

Third, adult learners are greatly impacted by prior experiences that provide rich resources and create individual identities and differences. Adulthood brings a wealth of life experiences to any learning situation. These experiences can support and enhance the learning process, particularly when adults have opportunities to relate what they are learning to what they already know (Sullivan, 2009). Past experience can successfully guide and connect adults to their current learning experiences (Russell, 2006). Knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Therefore, adults integrate new information into what they have already learnt and construct meaning through their prior experiences (Kennedy, 2002). As prior experience can vary from

person to person, the design of a professional learning model should take individual differences into consideration.

Fourth, adults need to feel ready to learn. People will not learn when they do not like to learn. The moment when adults become ready to learn might be caused by life situations or task performance (Holton, Swanson and Naquin, 2001).

Fifth, most adults prefer problem-solving orientated learning that provides real-life situations (Knowles, 1990). Adults are more task and problem-centered rather than subject-centered (Knowles, 1990). They are motivated to learn solutions that will help them perform tasks or deal with real-life problems. Most adults are interested in pragmatic applications of their learning rather than just increasing the knowledge for some possible future need. Adults prefer such learning that can be applied immediately (Conner, 2000). Adults frequently apply their newly learnt knowledge and skills in a practical fashion and they expect that the knowledge gained can help them to further fulfill their goals (Kennedy, 2002). In other words, learning theories without practical use are generally not favorable to adult learning. Although a problem-solving orientated learning style may not be the usual practice that teachers encountered in past decades in Hong Kong, it has been gradually influenced by global changes. Teachers are receptive to this new mode of learning style, which is different from what they learnt in school (Kennedy, 2002).

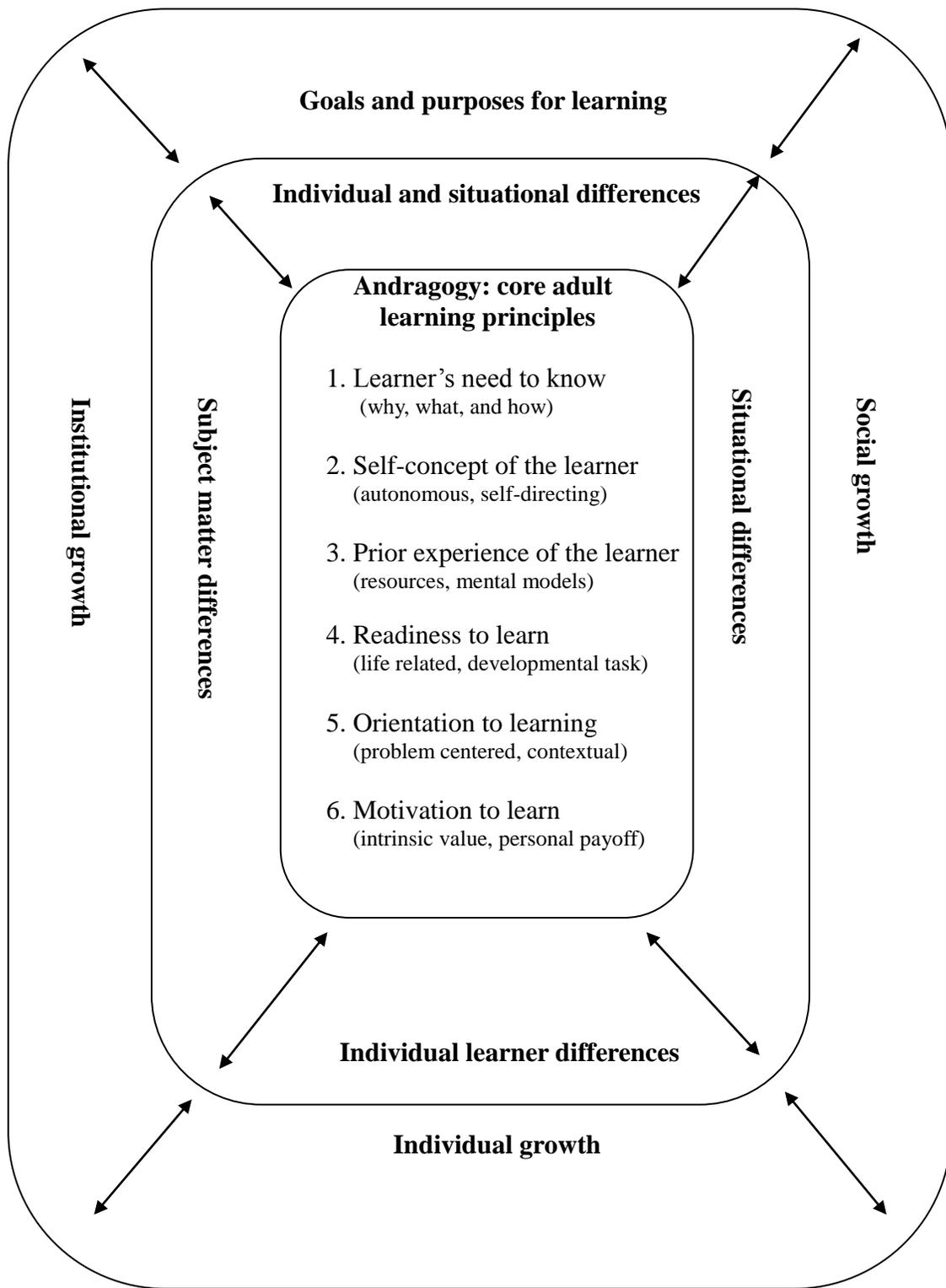
Last, adults' motivation can help them learn. Motivation refers to initiation, direction, intensity, and persistence of behavior. Adult learners may be motivated to learn by personal cognitive interest and by stimulation to relieve boredom. They may also be motivated by personal advancement such as achieving higher status in their job as well as

social responsibility to improve and to serve children (Rush, Hughes, Agran, Martin and Johnson, 2009). Motivation results from internal strengths or external encouragement, and can also help them to seek self-fulfillment and self-actualization (Malsow, 1970; Oomen-Early and Murphy, 2009).

Andragogy is the most popular model of adult education throughout much of the world (Merriam, 2004), sharing some common principles and beliefs with constructivism (Bullard and Hitz, 1997). The six established characteristics outlined above take into deep consideration an individual's physical and psychological needs including: mutual respect and trust, collaboration, authenticity, openness, and pleasure, which are not culturally or situationally bound (Bullard and Hitz, 1997) and can be applied to all kinds of learning, including professional learning for early childhood music education.

However, andragogy has received criticisms as it focuses on individual learners and ignores the impact of socio-cultural factors on learners (Taylor and Kroth, 2009). Addressing the socio-cultural influences, Holton, Swanson and Naquin (2001) applied andragogy more systematically and created a model that consists of an outer ring, middle ring, and inner ring. The model, 'andragogy-in-practice', as shown in the Figure 2.2, can help explain andragogy more fully. Andragogy-in-practice explains not only what adult learners want to learn and how learners could go about learning, it is also concerned with situational influences, such as socio-cultural factors, educational policies from the society, and subject influences, such as scientific inquiry or other subjects, which is lacking in Knowles's (1990) original andragogy model.

Figure 2.2 Andragogy in Practice (adopted from Holton, Swanson and Naquin, 2001: 121)



The outer ring shows the goals and purposes for adult learning and learning outcomes for individuals, institutional, and societal categories. The purpose of adult education can be to help individuals improve their life skills (individual goal), to promote productivity and performance in a job position (institutional goal), and to facilitate change in the social order or in the socioeconomic situation (societal goal) (Holton, Swanson and Naquin, 2001). Applying the andragogy-in-practice model to early childhood music teachers in this study, the goal and purpose of continuous professional learning could be set as follows: to improve each teacher's music teaching skills (individual goal); to promote the effectiveness of the field of early childhood education, by providing effective teaching resources (institutional goal); and to foster the growth of this new generation in society through recognizing the importance of music education from early in life (societal goal). In other words, the mission of professional learning for Hong Kong early childhood music teachers can be to improve their personal teaching skills as the individual goal; to cultivate the quality of music education across the field of early childhood education as the institutional goal; and as a societal goal, to nurture today's young children through learning, as well as to contribute to the artistic and cultural growth of the entire society.

The middle ring displays individual, situational, and subject matter differences that affect the learning process. The middle ring acts as the collective variable component of the andragogy-in-practice model addressing issues that arise from three different areas: "subject", "individual", and "situational". Individual differences refer to variations between individuals' cognition, learning styles, and personalities (Baumgartner, Lee, Birden and Flowers, 2003). Subject matter differences refer to diversity in the areas of inquiry, which require other kinds of teaching or learning strategies, such as the content,

knowledge, skills, and practices of early childhood music teachers that are different from other subjects. Situational differences involve various areas that capture the unique factors from a particular learning situation, educational policies, and cultural influences. They are sets of influences that may affect learning and learning outcomes, such as local educational situation or socio-cultural factors. In Hong Kong, academic excellence is a major part of Chinese educational values (Hui, Sun, Chow and Chu, 2011; Lee, Lam and Li, 2003). However, changes in defining quality education necessarily affect the keen demand of effective professional development for teachers after the educational reform a decade ago (EC, 2001). In view of these values and changes, professional learning is definitely not a stand-alone but involves the environmental context and influences in society.

The inner ring contains six core adult learning principles of andragogy mentioned and explained in the previous section. The inner ring focuses on learners' independent learning situation, which provides a sound foundation for planning adult learning experiences.

The concept of this three-ringed model of andragogy-in-practice covers not only the personal need but also the relationship between society, institutions and the individual from the point of view of adult learners. Different factors derived from society, the uniqueness of the subjects, and the special concern of individuals all contribute to the theoretical framework to explain the complicated characteristics of early childhood teachers seeking professional learning for music teacher education in this study. Based on the above aspiration, the following sections are devoted to exploring and understanding the middle ring factors of situational differences and how these influence teachers'

learning.

2.3. Situational influences on teachers' learning

One of the dimensions of andragogy-in-practice is “situational difference”. Holton, Swanson and Naquin (2001) believed that the ‘situation’ captures the unique factors derived from the learning external environment. They are sets of external influences that may affect learning and learning outcomes. The following sections discuss how changes and influences happened within these factors. Strengths and weaknesses of the external situations can serve as opportunities or threats for adult learners to construct and develop their professional learning. External influences usually refer to four areas: political, economic, socio-cultural, and technological aspects (Hickman, 2009). However, as professional music learning in early childhood education is not technologically driven, the technological forces are excluded. Thus the predominate forces of the external situations embrace the socio-cultural factors, political factors, and economical factors.

Socio-cultural factors

Socio-cultural factors are considered as a concern by Knowles (1980, 1990) within the field of andragogy. The middle ring is concerned with differences of subject, individual, and situation, with socio-cultural factors as part of situational variations in a broader sense (Holton, Swanson and Naquin, 2001). Such socio-cultural influences affect adult learners' learning behaviors. For example, in Hong Kong early childhood education, such issues encompass value and status of education, music education, and international advocacy.

As Hong Kong society is dominated by Chinese culture, which places education in a high position, including early childhood education. Scholars are accorded the highest esteem in society similar to the days of Confucius (Hsu, 2008). Most Chinese appreciate educational endeavors and they believe outstanding and higher social status come from education; therefore, they are very willing to provide finances, time, and energy to be engaged in education (Hsu, 2008). Also, adult learners are willing to commit to education to promote their status (Li and Bray, 2007). Chinese see education as human capital investment for adult career advancement and success in life, especially in the most competitive Hong Kong society (Morris and Adamson, 2010). These ideas can be traced back to the ancient Chinese Civil Examination system and the appointment to government services (Cheng, Jin and Gu, 1999).

The ancient Chinese Civil Examination was a highly centralized testing system to select officials for civil services (Feng, 1994). The examination system was perceived as the fairest platform for the masses to compete and to demonstrate their abilities and intellectual achievements for social mobility regardless of their family or ethnic background (Morris, 2004). Adamson and Morris (2000) believed that the wider context of this examination-oriented nature of the education system in Hong Kong puts emphasis on public examinations, namely the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination and the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination. Students who excel in these two examinations will be admitted to Hong Kong universities for preparation for career success and upward mobility. Admission to universities as a result of success in public examinations exerts a downward pressure on secondary education, primary education, and even early childhood education. Many early childhood schools in Hong Kong adopt

formal academic curriculum as well as test-oriented approaches to help children develop academic excellence (Chan and Chan, 2003; Rao and Pearson, 2006). As a result, music and other nonacademic subjects, such as physical education, are considered minor subjects and thus little time or resources are provided for music education.

Historically, a Confucian view of education started with “poems”, with emphasis on “ceremonies” and ended with “music” (Legge, 1960); therefore, music was considered as an important subject in the traditional Chinese education. However, nowadays in Chinese countries music without these functional purposes has become less valued. The classic six arts of ceremonies, music, shootings, driving, writing, and mathematics were intended to cultivate a person’s individual qualities (Cook, 1995; Yue, 2008). Music learning and development were then seen as the “good view” of people to conform to virtuous living, self-control, and personal behavior improvement. In the earliest comprehensive treatise on Chinese music, Yue (2008) stated that music can stabilize society and family in harmonious relationship. Chinese believed that music could help a ruler and his ministers join harmoniously with respect and help families join in mutual closeness (Chen-Hafteck and Xu, 2008). The value of music education cannot be separated from political influence and is now mostly associated with religious purpose (Yeh, 2001). Thus, music education has been seen not only as a functional tool to keep society in harmony within a broader Chinese culture but also to keep personal emotions stable. It is very different from the notion of music education in many western countries, where music has its own developmental purpose or maybe is viewed as one of served multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993) that support one’s cognitive development. This traditional belief is also different from contemporary expectations of Hong Kong’s

Education Bureau where music education is defined as one of the aesthetic developments for children's sensory, creative, and imaginative powers and considered to enhance children's quality of life by fostering their music interests in life (EDB, 2006a). Although the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) did not clearly suggest the duration for the music activities, it believed that effective arts education, including music, can arouse children's interest in arts and develop an attitude of lifelong learning. Therefore, CDC suggested that music should be taught daily with diversified activities to provide opportunities for enjoyment and expression of feeling. It should provide ways for children to enhance their creativity and appreciation ability. Obviously, there are two different values attributed to music between Hong Kong's society, as greatly influenced by Chinese culture, and the value placed by the Government education department, which is influenced by worldly scholars' research.

Thus, music education or music acquisition has a long history in Chinese culture and the value of music is formally recognized by the Hong Kong Government. Although actual music education succumbs to the career-status factor, it contributes little to a student's admission to a university. Music education is not emphasized and is perceived to have little formal value in preparation for university admission even from early childhood. Although the education department of the Hong Kong Government recognized its value, few resources and little support have been forthcoming. Thus, the value of music has been redefined and music has gradually become fashionable in an informal manner in recent years in Hong Kong.

Political factors

Lifelong professional learning is often linked to wider economic and social development (Day, 2000). It often forms the basis of different educational policies (Colardyn and Bjornavold, 2004) and permeates into policies related to early childhood education. It is suggested that early childhood education forms the foundation for lifelong learning (OECD, 1999). The world's movement of various educational policies has a strong influence on the direction of local government education policy. This has been the case in Hong Kong, as policy changes continue to affect teachers' qualification upgrading and other professional demands within the education field.

Until recently, early childhood education in Hong Kong was still left to market forces with little engagement from the Hong Kong Government. But the Hong Kong Government's change in attitude toward early childhood education became conspicuous when it embraced early childhood education as the cornerstone for lifelong learning (EDB, 2006a). The Hong Kong Government took the initiative to review and subsidize early childhood education in 2006 (Hong Kong SAR Government, 2006). It established a number of initiatives not only to recognize early childhood education as an important and integral part of the basic education system in Hong Kong but also to further upgrade the professional stance of early childhood education and teachers. With regard to qualification upgrading, from 2006 the Hong Kong Government required that all early childhood teachers should obtain the 'Certification of Kindergarten Teacher Education Program' before they could register as teachers. The existing non-qualified teachers were required to attain the qualification before 2012 (EDB, 2007b). Therefore, most of the unqualified early childhood teachers were occupied to finish the required qualification

before 2012. Regarding the quality of the teaching, the Hong Kong Government also began subsidizing early childhood schools to provide ongoing professional learning for teachers, which has been mentioned in the previous chapter. In view of these events, education policy changes have led to considerable advancements in teachers' roles, quality of teaching, and the ongoing need for professional learning.

Hong Kong early childhood education has been shaped by both global and local reforms, which involve upgrading teachers' qualifications (Hong Kong Government, 2006; Rao and Li, 2009) and producing desirable educational outcomes to meet contemporary quality needs (Ho, 2007). Therefore, changes in educational policies have impacted by demanding greater professionalism from teachers and increasing their professional learning opportunities at the same time.

Economic factors

Economic factors have a strong influence on education quality, especially in a knowledge-based economy society such as Hong Kong (Mok, 2003). It is argued that education should be directly reflected in or met the standards of the economy and society's expectations (Ashcroft, 2005). The development of a robust economy creates quality education needs, also called a "knowledge economy". The rise of the knowledge economy has not only changed the nature of knowledge but also restructured the whole education system, research and learning (Mok, 2005). In order to meet the needs of a knowledge-based economy society, Hong Kong education reforms play a significant role in nurturing the new generation with a more creative, innovative, and international perspective. The reforms also aim to promote a vibrant and dynamic economy (Mok,

2007). Early childhood music education is one of the aesthetic developments proposed in the education reforms to nurture children's creativity. Thus, music professional learning for teachers should be part of the strategies to accomplish this task.

3. Early childhood teachers as music educators

Research about the impact of music on positive child development highlighted the needs to prepare teachers' music teaching in early childhood settings (Schellenberg, 2005; Schellenberg, 2006). Preparation for subject knowledge is a vital component of early childhood teachers' knowledge. Teachers who are confident about their subject knowledge are more likely to identify and increase children's learning experiences (Horsley and Bauer, 2010). With well-prepared and well-equipped subject knowledge, teachers can contribute appropriate pedagogical strategies and meaningful learning for children (Cullen and Hedges, 2005). Also, incorporating adult music learner's preferred learning style and offering early childhood teachers an effective, sustainable, and professional learning approach may assist them with attaining more successful teaching goals that are set for them. Therefore, the relevant style of adult learning based on constructivism and andragogy are discussed below.

Research found that professional learning for early childhood music teachers should also build up their competence in music, including equipping them with pedagogies and general education (Colwell, 2006). As early childhood teachers teach young children, it is always believed that they only need preliminary music knowledge and skills. Research found that teachers' educational levels and the relevancy to the subject taught make a difference to teaching (Goldhaber, 2002). There is also a correlation between quality

early childhood education and teachers' subject qualifications and quality practices in teaching and learning (Garbett, 2003). It is argued that whether teaching adults or children, teachers who are well-equipped with subject knowledge and are skilled in teaching practices are most important and greatly contribute to children's learning development. Thus, the aim of this section is to review related literature and to understand the framework of teacher knowledge, focusing on music teacher knowledge and the development of music competence for early childhood teachers as music educators.

3.1. Teachers' knowledge

Prior to discussing music knowledge, it is necessary to determine what kind of knowledge teachers should gain for their music teaching. Shulman (1986) believed that those who understand knowledge provide growth while teaching. Based on the missing link between knowledge and pedagogy, he proposed a framework of teacher knowledge that included general education knowledge and subject content knowledge, as displayed in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3 Shulman's Major Categories of Teacher Knowledge (adopted from Shulman, 1987: 8)

General categories

- General pedagogical knowledge
- Knowledge of learners and their characteristics
- Knowledge of educational contexts
- Knowledge of education ends, purposes, and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds

Content-specific categories

- Content knowledge
- Curriculum knowledge
- Pedagogical content knowledge

Shulman (1986) pointed out that teacher knowledge should encompass theoretical as well as practical knowledge, general education as well as subject matter. The first four items in Figure 2.3 refer to general categories that serve as the foundation and theoretical framework of general knowledge about education, such as understanding of child development, value of teaching and learning, function of parents and society, and so on. This part appeared to be predominant in undergraduate teacher education courses but it was hard to apply the knowledge and skill from general education to the context of subject teaching (Ballantyne, 2005).

The last three items are more content-specific dimensions, which include content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge. Content knowledge refers to subject knowledge and its structure, such as music theory and performance skills. Curriculum knowledge is the full range of programs designed for the teaching of a particular subject, such as music curriculum planning. Pedagogical content knowledge is a special territory of teacher knowledge that bridges the content knowledge

and practice of teaching (Ball, Thames and Phelps, 2008). It also refers to integrating the perceived subject matter knowledge with teaching, such as engaging students with music in a meaningful way, explaining and demonstrating musical concepts. The following section attempts to capture some of the essential qualities of teacher knowledge required for early childhood music education, such as to elaborate content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge based upon this framework.

3.2. Early childhood teachers' music knowledge

In this study, general categories of teacher knowledge are not the focus of discussion. Rather, music, with special focus on early childhood music teacher education, will be the subject in which content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and curriculum knowledge are addressed in the following sections.

Music content knowledge

Content knowledge refers to the knowledge specific to the subject required for a profession. It covers not only the facts and concepts of the subject, but also the principles, structure, and the rules of the subject (Ball, Thames and Phelps, 2008). Applied to music, this category includes music theory, aural skills, music history, performance skills, conducting skills, aural perception skills, composition skills, and so on. These are the areas in which every professional musician is expected to be proficient (Gould, 2009). Although early childhood teachers do not directly teach music theory or history to young children, the knowledge of music theory and other knowledge are integrated into meaningful activities, for example, teachers might design some rhythmic activities to

teach certain rhythm patterns or introduce music's historical story through music appreciation.

Music pedagogical content knowledge

Pedagogical content knowledge is the link between content and pedagogy that is central to being an effective teacher for teaching (Ball, Thames and Phelps, 2008). Shulman (1986) observed the incompleteness of the traditional understanding of teachers' knowledge. Pedagogical content knowledge includes an understanding of conception and preconception of topics that broaden ideas on how knowledge can affect teaching (Shulman, 1986). In music teaching within early childhood education, pedagogical content knowledge can be seen to include: music teaching technique within the classroom; involving children with music in meaningful ways; implementing music curriculum effectively; assessing children's abilities in the various aspects of music; and, explaining and demonstrating musical concepts through different activities (Ballantyne, 2006). Pedagogical content knowledge is the important area of teaching practice that is directly contextualized to early childhood teachers' experiences as music teachers. Music listening, music making, and music creating have been proposed as the three main musical developments for children in Hong Kong (CDC, 1992). Thus, these three aspects are used as a basic music pedagogical content knowledge framework for reviewing the literature and exploring concepts relevant to this research study.

Musical listening skills are fundamental to children's music learning (Garner, 2009). Music listening involves the ability to discriminate sounds through hearing pitch, rhythm, dynamic, tempo, or timbre from songs (Gordon, 2003). These are all music

elements that make up a song or music, which can be learned through music listening. Making musical environments available for young children and enriching their music listening experiences are some of the important roles for teachers in early music education (Woodward, 2005). Teachers can help children to reach their music competence through delivering appropriate music experience in a nurturing environment (Richards and Durrant, 2003; Welch, 2006). Teachers can create and lead music listening activities for children. Doing so involves aural perception skills and music appreciation sourcing and leading skills. It is important for teachers to create active listening opportunities and engage children in focused listening (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009). That means teachers should specially design some music listening activities with a background learning purpose. Turning on music as the background for teaching other subjects is not necessarily an active listening activity. Musical listening is structured and has a purpose. Teachers can guide children to explore musical elements such as repeat, contrast, tone colors, and shaping of the music (Cutietta and Stauffer, 2005) through games to indicate different music elements in the excerpt of music. It is also important that teachers develop the skills to source appropriate content for their teaching (Ballantyne, 2006). Making music listening part of children's activities requires teachers to listen to music too. Teachers' openness, curiosity, discovery, and the act of listening are more likely to lead children to be more attentive and appreciative music listeners (Sims and Nolker, 2002) as they will have more repertoires and knowledge to introduce the music that they are familiar with. Also, teachers' knowledge, skills, and continuous learning attitudes are more likely to increase the possibility that music listening becomes a pleasure and is a fulfillment for children's future lives. Teachers can be the facilitators

to encourage children's music learning through their active involvement and well-designed activities (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009).

Musical making includes singing, instrument playing, and accompaniment, using music with movement, and so on. This form is dominant in children's music curriculum (MENC, 1991). It requires teachers to have performance skills or conducting skills. Teachers should be able to lead children in singing and exploring their own natural instrument – voice (Leighton and Lamont, 2006). Singing not only brings joy to children but also goes hand in hand with musical listening to help develop children's voices (Garner, 2009). Pitches, phrases, contours of a melody, rhythm, text, and formal organization (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009) are all important elements that children need to be exposed to and guided through in specially designed activities or games when learning songs. Also, teachers understanding children's vocal structure and noticing the individual differences between children can facilitate and nurture children's singing (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009).

Teachers as important vocal models and teaching transmitters can provide quality education as well as encourage children to sing as part of their enjoyment in their lives with well-equipped knowledge and practice. Other than singing, both instrument playing and using music with movement can be part of teachers' teaching agendas when planning, leading, and providing children with relevant authentic learning activities. Although all these necessary knowledge and skills sound complicated and very detailed for early childhood teachers, these knowledge and skills will greatly help teachers to make music with children. Thus, the literature supports the idea that teachers should have and explore this comprehensive music making content through professional learning.

Musical creating involves composition and improvisation skills (Burnard, 2000). Creating music is an important part of the early childhood music education curriculum within the national standards in the United States (MENC, 1994a) as well as Hong Kong (CDC, 1992; EDB, 2006a). Teachers need to be equipped with some music theory and composition skills, such as time and key signatures, rhythms, intervals, etc. Through composition and improvisation, children can formulate ideas through creative activities, (Hickey, 2001; Kinns, 2004) such as creating their own version of a familiar song, creating movement for music, and improvising instrumental playing, thus using and developing their creativity. Thus, teachers provide varied opportunities for children and children's development of music improvising, composition, and creativity are inter-related.

Teaching improvisation and composition requires early childhood teachers to share ideas by stimulating children with lots of examples and demonstrating creativity, such as creating new melody with children and letting children create their own as well. It is important to provide lots of opportunities for children to explore and create their own musical products (Welch, 2006). Teachers can consider the performance levels and musical generating skills of children when planning improvisation for them. It is important to make improvisation meaningful within the simple musical structure (Brophy, 2001). Providing opportunities for creativity and improvisation, may be a constant challenge for teachers to create low-stress settings and determine the medium, context, and materials of the lesson for children (Riveire, 2006) so that children's ideas can grow freely and their creativity can be nurtured. Teachers can echo singing patterns, adopting question-and-answer singing, listening and analyzing patterns, and then improvising short

vocal melodies (Whitcomb, 2003). Thus, teaching composition and improvisation require early childhood teachers to be endowed with a certain level of music competence or to acquire it with professional learning.

In sum, music listening, making, and creating are three inter-related aspects of music content knowledge for early childhood teachers. These three ingredients should be included in children's music learning so that early childhood teachers can create richer and more effective music environments which provide children with better musical stimulation and development.

Music curriculum knowledge

Curriculum knowledge refers to the full range of programs design for a specific subject at a particular level. It also includes understanding a variety of instructional materials available for the subject and the set of indications for the use of the particular curriculum (Shulman, 1986). In this study, curriculum knowledge refers to music curriculum knowledge specific to early childhood education. According to Shulman (1986), curriculum knowledge includes two dimensions: lateral curriculum and vertical curriculum. Lateral knowledge relates to the curriculum that children are taught in other classes and subject areas, such as thematic or integrated curriculum used across the whole early childhood education. Vertical curriculum knowledge refers to the same subject areas that a class is taught in later year levels (Ball, Thames and Phelps, 2008) such as music curriculum across different years of schooling from early childhood.

To acquire curriculum knowledge for early childhood music education, teachers ought to have a full understanding of the music development and program designed

across different age levels, the related materials for music instruction, and the characteristics of both indications and contraindications for the use of music curriculum. It also includes the knowledge to relate music to the content of a given lesson to topics or issues in other classes (Ball, Thames and Phelps, 2008; Shulman, 1986). This is challenging for teachers in Hong Kong who are generally not well equipped with music content knowledge, as well as pedagogical knowledge. Therefore, this is part of the professional learning need for early childhood teachers when they assume the responsibilities to plan and lead the music in school as well as increase the quality of music education in Hong Kong.

3.3. Music Competence

Teaching is a highly complex activity that draws on many kinds of knowledge (Mishra and Koehler, 2006). Music competence of a teacher refers to a teacher's own musical abilities and skills for guiding children's experiences, knowledge, and understanding of music as a whole (Woodward, 2005). It also refers to a teacher's ability to combine the content, perspectives, and techniques associated with the various elements to achieve specific artistic and analytical goals (MENC, 1994b). According to the framework of Shulman's (1986) concept of teacher knowledge, this includes content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge. But how can early childhood teachers acquire an understanding of the complex relationships among content, curriculum, and pedagogy skills of music so that a general teacher is competent to teach music? Research suggests that teachers simply need to be trained to acquire basic competence of the subject knowledge, skills, and pedagogy to unlock the power and

potential of the subject (Mishra and Koehler, 2006) and then integrate and conceptualize this knowledge into practice, such as integrating the concept of high and low pitch into music and movement, or identifying soft and heavy sounds with imaginary musical games. On the whole, it is most important for teachers to develop their music competence, and to embed and conceptualize these competences to their daily music teaching.

Although the core of music knowledge, skill, and pedagogy is similar for music teacher education across all ages, children's distinctive needs at different age groups are varied, which should be part of the pedagogical content knowledge (Nardo, Custodero, Persellin and Fox, 2006). There is no commonly identified set of music competences required for early childhood teachers. However, Saunders and Baker (1991) and Kelly (1998), in their research about the teachers' perceptions of useful music skills and understanding, all used the same music competence list that was also used later in Chau's (2003) research. Chau (2003) researched the early childhood teachers' useful music curriculum and music competence when teaching young children. Table 2.1 shows the list of music competences for early childhood teachers which was used by these researchers. The list includes 23 items covering music theory, history, music listening, music making, music creating, music curriculum, and integrated curriculum planning; these were used in this study as the blueprint of music competence in the questionnaire. The list is comprehensive and covers almost all the areas of music knowledge, skills, pedagogy, and understanding required for early childhood teachers to teach children effectively. Most important, the list has been used as the tool in different studies which supports the idea that the items cover most of the musical competence needs expected from the west (USA) to the east (Taiwan, Hong Kong).

Table 2.1 List of Music Competences for Early Childhood Teachers (adopted from Chau, 2003; Kelly, 1998)

- Music theory and reading notation
- Music history
- Playing piano or keyboard
- Playing recorder
- Playing guitar
- Singing experiences with teacher accompaniment
- Singing experiences with recorded accompaniment
- Characteristics of children's voices
- Selecting appropriate songs
- Leading and teaching songs
- Using rhythmic instruments
- Using pitched instruments (e.g. xylophones)
- Developing movement activities
- Selecting recordings for children
- Developing listening lessons
- Providing creative musical experiences
- Developing music reading activities
- Developing music curriculum
- Using basal music text series
- Using music to supplement other activities or studies
- Music improvisation
- Music composition
- Integrating music with computer activities

Kelly (1998) believed that teachers were more “comfortable” with movement, using rhythm instruments, leading and teaching songs, engaging children in music listening activities. Whereas Chau (2003) found that practical music skills are more useful than the traditional ones (Chau, 2003; Kelly, 1998); for example, music and movement are more useful than music history and notation-ready skills. Most importantly, children tend to benefit more when they are exposed to these music skills and understandings than the traditional fundamental music skills, such as music theory, notation, and history (Chau, 2003; Kelly, 1998). The focus of this study was not to find out teachers’ comfortable music teaching competence but their needs for further learning based on the list of music

competences so as to benefit teachers as well as children's development. Constructivists believe that humans are active learners and construct knowledge based on interactions with prior knowledge and people (Bullard, 2003). Thus, it was adopted as the reference for early childhood teachers to be equipped through training based on these appropriate and useful skills.

3.4.Styles and approaches of adult music educators

Identifying adults' learning styles helps educators to decide the clear direction to promote adult learning and effective instruction (Richardson, 2005). To enhance efficient learning outcomes, the characteristics of learners and their learning needs and styles should be part of the content when planning professional learning for a group of people. Learning style relates to the personal, biological and developmental set of characteristics that make instruction and learning more effective for a particular learner (Dunn, Beaudry and Klavas, 2002; Dunn, Thies and Honigsfeld, 2001). Huang (2002) believed that the practice and design of learning can be guided from a perspective of philosophy and methodology. Thus, in the constructivist and andragogy approaches for music learning, early childhood teachers' ongoing learning can be given consideration across three learning styles, which are interactive, collaborative, and learning-centered. These styles appear to be consistent with the beliefs of constructivism as well as the principles of andragogy. In Hong Kong, "the guide to the pre-primary curriculum" based on constructivism proposed that teachers should widen children's space, be child-centered, respect children's individual differences, and promote motivation for learning (EDB, 2006a); all these ideas are similar to the common beliefs and principles of constructivism

and andragogy. These learning approaches can help teachers plan and implement experiential learning and arts exploration, such as music, with young children.

Interactive learning

Interactive learning is an active and learner-centered approach with stronger learning stimulus (Huang, 2002). It challenges teachers as learners to develop their own capabilities and they can share ideas with experts and obtain feedback (Rose and Reynolds, 2008). The interactive approach also involves an attitude of learning that does not focus on passing knowledge from teachers and being received by learners; but rather, teachers as learners construct knowledge and meaning of their own and make sense of it. In Hong Kong, teaching has always been didactic and text-bound, allowing little room for interaction between teachers and learners (Kennedy, 2002). However, Hong Kong early childhood education is based on constructivism, with the belief that children are born to be learners and that the education program should be child-centered to give room for constructing one's own knowledge (EDB, 2006a). In response to this position, teachers should be enabled to adopt this learning style (Kennedy, 2002). Music learning always involves interactive activities, such as music, movement, and musical games. Interactive activity helps to maintain a learner's interest and provides a means for individual practice and reinforcement (Fischer, 2000; Grieshaber and Lau, 2010). It is effective as it provides ways to motivate and stimulate learners through activities and interactive programs so that adults can participate more fully in content and concept building. Also they can be engaged in reflection, recognition, and organization through interactive learning to acquire knowledge (Fischer, 2000). With this clear goal and mission, early childhood

teachers as adult learners in Hong Kong ought to be capable of deploying different learning strategies and styles (Kennedy, 2002).

Collaborative learning

Adult learners gain knowledge collaboratively in their lives and not in isolation from others (Caffarella and Merriam, 2000; Huang, 2002). From a social constructivists' perspective, learning should involve other people, such as educators and peers (Huang, 2002; Vygotsky, 1978) as people learn through interaction and stimulation from others. Teachers can enhance their social, interpersonal, and reflective skills through guidance from mentors or educators or in collaboration with peers (Huang, 2002). Educators may lead group music games with teachers. Through demonstrating experiential activities to teachers, they can learn to lead children's activities. Learning involves creating a social negotiation environment and supportive collaborative learning. Adult learning can involve mentoring, coaching, and facilitating (Murphy, Mahoney, Chen, Mendoza-Diaz and Yang, 2005). These are all effective means to engage adults in the learning process through collaboration in one way or another. Applied in professional learning sessions for early childhood teachers, music trained or experienced teachers can act as mentors or coaches while demonstrating and facilitating music teaching. Joint efforts can be made by experienced teachers, music specialists, or heads of schools to address the individual differences, expand and unite the sphere of music professions, and also share knowledge through the collaborative process (Luce, 2001).

Learner-centered learning

The concept of learner-centered learning is based on taking ownership of the learning process (Huang, 2002). Learners' talents and backgrounds, and prior experiences can be the assets during such explorations. Adult learning should be related to their real life and work experience (Herrington and Herington, 2005). Thus, adult learning grounded in adults' valuable experiences means past opportunities are resources. Their interest, perspectives, capacities, and needs help to promote the highest achievement for learners (McComb and Vakili, 2005). Learner-centered learning can be achieved when learners are self-directed and motivated to set objectives, find resources, and evaluate learning progress (Huang cited in Cranton, 2002). In music learning, such as for professional learning, teachers can be actively involved in their own learning plan by self-assigning, self-correcting, anticipating, expanding, and extending the musical materials into their environment (Custodero, 2002); this might include setting goals and self-evaluation plans for themselves. All these learning tasks then become meaningful and can help teachers take responsibility for their own learning.

Adults' acquisition of knowledge can be addressed by acknowledging different learning styles. Adults learn better when they are engaged in interactive learning activities in collaboration with others. Also, they will find learning more meaningful when they are the center of the learning. Other than addressing different learning styles of adults, exploration of situational differences as a follow up can also expand the understanding of contextual issues, which can contribute to the promotion or not of effective professional learning.

4. Early childhood teachers as lifelong music learners

Lifelong learning is a necessity and an essential challenge for inventing the future of societies (Trilling and Fadel, 2009). In view of the changing society, the Hong Kong Government (EDB, 2006a: 44) believes that early childhood teachers should be more knowledgeable and have the ability to master new concepts and skills to better meet children's highly "inquisitive" "creative" and "imaginative" needs. After pre-service education, teachers can be further equipped beyond initial qualifications. Significant depth of theories, research, and professional competence relevant to a teacher's current work and future goals are essential for early childhood teachers (NAEYC, 2002). Therefore, teacher professional learning can greatly contribute to teachers' ongoing process of renewing knowledge and competence.

Lifelong learning is a buzzword in the twenty first century. It promotes learning across the lifespan, from cradle to grave (Medel-Añonuevo, Ohsako and Mauch, 2001). On the other hand, lifelong learning is connected to the utilitarian view of education when government promotes education to support economic development (OECD, 2007). However, as mentioned earlier, although lifelong learning involves learning from infancy to the end of life, discussion by government agencies often puts emphasis on continuous learning extended beyond a person's initial education, be it the completion of basic secondary education or university education. Thus lifelong learning and professional learning, as well as other related advocacies such as continuing education and recurrent education, are often used interchangeably (Tuijnman, 2002). Not only a specific learning program or plan, lifelong learning is also an approach and attitude for early childhood teachers. It requires teachers to undertake continuous reflection and contemplation:

goal-setting, reviewing, adjusting, and evaluating.

Under this lifelong learning view, the focus of this study was to explore the learning needs of practicing early childhood teachers who have already completed their initial teacher training in early childhood education. The following sections discuss professional learning from four different aspects: goals and purposes of professional learning; the value and function of professional learning; professional learning related to early childhood education generally; and, music education specifically.

4.1. Goals and purposes of professional learning

Professional learning or continuous professional learning has become a core requirement of different professionals to stay competitive in their professions and across their workplaces or field of work. Because of the changing (economic and other) environment, it helps to maintain their attachment to the related professional bodies, for example, accounting, medical, and law professional bodies in different parts of the world, including Hong Kong. In relation to education, the Education Bureau of Hong Kong set up the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications (ACTEQ) to make recommendations for Government about teachers' continuing professional learning. ACTEQ suggested teachers should be engaged for 150 hours over three years of professional development activities (EDB, 2010a; EDB, 2010b). However, this does not include early childhood teachers. Professional learning can range from a single workshop or in-service days to a semester-long academic course offered by various professional learning providers and varying widely with respect to the philosophy, content, and format of the learning experiences. Professional learning is often associated with "education"

and “training”, with “education” and “training” varying. Education activities are within a formal education system, whereas ‘training’ is usually outside the formal education system (Maxwell, Field and Clifford, 2006). In general terms, education helps teachers decide what to do, whereas training is about achieving what is necessary with consistency, effectiveness, and efficiency (Day and Gu, 2007). Both education and training can be significant and essential contributions to teachers’ professional learning.

The definition of professional learning for early childhood teachers comprises improving teachers’ knowledge, skill, and practices. It is also believed that professional learning helps teachers obtain more and new professional knowledge, skills, and perspectives and assists them with applying their acquired learning (NPDCI, 2008). As explored in the previous sections, professional learning should be learner-centered, practical, and an ongoing process to foster more collegiality, collaborative inquiry, and critical discourse (Gruenhagen, 2008). This joining of skills seems suitable for Hong Kong early childhood teachers.

Early childhood music teachers’ professional learning geared toward children’s development outcomes can support their learning (Díaz-Maggioli, 2004; Hedges and Cullen, 2005; Nieto, 2003). As mentioned before, adult learners are more convinced to learn when the purpose and function of the learning is clear (Knowles, 1990). This can become the goal for teachers’ professional learning. In this study, professional learning for early childhood teachers’ – through participation in education or training from both within or outside the formal education system – not only provides knowledge and skills for their music teaching, but also sets the example for children as lifelong music learners and ultimately more fully enhances children’s learning and contributes to their

development (Myers, 2005). This perspective not only informs and extends existing practice, but it may, and should, challenge teachers' attitudes toward music education.

4.2. Values and function of professional learning

The world is changing, and so is teacher education. One of the major issues across the ever-changing worldwide education reforms is developing more highly qualified and committed teachers (Cheng and Chow, 2002). Teachers will only be able to fulfill their educational purposes if they are both well prepared for the profession and are able to maintain and improve their contributions to the teaching profession through professional learning (Day and Gu, 2007). Teachers engaged in regular self-assessment and professional learning can better maintain their teaching enthusiasm and avoid burnout (Smith and Haack, 2000). High-quality professional learning becomes one major element to help sustain teacher effectiveness and to effectively support their continuous growth (Hamre and Pianta, 2005; Loeb, Fuller, Kagan and Carrol, 2004). Through professional learning, teachers stay in touch with current ideas, materials, and methods, which can challenge them to continue to move forward in their work. Professional learning is seen as the key to maintaining teachers' professional competence (Day and Gu, 2007; Smith and Haack, 2000). Research also supports the notion that early childhood teachers' professional learning positively affects the quality of early childhood programs and predicts the children's developmental outcomes (Early and Winton, 2001; Saracho and Spodek, 2006, 2007). Thus, the value of professional learning can be summarized as: helping early childhood teachers stay competent, thus meeting the required quality education needs of society under the education review, and enhancing children's learning

and development through more effective teaching.

4.3. Professional learning and early childhood education

Research finds that early childhood teachers with greater professional preparation and in-service education increase their sensitivity and responsiveness and improve the overall quality of their classrooms (Saracho and Spodek, 2006). Effective professional learning is a process of changing or further developing or extending teachers' mental models, beliefs, and their perceptions (Howes, James and Ritchie, 2003). With the focus on practicing early childhood teachers in this study, research indicates that professional development is intended to provide existing teachers with intensive learning over a limited period (Day and Gu, 2007). Through this kind of learning, their knowledge, skills, or understanding can move a step forward or even have transformative growth, resulting in major changes in beliefs, knowledge, skills, or understandings (Day and Gu, 2007) and so change their practices toward effective teaching. In Hong Kong, professional learning is likely to meet the needs of teachers in relation to their level of experience, career development, demands of the system, lifelong learning cycle or system needs, and it may succeed in accelerating growth. However, additional responsibilities and unrealistic teaching expectations from schools, handling difficult classes, together with lack of status and professional feedback may hinder teachers' professional learning (McCormack, Gore and Thomas, 2006); this is the current situation of Hong Kong early childhood education.

Children's development and learning and early childhood teachers' professional learning are always inter-related (Zaslow and Martinez-Beck, 2005). As constructivism and social constructivism approaches explained, people's learning interacts with the

physical and social world, and teachers play an important role as the facilitator and guide in this learning process (Ray, 2002). During professional learning, early childhood teachers need to consider not only the understanding of children's developmental needs where all children can thrive, but also the additional responsibilities: difficult classes and unrealistic teaching expectations together with lack of status and professional feedback hinder early childhood teachers' professional learning.

Considering that the Hong Kong early childhood education workforce is currently under educational reform and review (EC, 2001; EDB, 2006b), professional learning might play an important role in sustaining teachers' effectiveness and support their continuous growth in the field, most importantly, by appropriate learning enabling teachers to deliver the program required by the curriculum, such as music knowledge and skills with an integrated approach. Professional learning can address the need for a highly effective early childhood workforce. This study focuses on music education as the special feature of professional learning.

4.4. Professional learning and early childhood music education

It is believed that one of the sources of developing and changing teachers' beliefs is through formal knowledge (Richardson, 2003). Teachers gain formal music knowledge in schools or through private music instruction, which creates a belief structure about music and music experience. Private music instruction may affect teachers' self-efficacy (Thompson, 2007) as they may feel more confident of their music skills to help in their teaching. In Hong Kong, early childhood teachers may receive more or less formal knowledge (school or private instruction) of music education depending on their personal

interest and own choice in seeking music education and training. However, no matter how much formal music education or private music skill training they receive, teachers are assumed to teach music in their schools. It is not common to have subject specific teachers in early childhood schools teach music.

In many other countries, early childhood teachers also assume duties of teaching music. However, non-music specialists without key skills to teach music may be less able to effectively develop children's positive music experiences. It might be possible to instill among children discomfort and fear of music in the classroom (Siebenalar, 2006). Some research found that musically untrained teachers lacked confidence in teaching music and even tried to avoid it (Siebenalar cited in Bresler, 2006). Although teachers may have received music training, some teachers cannot put what they have learned into practice (Siebenalar, 2006). Opportunities for teachers to reconstruct their teaching and learning should be created in light of their current practice (Thompson, 2007). According to constructivism, reconstruction can happen through actively creating and modifying knowledge from meaningful learning (Palmer, 2005). Meaningful and collaborative professional learning can provide opportunities for reflection, inquiry, and to evaluate beliefs about teachers' role in teaching. Therefore, this is also the direction of the framework for professional learning of early childhood teachers in this study.

As mentioned, early childhood teachers are usually cross-disciplinary trained (Ray, Bowman and Robbins, 2006). Thus, their subject knowledge is comparatively weak and they cannot claim to have expertise in any subject area. If early childhood teachers want to develop some specialized subject knowledge, skills, and practices to increase their capabilities and expertise in some subject area, professional learning may be a way

to achieve this (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond and Bransford, 2005). Moreover, when teachers have not been well prepared during pre-service education and training, professional learning may become more urgent (Ho and Yip, 2003). Also, teachers need to acquire new skills, such as music when music is unlikely to permeate into the teachers' daily practice of teaching. In Hong Kong, there is no specific benchmark standard required of early childhood teachers to teach music. The music knowledge endowed in each early childhood teacher varies as they receive little music training in their pre-service early childhood education training (see Chapter Four).

Lee (2008) suggested that adult learners' musical learning can be achieved through hands-on experiences with the raw materials of music. Experiential learning could be employed to help adult learners develop, such as musically untrained early childhood teachers. Professional learning allows them to construct musical knowledge and develop a sense of self-confidence about performing music. Professional learning ought to accommodate adults' personal learning styles and possibly include opportunities for cooperative learning, peer tutoring, and student-defined projects (Lee, 2008). Scott-Kassner's (1997) research gathered suggestions about what an ideal early childhood music educator might be. The list below shows the ideal qualities of early childhood music educators.

- Have a love of young children that combines a respect for individual differences, a capacity to see music through the eyes of the child, patience, and kindness.
- Be keenly observant and thoughtful, reflecting on the growth of each child, as well as their own work with the child, and adjusting instruction accordingly rather than rigidly following a prescribed text or method.
- Be adaptable in responding to the child, open to pursuing the direction he or she wants to take, playful in entertaining the ideas that he or she generates, and flexible in the use of musical resources.
- Value the process of documenting a child's growth, recognizing children's capacity to reflect meaningfully on their own progress from a very young age.

- Have a solidly developed musicianship and possess abilities to hear well, sing well, and move well, in addition to knowledge of the instrument(s) they teach.
- Have an understanding of all areas of child development – social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and musical – that is not only theoretical but also informed by practice.
- Be genuinely spontaneous as music makers, capable of improvising, composing, and arranging music from a child’s perspective
- Be open to children’s improvisations and compositions and sincerely value their input
- Know a broad repertoire of music for children, including songs from many cultures, and be able to use it spontaneously to suit the moment.

(Scott-Kassner, 1997)

The list of what an ideal early childhood music educator might be like included some teachers’ attitudes, knowledge, skills, and practices that are usually acquired through a general understanding of music, but also through general early childhood teacher education. The list reflected that early childhood teachers were required to be fully equipped both professionally as well as academically. This high expectation needs to be met by the initial music education training as well as ongoing professional learning.

In sum, early childhood music teachers are expected to receive general early childhood education knowledge, such as child development, observation skills, and assessment skills. In addition, they are expected to be equipped with enough musical knowledge and skills plus abilities of integration and conceptualization, which was suggested in the previous section, so that they can conduct early childhood music education with young children.

The recent education reform and review in Hong Kong demonstrated the effort of the Government to reprioritize early childhood education and commit to higher quality education for young children. However, from my researcher’s expert position, the

benefits of early childhood music education are not adequately demonstrated. Music education is still not a major part of any Hong Kong early childhood teacher training program. With limited time allocation to the pre-service training in early childhood music education, there is insufficient time spent to adequately prepare teachers to meaningfully teach music to young children. Thus, the role of professional learning becomes crucial. It is the aim of this study to explore the suitable and effective professional learning for early childhood music teacher education.

The above literature seeks to provide a practical framework and direction for researching professional learning of early childhood music education for the government, early childhood teacher education institutions, and practicing early childhood teachers. Concluding the above literature findings, professional learning should benefit both teachers' growth in their career prospects as well as children's learning. Professional learning may help early childhood teachers become more effective in offering integrated early childhood education. In the area of teaching music, professional learning can help teachers to develop specialized music content knowledge, skills, and practices. Professional learning focuses on the integrated concept of 'education' and 'training', involving both formal and informal settings through hands-on experience and experiential learning. With the hard work and determination of all the stakeholders involved, professional learning of early childhood music education can enable teachers to achieve academic and career excellence and the children can benefit from high-quality music education that will enrich their lives.

SUMMARY

This chapter represents a combination of the study of professional learning of early childhood teacher education and music education. Early childhood teachers as adult learners seek to become music learners and lifelong music educators in response to the society, institution, and personal goals. It is an attempt to seek a way to achieve the quality as expected from the education reform and review in Hong Kong. This chapter included and reviewed current literature on the theory of adult education, a framework of teacher knowledge with a focus on music teacher knowledge for early childhood teachers, and professional learning specifically geared toward early childhood music teacher education. The particular focus is on early childhood practitioners' professional learning in terms of music teacher education. The reviewed literature incorporated research from experts all over the world; ideas have been presented, compared, contrasted, and critiqued to provide a broader global view as a foundation for researching and developing a professional learning framework which could more effectively assist early childhood teachers in Hong Kong and beyond to facilitate higher quality music teaching. With the theoretical framework stated above, Chapter Three will report the researcher's conceptual framework and the methods, design, data collection, and data analysis to further investigate the study.

Chapter Three

Researching perspectives of early childhood teachers’ music professional learning needs and music teaching practices in early childhood schools: methodology and methods

INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a full discussion of the methodology and methods used in this study. The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of stakeholders’ perspectives on existing professional music practices in early childhood schools with a focus on young children’s music learning and teaching in Hong Kong. Those key stakeholders were practicing early childhood teachers, principals of early childhood schools, and higher education lecturers (teacher educators from four different institutions or universities). From their perspectives and rich lived experiences, the researcher planned to gather data that would help explain and understand the everyday needs for early childhood music teaching and learning. This understanding would help inform the design and creation of a professional learning framework for practicing early childhood teachers and/or for lecturers.

The researcher purposely chose to work as a colleague or team member with those key stakeholders during the process of this research. The researcher knew that they were frontline practitioners and played a pivotal role in the learning and teaching of early childhood music. Rather than treating them as information sources and drawing data from them, the researcher valued them as companions in walking through different stages of reflection, redirection, and evaluation. The researcher and these stakeholders sought to co-construct meanings of professional learning for early childhood music education.

These ideas reflected my philosophical position and thus formed a researcher's conceptual framework for this study.

Below, I start with the methodology and research design. The data gathering methods adopted and the techniques used to analyze the collected data are described. Finally, the trustworthiness, validity, limitations, delimitations, and ethical issues associated with this research are explored and discussed.

1. Methodology and research design

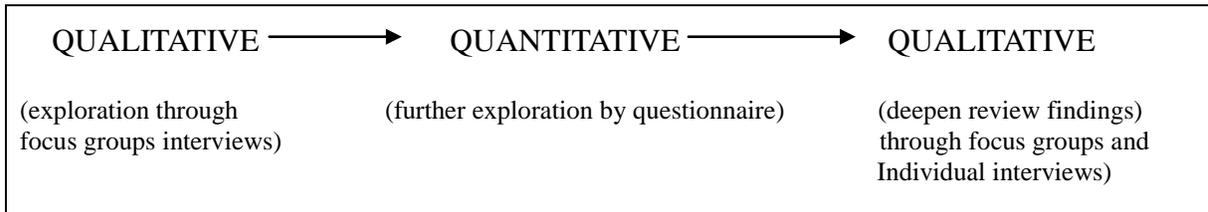
This section discusses the methodology and research design. For this study, the researcher adopted a mixed method approach to include both qualitative and quantitative research generating data from the early childhood stakeholders: teachers, principals, and lecturers. The following two sections involve a discussion about the mixed method approach and the research questions in this study.

1.1. Mixed method research approach

Mixed method research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Mixed method research can also be called multi-method research, which involves both quantitative and qualitative research (Punch, 2005; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). It is an expansive, inclusive, pluralistic, complementary, and creative form of research (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Qualitative research is generally perceived as induction, discovery, exploration, and hypothesis generation, while quantitative research focuses on deduction, confirmation, hypothesis testing, explanation, and prediction (Johnson and

Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Punch, 2005). Mixed method approaches can help minimize weaknesses of any single approach, potentially answer research questions with more depth, and assist with generalizing from richer data (Creswell, 2003; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; McMurray, Pace and Scott, 2004). This research bridges both the interpretive and normative paradigms, and becomes the third research paradigm (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner, 2007). The interpretive, or qualitative, design is “a commitment to some version of the naturalistic, interpretive approach to its subject matter and an ongoing critique of the politics and methods” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: 8). Normative, or quantitative, research assumes that the social domain is an absolute reality (Singh, 2007). A mixed method of data collection and analysis that integrates and combines data seems to be the least controversial issue in the research discourse (Tashakkori and Creswell, 2008). Thus, for this unique study, two paradigms were combined by using interviews and a questionnaire to explore, find out, and analyze the findings. The research process adopting the mixed method approach is shown in Figure 3.1. This figure illustrates the linking relationship of mixed method research between qualitative and quantitative data designed by Miles and Huberman (1999). The figure explains the use of qualitative research to explore the topic, then quantitative research to investigate and further collect data from the wider field’s response, and finally qualitative research method used again to review the quantitative findings and get the deeper view on the topic and issue.

Figure 3.1 Mixed Method Designs Linking Qualitative and Quantitative Data (adopted from Miles and Huberman, 1999: 41)



In this study, the mixed method design with qualitative and quantitative techniques introduced at different stages aimed at achieving both depth and breadth to generate rich data so as to better understand the human and social contexts in this most complicated world. This study could be classified as a sequential mixed design where qualitative and quantitative methods were introduced one after the other to help elaborate or expand the findings (Creswell, 2003; Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006). The researcher first adopted purposive sampling (Miles and Huberman, 1999) and invited key informants, three early childhood teachers, four principals, and four lecturers to join three separate focus groups. Focus groups are often used because they can gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena experienced with early childhood music education.

The focus groups generated issues that required the participation of a wider group, and the rich qualitative data helped to set the sense of the issue. Based on the data gathered from the focus group interviews, a questionnaire was developed to collect quantitative data from practicing early childhood teachers. The questionnaire provided a broad picture of early childhood teachers' perceptions of early childhood music teaching and learning, and their needs for professional learning in a wider scope. Finally, the researcher conducted another focus group interview and one-on-one interviews to elicit the participants' personalized contextualized responses, which provided insights into the

reflection process, and teaching and learning experiences of early childhood music education and other issues arising from the analysis of the questionnaire responses.

1.2. Research question

The aim of this study was to explore the views of stakeholders about music professional learning for early childhood teachers in Hong Kong, in terms of: existing practice in early childhood schools; teachers' initial formal and other training for music teaching; and professional music learning needs for teachers. The research question linked to the aim of this study was divided into a broad research question and some guiding questions as follows:

Broad research question:

What kinds of professional learning would empower Hong Kong early childhood teachers and facilitate their higher competence of quality music teaching for young children?

Guiding questions:

1. From the perspective of Hong Kong practicing early childhood teachers, principals, and teacher educators, what kinds of music training already exist in the professional teacher training institutions or private sectors for early childhood teachers? What are the implications for their continuous professional learning of music?
2. From the perspective of Hong Kong practicing early childhood teachers, principals, and teacher educators, what kinds of early childhood music education programs for

young children already exist in early childhood schools? What are the implications for early childhood teachers' continuous professional learning in order to provide quality music learning for young children?

3. What are the ongoing music professional learning needs of Hong Kong early childhood teachers?

2. Data gathering design

As this study used mixed methods, the ways and techniques for collecting qualitative and quantitative data were varied. The following sections describe the purposes and processes of all these data gathering designs and data collection methods in detail. The plan of the whole study is shown in Table 3.1 below. It presents the methods used during this research and the different stage in the respective chapter in this study.

Table 3.1 Phases and Organization of the Study

Phase	Method	Chapter
1	First focus group interviews	4
2	Pilot questionnaire	5
	Full-scale questionnaire	5
3	Second focus group interviews	6
	Individual interviews with prominent ECE leaders in the field	6

2.1. Phase 1 – Focus group interviews

The focus group interviews in Phase 1 involved a total of eleven participants. They were divided into three groups: early childhood teachers, principals of early childhood schools, and lecturers of early childhood professional teacher training institutions. The following provides detailed descriptions of the participant groups.

Focus group participants

Early childhood teachers

Three practicing early childhood teachers participated; they held a Certificate in Kindergarten Teacher Education (CE) or equivalent, which has been the minimum qualification requirement for an early childhood teacher in Hong Kong since 2006. They graduated from Government-accredited professional training institutes (note: after the first focus group interview, it was found that Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Poly U) has not offered early childhood teacher education courses since 2006). Each had taught in kindergarten for more than three years. They were important frontline teachers of children, and they determined the quality of music teaching and learning in their classrooms.

Principals of early childhood schools

The principals worked as Heads of early childhood schools. Four early childhood school principals participated; they graduated with a Certificate in Kindergarten Teacher Education from four professional teacher training institutes. They were considered to be the most experienced early childhood educators as they were once frontline early childhood teachers and had assumed headship in an early childhood school for more than three years. They were in charge of recruiting teachers and overseeing the performance of teachers in their early childhood schools. With their extensive field experience, these people were in a position to assess other teachers' performance. They provided insights from their frontline experience of the current provision of early childhood music education in Hong Kong early childhood schools and shared how the professional music

teacher preparation courses did and did not meet the needs of early childhood music teachers. From their perspective as Heads of early childhood schools, they could share examples of competences deemed essential for early childhood music teachers in early childhood schools.

Lecturers of early childhood professional teacher training institutions

Three lecturers were chosen from the early childhood professional teacher training institutions; each had worked as a lecturer for more than three years. One had worked in a private educational institution to gather views from the private sector. The lecturers were also selected according to their availability and geographical convenience. They understood the strategic level of early education and had perceptions of early childhood professional teacher pre-service training programs. They were also responsible for designing such pre-service programs and responding to the ongoing professional learning needs of early childhood music teachers working in early childhood schools after their graduation.

Throughout the interactions between participants and the researcher in all three focus groups, various topics were explored and discussed. These included: the current provision of music education in early childhood classrooms, the provision of pre-service music teaching programs in professional teacher training institutions, their perceptions of the essential elements for music education in early childhood schools, and the relevant competences that teachers need to acquire to teach music effectively to young children. The ongoing professional learning needs of practicing early childhood teachers in relation to early childhood music education were also explored, particularly after they have

graduated and worked in the field for several years.

Allocating codes to focus group participants

Before the commencement of focus group interviews the researcher obtained consent. A coding system was adopted to preserve the anonymity of the respondents and their work locations. The purpose of this was to minimize the possibility of the participants being identified, as their opinions might not represent those of their schools. To clearly differentiate the participants in this study, each participant was assigned a code, as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Codes of Focus Group Participants

Code	Participant information
T1	Practicing teacher who completed a Certificate in Kindergarten Teacher Education course
T2	
T3	
P1	Principal who completed a Certificate in Kindergarten Teacher Education course
P2	
P3	
P4	
L1	Lecturer who taught at a higher education institution
L2	
L3	
L4	

Each code consists of one capital letter and one number. The capital letter distinguished their particular focus groups. For example, T stood for teacher participants, P for principal participants, and L for lecturer participants. A number was randomly assigned to each participant. For example: T1, P2, L3.

Plan of focus groups interviews

The focus group interviews were used initially to involve the participants in in-depth discussions focused on a specific area of interest or topic (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005). In this study, the area of interest was music professional learning for early childhood teachers. Focus group interviews are part of the arsenal of social research methods (Creswell, 2003; Fowler, 1995; Kleiber, 2004). Interviews are in-depth conversations between the researcher and the participants, moving them to a rich discussion of thoughts and feelings, perceptions and opinions, and meanings and definitions of situations (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994; Punch, 2005). The focus group interviews in this study were especially important for communicating the perspectives and experiences of music learning and teaching of early childhood educators from different social and cultural backgrounds (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005). These three focus group participants were all knowledgeable agents (early childhood school principals, early childhood teachers and lecturers in early childhood teacher training institutions) in early childhood education as mentioned earlier. Their years of experience in early childhood education ranged from five years to more than thirty years. They came from different early childhood schools and they received their early childhood education training from different institutions. They were purposely chosen to reflect their perspectives with different background.

The principal function of a focus group interview is to draw upon participants' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences, and reactions (Freeman, 2006). In this study, the aim was to explore these in terms of music learning and teaching in Hong Kong. The purpose of using focus group interviews in this study was to create a space for meaningful interactions between the researcher and some early childhood stakeholders.

The interactions were among the crucial features of the focus group interviews because they allowed the participants to exchange their views on music learning and teaching in Hong Kong. More informal communication and talking during the interviews created better opportunities for the participants to explore the topic, which could possibly lead to a forum for change and collaborative work with researchers (Cheng, 2007).

Through the ideas exchanged in the focus group interviews, assumptions could be examined and issues would arise. The focus group interviews were also assembled to help the researcher develop questions for the pilot questionnaire (see Appendix A for an English translation and Appendix B for a Chinese version), and they provided opportunities for the researcher and the participants to evaluate the questions to be used in the survey instrument.

It is argued that a homogeneous group composition can benefit the interactions during interviews by making the process more open and the participants feel more comfortable (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005). Thus, I grouped early childhood teachers, principals, and lecturers into three separate groups. As in other qualitative methods, the participants were not randomly selected; a “purposive sampling” method was employed (Miles and Huberman, 1999; Patton, 2002). The researcher was conscious about the selection of participants to generate valuable data. These focus group participants were chosen based on three criteria: their job positions, qualifications background, and years of work experience in the early childhood field. At the time of this study, the researcher was a lecturer in one of the government-accredited early childhood teacher education institutions in Hong Kong. The researcher exploited her network to locate appropriate target early childhood stakeholders and invite them to join a focus group.

Process of focus group interviewing

There were three focus groups with a total of eleven participants, as previously mentioned. Invitation letters (Appendix C) were sent out and personal calls were made before the commencement of the study. Each meeting was arranged as the participants confirmed their participation. Based on the research questions, a list of guiding questions for the focus group interviews was created (see Appendix D, a list of guiding questions for early childhood principals and teachers; and Appendix E, for lecturers). These questions were tabled for the participants' information during the interviews. The questions were categorized into three different areas to gather information about the existing conditions of early childhood music learning, and the teaching competence of music teachers and their ongoing needs for professional learning. The questions formed a general guide; the researcher did not strictly follow the questions but allowed room for flexibility, valuing the participants as partners in constructing knowledge in a collaborative manner instead of treating them as a reservoir of data to be excavated (Holstein and Gubrium, 2002). The researcher used the guiding questions to initiate the topic and facilitate the discussion.

The researcher provided clear explanations of the purpose of the group, helped the participants to feel at ease, facilitated interactions among the group members, promoted debate when needed or asked open questions to draw out differences, and teased out a diverse range of meanings on the topic under discussion (Cheng, 2007). The researcher acted as facilitator during the interviews, using the planned questions to initiate the discussion and raise some differences from their points for clarification and explanation. The participants were encouraged to keep confidential what they heard in the meeting, as

this is part of the ethics of protecting the privacy of the participants. Each interview session lasted for one to two hours. Since all participants were Chinese (Cantonese speakers), the interviews were conducted in Cantonese. Adopting the participants' mother tongue promotes "free-flowing conversation" within the group (Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005: 82). The interviews were audio taped with the permission of the participants and later transcribed for analysis. Each participant was provided with a copy of the transcript of the interview session for verification; this process included the opportunity to delete or add one's comments. Below are two sample transcripts from the focus group interview with the teacher participants and the principals, respectively:

Table 3.3 Sample Transcript from Focus Group Interview with Teachers

R- Researcher	T- Teacher
R: What do you think about music learning in the early childhood classroom?	
	T1: Our school is a kindergarten. We do not have a music lesson every day. Only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Tuesdays and Thursdays, we have PE lessons instead. Each music lesson in K1 lasts for 40 minutes, and in K2 and K3 for 50 minutes.
R: 50 minutes.	
	T1: Yes. It's too long. I really prefer 30 minutes or a maximum of 40 minutes [for each lesson]. It is a bit difficult to keep children focused for such a long duration, and a teacher has a problem planning so many activities.
	T2: It depends on how you lead a music lesson. Experience can be accumulated, and with more experience, a teacher can handle even a long music lesson. In my school, there are only two music lessons a week, and each lesson lasts for 30 minutes only. The other three days we have PE lessons. I feel that music is quite weak [in my school]. Of course, my school only focuses on academic subjects rather than this kind of minor subject [music].
	T3: Music lessons are run three times a week in my school, and each lesson lasts for 30 minutes, but teachers often cut it down to 20 minutes or even to 15 minutes because of the tight schedule. Moreover, children tend to be crazy in music lessons. To cut them short will help teachers to manage their classes better.

Table 3.4 Sample Transcript from Focus Group Interview with Principals

R- Researcher	P- Principal
R: After talking so much about music learning in school, what do you think about professional teacher education courses? How do you think the music education training in those courses can help teachers to teach music in the classroom?	
	P2: There is too much content to be covered in the courses within a limited time, so it only provides very simple and practical skills. I wish the lecturers could provide me with more books or resources so that I could learn by myself.
	P1: Even the teacher education course didn't really pay too much attention on music. Maybe because we are kindergarten teachers, not primary or secondary.
	P4: I don't think there is enough training in the professional teacher education courses. After the training, I really question if the teachers can teach music.

The researcher was conscious of the interactive nature of the researcher and the participants during the interviews. For example, there could be potential bias, and possible misdirection or manipulation of data. While this is acknowledged, the researcher made every effort to clarify rather than to lead. However, it should also be acknowledged that interviews were interpretively active, and the researcher and the participants were necessarily collaborative (Morse, 2008).

2.2. Phase 2 – Questionnaires: pilot and full-scale

A questionnaire is a written form of survey consisting of questions to be answered by a selected group of research participants. It is a quantitative research method for collecting data from a much larger sample. In this study, a descriptive type of questionnaire was adopted to explore the nature of the existing conditions or the attributes of the population of the field (Burns, 2000). It was important to reflect the existing situation regarding early childhood music teaching and learning in Hong Kong. The questionnaire could add to the researcher's understanding of the interests of the respondents (Kumar, 2010), as a survey

soliciting input from the largest possible audience increases the accuracy and objectivity of the results of statistical analysis (Hutchinson, 2004). The questionnaire was created as a result of the Phase 1 research with focus group interviews.

Questionnaire construction

Since there was no similar and appropriate questionnaire ready to be used, the researcher needed to develop and construct a questionnaire for this study. In order to produce quality questions and valid measurements, it was important to meet the process standards (Fowler, 2008). The construction and revision of the questionnaire underwent a rigorous process to ensure that the questions were appropriate and feasible to address ambiguousness and paradoxes in the questions.

The process of constructing the questionnaire adhered to De Vaus's three-stage model (2002). In stage one, some selected statements were reviewed and the proper phrasing and wording of each item was established. As a result of the focus group interviews, ideas for some tentative questions were formed; these were linked to the research questions during the interviews to help the researcher draft the questionnaire. After completing this stage, the questionnaires were sent to the focus group participants, who were invited to critically review and comment on the quality of the questions in order to contribute to the enhancement of the questionnaire.

In stage two, a revised questionnaire was sent to and tried by eleven early childhood educators who were not involved in stage one: three principals, four teachers, two institution lecturers, one institution student, and an administrative officer in

education. They were invited to provide interpretations of the statements and to determine whether the statements adequately reflected the scope of alternative responses. Based on the feedback from these respondents, the questionnaire was further revised and refined thoroughly prior to carrying out a pilot study.

In stage three, the refined questionnaire (see Appendix F for an English translation) was distributed to 27 early childhood teachers who had at least three years' work experience in the field. Some modifications were made after receiving feedback from 18 respondents (the details of the respondents are discussed in the following section). The revision focused on the way the message was conveyed, which could help future respondents elicit the truth of the situation and eliminate misunderstandings. The questionnaire was then revised to ensure the clarity of the message for the actual respondents (De Vaus, 2002). The final questionnaire was in Chinese and included four parts with 55 items (see Appendix G for a final Chinese version).

Pilot questionnaire questions

After the tentative questionnaire was developed in stage one, a pilot questionnaire was distributed to ensure the suitability of the items and to determine if there were any problems within the questions that would indicate a need for further revision. The pilot questionnaire also served to estimate the time required by the respondents to complete the survey. The pilot questionnaire consisted of the following:

- Part 1: the teacher and the early childhood school;
- Part 2: music in the early childhood school;
- Part 3: music training in early childhood professional training in Hong Kong and

- competence; and
- Part 4: professional learning needs of practicing teachers.

The content of the pilot questionnaire included the existing condition of music teaching in early childhood schools, professional teacher training, and music professional learning.

Since all the respondents in the survey were Chinese and could read written Chinese, the questionnaire was constructed in Chinese to ensure effective communication. It contained closed and open-ended questions requiring quantitative and qualitative analyses. Through the questions in part 1, the researcher aimed to solicit information on the kindergarten teachers' backgrounds, the early childhood schools, and the teachers' satisfaction level with their early childhood teaching, especially in music. Part 2 of the questionnaire contained questions meant to gather general information about music teaching and learning in early childhood schools, such as the frequency and duration of music classes in the daily schedule; the teacher-to-student ratio; the materials, equipment, and resources that teachers use in music classes, etc. Through the questions in part 3, the researcher intended to understand the content and expectations of music skills, gain insights regarding professional teacher training, and gather suggestions on the essential elements/competences that early childhood teachers should acquire to be able to teach music to young children. Saunders and Baker (1991) identified useful music skills and gained an understanding of in-service early childhood and elementary teachers by gathering professional suggestions, conducting textbook revisions, and from in-service teachers' experiences. This list of music competences was also used later in both Kelly's research (1998) in Florida and Chau's (2003) research in Taiwan. Here the researcher

adopted the list of music knowledge and skills from Saunders and Baker (1991), and included them in part 3 of the questionnaire to help find out the perceptions of the previous early childhood trainings the teachers had received and their expectations of the new professional learning (Saunders and Baker, 1991). The researcher hoped to understand, through the questions in part 4, the professional learning needs of respondents who were already teaching early childhood music, including their preferred contents, modes, forms, qualifications, and fees in the professional learning program.

In sum, these four parts of the questionnaire were aimed at best understanding: the current situation of early childhood music learning and teaching from a larger field of early childhood education; the perceived and expected competences of early childhood teachers for teaching music; and, their needs and wants regarding professional learning to be able to teach music in early childhood education more effectively in the future. The pilot questionnaire served as an important step in evaluating the questions.

The pilot questionnaire participants

The pilot questionnaire collected data from early childhood teachers whose backgrounds were similar to those of the full-scale questionnaire respondents. Twenty-seven copies of the questionnaire were sent to early childhood teachers in different schools, with a response rate of 67 per cent (18 responses). Eighteen of the respondents who participated in the pilot questionnaire were female and experienced early childhood teachers. Over 80 per cent (15) of respondents had between 5 and 10 years of early childhood teaching experience, while 17 per cent (3) had between 11 and 20 years of experience. The mean length of teaching experience was 9.11 years. About one in three respondents (33 per cent

or six) had completed advanced training in early childhood education; the others had completed the basic Qualified Kindergarten Teacher (QKT) Certificate. Four government-accredited early childhood teacher training institutions had their graduates represented by the respondents. While over 40 per cent (8) of respondents were studying early childhood-related professional learning programmes, none of them was studying a music-related programme at that time. The findings revealed that most respondents did not possess a strong background in music: over 60 per cent (11) of respondents had not obtained any certificate or qualification in instrumental performance, music theory, or music education. Less than one third (4) of respondents had completed some type of music qualification (e.g. levels 5 to 8 of the Royal School of Music graded piano examinations), and about 20 per cent (3) of respondents expressed their desire to further their knowledge of music teaching. The profile of these 18 respondents is presented in Table 3.5 below:

Table 3.5 Profile of Respondents of the Pilot Questionnaire

<i>Item</i>	<i>Answer</i>	<i>N=18</i>
1. Gender	Male	0
	Female	18
2. Teaching Experience	5 yrs	4
	6–10 yrs	11
	11–15 yrs	1
	16–20 yrs	1
	More than 20 yrs	1
	3. Professional Qualifications	Degree
	Diploma/Certificate	6
	QKT	12
4. Music Education Background	None	18
5. Music Knowledge and Skills	Music Theory Grade 5	2
	Music Theory Grade 8	1
	Piano Grade 2–3	1
	Piano Grade 5	1
	Piano Grade 6–8	2
	None	11

Pilot questionnaire process

The pilot questionnaires were sent to the respondents either in person or by mail, and followed up through a personal phone call. Each questionnaire came with a cover letter (Appendix H). The letter explained the aim of the research and how the questionnaire data would be used. The respondents were assured that the pilot study was anonymous and confidential. They were asked to complete the questionnaire and provide comments on the statements to indicate whether they perceived any statement to inadequately represent what they expected in music learning and teaching, and what they believed to be important regarding professional learning. It took one week for all the questionnaires to be returned through the mail.

Revisions made to the questionnaire

The pilot survey respondents' comments and suggestions were collected, and several changes were made to the questionnaire accordingly. Some questions were reworded to improve the clarity of the message; other items were added, combined, or removed. In part 1, titled "The teacher and the early childhood school", two questions were added to gather more information about the number and qualification of the teaching staff in a preschool in order to understand the school's teaching force as a whole. Questions 10 and 11 were changed so that the respondents could indicate their preference and confidence to teach music instead of comparing music teaching with teaching other subjects.

In part 2, titled "Music in the early childhood school", a few questions were added to determine the actual and the planned length of the music lesson (question 3c); the level of satisfaction with the school music curriculum and lessons (question 6c); the use,

example, and effect of music in an integrated curriculum (question 7); and the school's emphasis on music teaching (question 8).

In part 3, "Music training in early childhood professional training programs in Hong Kong and competence", the questions were revised to invite respondents to "rank" both the taught areas of professional music learning in their previous teaching training and their preferred content of professional music learning (questions 2 and 3). The pilot respondents suggested finding the distinction between the actual music training they received and their preferred content of professional music learning (question 4). Questions 5 and 6 were added to collect the respondents' views about the recruitment of music specialists in preschools and the music knowledge requirement for early childhood teachers.

Although the respondents added several questions in the different parts to complete the questionnaire, they considered the whole survey form to be a bit lengthy. The researcher suggested dividing part four into two sections, one for respondents who had joined a professional learning training and one for those who had not, so that the respondents would only have to complete the section relevant to them. Thus, part 4 was divided into two, with the latter section only for those who had joined any professional learning program within the past three years.

Full-scale questionnaire participants

As with the pilot questionnaire, all the respondents of the full-scale questionnaire were female and experienced early childhood teachers. Their profiles are summarized in Table 3.6 below :

Table 3.6 Profile of Respondents of the Full-scale Questionnaire

<i>Item</i>	<i>Answer</i>	<i>N=263</i> <i>(%)</i>
1. Gender	Male	0
	Female	100
2. Teaching Experience	1–5 yrs	15.8
	6–10 yrs	26.6
	11–15 yrs	20.8
	16–20 yrs	18.9
	More than 20 yrs	17.7
3. Teacher Qualifications	Degree	5.7
	Diploma/Certificate	37.8
	QKT	51.1
	Others	5.3
4. Music Education Background	Yes	12.4
	None	83.5
	Others	4.1

As seen in the table above, most of the respondents were experienced early childhood teachers, and the mean length of teaching experience was 13.77 years (see Table 9 below). Half of the respondents had completed the basic Qualified Kindergarten Teacher training course (QKT), and 37.8 per cent had obtained the advanced certificate level. Most of them reported that they did not receive any music education qualification (83.5 per cent).

Full-scale questionnaire process

The questionnaires were self-administered. Of the more than 1000 preschools in the Hong Kong early childhood school list, 385 (about 33 per cent) were randomly selected for the study. After obtaining clearance from the relevant authorities, copies of the questionnaire were sent to early childhood teachers in these 385 kindergartens and child care centers, which formed a stratified random sample of early childhood schools in Hong Kong. A cover letter (Appendix I) was enclosed to brief respondents about the study and request support from the school heads in passing the questionnaire to one of

their teachers who had at least three years' teaching experience. The respondents were provided with a self-addressed stamped envelope so that they could return the completed questionnaires to the researcher.

Mailed questionnaires have always suffered a low response rate (Gilliam, 2005). To tackle this problem, the researcher sent follow-up reminders to non-responding early childhood schools one month after sending out the questionnaire as a strategy to solicit more participation and a higher return rate. A total of 263 teachers returned the questionnaires, yielding a response rate of 68 per cent.

2.3. Phase 3: Focus group and individual interviews

Phase 3 of the research study consisted of a number of interviews. After conducting the full-scale questionnaire survey with a data analysis stage, Phase 3 interviews were undertaken. The following discusses the two kinds of interviews used in the third phase of the study.

Second focus group interviews

The participants in the previous focus groups were interviewed again in November 2007. One principal participant and one lecturer participant who had changed jobs were replaced by two new participants with similar backgrounds. Three separate focus groups (a teacher group, a principal group, and a lecturer group) were again completed; it had been three years since the first round of focus group interviews.

The Phase 3 focus group interviews were conducted in almost the same manner as those in Phase 1 (see Chapters Four and Six). Each interview session lasted for one to

two hours. During the interviews, the findings from the teachers completing the full-scale questionnaire were tabled for discussion and comments. As in Phase 1, after the interviews the researcher transcribed the recordings of the Phase 3 focus group interviews. A copy of the transcript was sent to each participant for verification.

One-on-one interviews with prominent early childhood leaders

When the researcher reviewed the questionnaire findings, a decision was made to include participants who hold senior positions in early childhood teacher training institutions in Hong Kong. These prominent early childhood leaders influence the direction of their institutions in the offering of professional learning programs, including those related to music.

Three prominent early childhood leaders from three government-accredited early childhood teacher education institutions in Hong Kong were invited to take part in the study. Their specific importance was in sharing their perspective about the provision of teacher education in the institutions. They are considered to be the strategic heads in early childhood education and the key persons to make changes regarding the professional learning of early childhood teachers, particularly in the area of music. As mentioned before, the researcher was a lecturer in an early childhood education institution who exploited her network to establish a connection with the participants. The researcher was aware that the participants were “influential people”, such as the head of a department or someone holding a senior position in an institution or university. They were involved in setting strategies for the development of early childhood education programs. The researcher was aware that interviews with these prominent early childhood leaders might

lead to issues considered part of the business intelligence of one's institution being shared with competitors (sister institutes). Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct one-on-one interviews instead of group interviews. One-on-one interviews allowed more flexibility in arranging the meeting times to suit their schedules. Also, one-on-one interviews allowed these influential people to share their ideas in a more confidential manner. Each interview participant was also assigned a code, as shown in Table 3.7 below.

Table 3.7 Participant's Code of Individual Interviews

Code	Participant information
E1	Department head in an early childhood institution
E2	Department head in an early childhood institution
E3	Senior lecturer in an early childhood institution

Each code consists of a capital letter and a number. Letter E stands for expert or influential people while the number distinguishes one person from another. The interviews were also conducted in Cantonese, a common Chinese dialect spoken in Hong Kong, as mentioned earlier. The interviews were taped with the permission of the respondents, whose names the researcher assured would be kept anonymous. The researcher also later sent them a copy of the transcript for verification. Below is a sample transcript from an interview with E1.

Table 3.8 Interview with Influential People in Early Childhood Education Institutions

R-Researcher institution	E1-Influential person in an early childhood education institution
R: I have sent you the result of the survey. What do you think about the result generally?	
E1: At first, I was shocked about the high percentage of teachers being confident in teaching music. But later, I thought they couldn't [honestly] say that they couldn't do their job [teach music] since they were practicing teachers. Also, I feel quite interested to know that teachers wanted music-trained teachers to teach music in the classroom. I have been thinking about this issue but still cannot figure out how it can be done. This problem exists in other subjects as well, doesn't it? For example, in English, PE, etc.	

The individual interviews were conducted in the same way as the focus group interviews, except that they were done on an individual basis. Interview questions were similar to the second focus group interviews, which had been sent to the participants before the interviews. The findings from the interviews were compared and contrasted with those derived from the questionnaire, which could possibly enhance the validity of the overall findings (Punch, 2005). Also, the interviews allowed the researcher to establish relationships among variables and to explain factors underlying the broad relationships established (Punch, 2005).

3. Data analysis

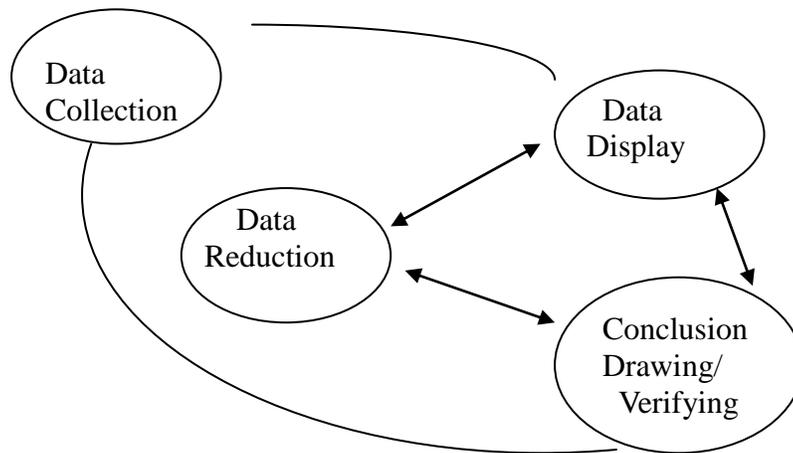
This was a mixed method research study involving the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. As the approach to data analysis of qualitative and quantitative is different, the following describe the different research analysis tools used for the qualitative and quantitative data in three different phases of this study.

3.1. Phase 1 – Qualitative research analysis tools

In this study, the qualitative data were gathered from focus group interviews and individual interviews. Data analysis was conducted as an ongoing research activity by constant comparing and contrasting of information (Miles and Huberman, 1999; Punch, 2005). After each interview, the researcher transcribed the tape recording into text. Because the interviews were conducted in Cantonese, the tape recording was transcribed into written Chinese to best preserve the participants' thoughts and to avoid the loss of meanings in the process of transcription. The researcher read the tape transcripts several times to gain a general view of the interviews. After reducing and displaying the data, the researcher verified and drew tentative conclusions through coding, memoing, and developing propositions (Miles and Huberman, 1999).

The process of data reduction involves selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data from field notes and transcriptions. As the data collection proceeds, data reduction further occurs, such as in writing summaries, coding, teasing out themes, forming clusters, making partitions, writing memos, etc., until the final report is completed. Data reduction is considered to be a continuous process and also part of the analysis. Data display involves organizing and compressing techniques that help in drawing a conclusion. It includes making matrices, graphs, charts, and networks that help to organize the information into an accessible and compact form. Like data reduction, it is also part of the analysis process. Conclusion drawing and verification entails noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions that interact during the process of data reduction and display (Miles and Huberman, 1999). These processes are shown in Figure 3.2 below.

Figure 3.2 Components of Data Analysis: Interactive Model (adopted from Miles and Huberman, 1999: 12)



According to the research questions and literature review, the researcher developed a list of initial codes for analyzing the interview topics, including the frequency and time spent in music learning, the environment and resources, professional teacher training, music skills, etc. Also based on the literature review, the initial codes classified the information into themes, issues, topics, and concepts. The researcher was guided by the initial codes, which were expanded as the study progressed to further display and reduce the data. There were two types of codes used in this study: descriptive and inferential (Miles and Huberman, 1999; Punch, 2005). The descriptive code is the first-level code, which summarized segments of the data with little inference and provided basic information for inferential coding. Table 3.9 shows analysis plans, sources and method within Phase 1.

Table 3.9 Focus Group Interview with Principals

Code	Text
Music professional learning New professional learning type (MP–new–typ)	P4: I think teachers need more workshops. More workshops can stimulate their thinking.
Music professional learning New professional learning content (MP–new–con)	P3: Just like the puppet teaching approach. There are many workshops conducted to show us how to teach through puppets. Music teaching can also use these.
Music professional learning New professional learning content (MP–new–con)	P1: But I think the most suitable professional learning should be tailor-made for early childhood teachers. The course provider should understand the teachers’ music background and provide them with suitable development.
Music learning in formal professional teacher training program Time allocation (ML–for–tim)	P2: For example, many teachers who can play the piano are not necessarily good music teachers. A few teacher education lessons in professional teacher training are really not enough. I wonder why they think a few lessons can help a teacher to teach music.
Music professional learning New professional learning content (MP–new–con)	P1: Teachers should be exposed to many music theories and music skills, and then practice.

The second level of coding, called inferential coding or pattern codes, further breaks down the material into smaller and more meaningful units, themes, or constructs that indicate the inferred theme or pattern (Miles and Huberman, 1999; Punch, 2005). It

is a higher level of abstraction and brings about less abstract variables.

The memoing referred to by the researcher involved jotting down her thoughts whenever and wherever they occurred, and was done alongside coding. Memoing served as a creative process during data analysis (Punch, 2005). Links across transcripts, and between the codes and the literature, were built. Memoing also helped to link coding with the development of propositions. Table 3.10 shows an example of a memo done by the researcher in the right-hand margin of a tape transcription of an interview with an early childhood teacher.

Table 3.10 Memo on Focus Group Interview of Early Childhood Teachers

Code	Interview text	Notes	Observation
MT-cl-tim	<p>R: How do you find music learning in early childhood classroom?</p> <p>T1: Our school is a kindergarten. We do not have a music lesson every day. Only Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Tuesday and Thursday are PE lessons. K1 is 40 minutes, K2 and K3 are 50 minutes per lesson.</p>	<p>M, W, F.</p> <p>K1 – 40 mins</p> <p>K2, 30–50 mins</p>	
MT-cl-tim	<p>R: It's not bad to have 40–50 minutes!</p> <p>T1: I prefer to have 30 minutes to 40 minutes every day. It's bit difficult to keep children focused for such a long duration and the teacher has problems</p>		<p>Teacher has difficulty planning activities. Difficult to keep the children focused.</p>

MT–oth–acad	to play the activities		
MT–cl–tim	<p>T2: It depends on how you lead the music lesson. The experience teacher can handle it well even a long lesson. My school has only 30 minutes per lesson and twice a week. The other three days are PE lessons. I feel that the music is quite weak. Of course, my school only focuses on academic subjects rather than this kind of minor subject.</p> <p>T3: Music lessons are three times a week in our school and are planned for 30 minutes but teachers quite often will cut it to 20 mins to 15 mins because of the tight schedule of other lesson. Moreover, children tend to be crazy in music class.</p>	<p>T, H two times a week. 30 mins each time</p> <p>Three times a week. 30 mins per class</p>	<p>Academic learning is dominant in the children’s learning in school</p> <p>Children were very active during music class and this created concerns about classroom management</p>

3.2 Phase 2 – Quantitative research analysis tools

The quantitative methods used in this study included a pilot questionnaire and a full-scale questionnaire. Both questionnaires collected quantitative and qualitative data through a variety of question types. The qualitative data in the questionnaires were analyzed through Miles and Huberman’s framework for qualitative data analysis, which was mentioned in a previous section.

Quantitative data are numerical and were divided into two large categories in this study: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (Miles and Huberman,

1999). A descriptive statistic is typically used to analyze sample data by summarizing the data collected about a quantitative variable. In this study, the descriptive statistic was mainly adopted for data analysis. After receiving the completed questionnaires, the data were entered into a database and analyzed with the use of Microsoft Excel 7.0, which converted the statistical data into spreadsheets, graphs, or visual images. Some data were entered into a SPSS file and converted into table form. The data were analyzed and presented in different graphic forms according to the nature of the information and the results of the analysis. Data processing through Microsoft Excel summarized the distribution by frequency. A simple descriptive statistic was used for most parts of the questionnaire. The data from parts 2 to 4 were mainly presented as one-way tabulation.

Since the researcher was keen to understand the association between the teachers' willingness and confidence to teach music, Q10 and Q11 were reported as two-way tables to see the relationship between these two variables. A cross tabulation displays Q10 and Q11 in a contingency table and matrix format. Another level of data analysis applies inferential statistics, which are used to analyze random sample data by predicting a range of population values for a quantitative variable (Punch, 2005). The study also adopted a chi-square test, which is any statistical hypothesis test in which the test statistic has a chi-square distribution when the null hypothesis is true or

in which the probability distribution of the test statistic can be made to approximate a chi-square distribution (Burns, 2000). The chi-square test was used in this study to determine whether the observed frequencies differed markedly from the frequencies that would be expected by chance (Punch, 2005). The researcher tried to find out if there was an association between the teachers' work experiences (P1, Q2), qualifications (P1, Q6a), music skills (P1, Q7b), willingness to teach music (P1, Q10), confidence to teach music (P1, Q11), satisfaction with the school's music curriculum (P2, Q6c), and professional teacher education (P3, Q1).

3.3. Phase 3 – Qualitative research analysis tools

The analysis tools used in this phase were similar to Phase 1. Phase 3 included the three focus groups that were interviewed in Phase 1 and another three individual interviews with prominent leaders in the field of early childhood education. There was a total of six interviews. After each interview, the researcher also transcribed the tape recording into text. The researcher again read the tape transcripts and gained a general view of the interviews. The researcher verified and drew tentative conclusions through coding, memoing, and developing propositions after reducing and displaying the data (Miles and Huberman, 1999).

The researcher used the list of initial codes developed in Phase 1 for

analyzing the interview topics again. Table 3.11 below displays the first level analysis from part of the individual interviews with one prominent leader.

Table 3.11 Individual Interview with One Early Childhood Education Leader (E1)

Code	Text
Music-trained specialist Availability of music teaching (MT-sp-ava)	E1: I think music should be taught by early childhood teachers as there are not many music-trained teachers whom we can choose to teach in the pool at the moment.
Music-trained specialist quality of music teaching (MT-sp-qua)	E1: I remember, once I invited an expert from China to teach our teacher music and art. They integrated art and music and showed us a good lesson. Of course, having a music-trained teacher's input in designing the music curriculum will make it much more creative and effective.
Music-trained specialist Role of music teaching (MT-sp-rol)	E1: However, I don't think it is possible in Hong Kong at the moment. I suggested that we could have one music-trained teacher to help many schools and oversee the music curriculum. ECE teachers would be responsible for planning the lesson and teaching.

As the first initial code had developed, the second level, inferential codes were further developed to break down the material into smaller and more meaningful units, themes, or constructs that indicate the inferred theme or pattern in one of the individual interviews.

The purpose and method of memoing has been explained above. Table 3.12 shows an example of a memo done by the researcher in the right-hand margin of a tape transcription of part of the individual interviews with one prominent leader.

Table 3.12 Memo on Individual Interview of One Early Childhood Education Leader (E1)

Interview text	Memo
R: How do you find music learning in professional teacher training institutions?	
E1: I know there was not enough.	Means ‘quantity’ and ‘quality’?
R: How do you interpret the questionnaire respondents’ satisfaction of music learning in professional teacher training institutions?	She doesn’t agree with the result.
E1: I am surprised at the result.	
R: In what way do you feel surprise?	Teachers should not have any music background or training before so that I can’t compare.
E1: At first, I thought many teachers should be unsatisfied with what they learned. On second thoughts, I think they are normal as they can’t compare with other programs.	

4. Trustworthiness and validity

In every research study, it is very important to seek valid data and persuade readers that the findings are worth noting (Burns, 2000; Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006;

Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007). The criteria of quantitative and qualitative research methods are different. ‘Validity’ is a general term that has been commonly used to discuss the quality of quantitative research (Punch, 2005), which is established by achieving internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity (Punch, 2005). ‘Trustworthiness’ generally refers to qualitative research (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006), the quality of which is established by achieving credibility (similar to the quantitative concept of internal validity), transferability (similar to the quantitative concept of external validity), dependability (similar to the quantitative concept of reliability), and confirmability (similar to the quantitative concept of objectivity) (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006). In a mixed method research like this study, quantitative and qualitative approaches were combined. The following section aims to discuss both methods: the trustworthiness of the qualitative aspect, which includes the focus groups and one-on-one interviews; and the validity of the quantitative component, which refers to the pilot and full-scale questionnaires.

4.1. Trustworthiness of qualitative research processes

As mentioned above, trustworthiness is established through achieving credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Miles and Huberman, 1999). In this study, the researcher deliberately interviewed three kinds of stakeholders in ECE

who work in different early childhood schools and early childhood teacher training institutions. This helped to elicit a wide variety of perspectives in the field of early childhood and was considered to gain credibility through triangulation. The focus group and individual interviews provided a lot of “thick description” (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). From the write-up of this study, readers or audiences in a similar context may be able to relate to and transfer the findings to their own settings, thus making transferability possible. The researcher built an audit trail (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson and Spiers, 2002) for this study, which would allow an audience to understand the researcher’s work, and help establish dependability and confirmability at the same time. Tape recordings of the interviews were transcribed and the transcripts sent back to participants for verification. This process was important in ensuring the quality of the data. The accurate tape transcripts, together with the field notes and other artifacts, and the examples presented in this thesis form an audit trail. Finally, the quantitative data collected and analyzed through questionnaires helped create credibility through the triangulation of the study.

4.2. Validity of quantitative research processes

The validity of a questionnaire is essentially based on the right questions phrased and worded in an unambiguous way. The meaning of the items must be clearly

defined to all the respondents in order to present a significant aspect of the purpose of the investigation (Rasinski, 2008). In this study, the items in the questionnaire went through a design stage that utilized focus group interviews, and De Vaus's three-stage model (2002) was adopted for the questionnaire construction. A pilot questionnaire survey was implemented to minimize ambiguity before administering the instrument. Some items that did not contribute to the questionnaire's purpose were removed. During the three stages, either a panel of experts or pilot questionnaire respondents helped to rate the significant aspects of the questionnaire's purpose, which could provide estimates of content validity.

5. Limitations and delimitations

In all the measures in a study, certain bias, unreliability, or inaccuracy may occur (Punch, 2005), and it is the researcher's responsibility to minimize such risks (Roberts, Priest and Traynor, 2006). The researcher considered the following limitations and came up with strategies to overcome them while taking into consideration any ethical issues in the study.

Focus groups can provide rich information on people's lived experiences and perspectives (Freeman, 2006). However, there could be limitations to the method's applications. These include the tendency for certain socially acceptable opinions to

emerge and for certain types of participants to dominate the research process (Smithson, 2000). Some participants may be rather reserved in expressing their perspectives, especially when the issues are closely related to their own school. The researcher assured the participants that they were contributing to a study that was meant to accrue benefits for the Hong Kong and global early childhood community, not divulging the administration secrets of their early childhood schools. Also, the researcher solicited support from the participants in keeping the contents of the interviews confidential, both through the signing of a consent form and by reminding them of the issue of confidentiality at the beginning of each focus group interview.

The researcher considered herself to be endowed with good interpersonal communication skills. She played the role of facilitator to encourage the participants to share their perspectives and used probes to urge them to clarify themselves. Also, the researcher occasionally needed to “regulate traffic” when some participants appeared to be a bit dominant, by acknowledging the “dominating” participants’ views while inviting the others to contribute as well. The focus group members were participative, relaxed, and took pride in their contribution, as shown by their bursts of laughter in the midst of the interviews.

One of the limitations of the mailed self-administered questionnaire was the

low response rate (Gilliam, 2005). In view of this issue, the researcher sent out a second lot of questionnaires to those who had not responded one month after the first batch was sent; this worked well. The response rate was 68 per cent, with 263 completed questionnaires returned to the researcher.

Some of the replies to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire were rather brief and thus did not provide the depth of information the researcher had hoped for to undertake meaningful data analysis. The researcher therefore conducted the second interviews (focus group interviews and one-on-one interviews) to help elaborate and clarify the issues that arose from the questionnaire, in particular those mentioned in the brief responses to the open-ended questions.

6. Ethical Issues

All research involves ethical issues, though these may vary in nature (Punch, 2005). As this study involved both qualitative and quantitative aspects, the researcher had to consider the ethical concerns within both approaches, which included informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality.

In the quantitative part of the study, the researcher sent out the questionnaires to the administrators in charge of the schools and stated the importance of confidentiality in the cover letter. It helped to have the consent of the schools in

obtaining the teachers' commitment to answer the questionnaire. In the qualitative research part, the researcher obtained consent before the commencement of the interviews. As mentioned earlier, the participants were reminded about confidentiality, and all the discussions, particularly in the focus group interviews, were kept in strict confidence. Also, in the analysis process and writing up of the thesis, the coding system was adopted to preserve the anonymity of the respondents and locations. The purpose of this was to minimize the possibility of the participants being identified, as their opinions might not represent those of their schools. Thus, anonymity could protect them from any unnecessary misunderstandings. Throughout the interviews, the participants were treated with respect and were informed of the goals and steps in the process, including the need to record and take notes of the interviews. They were acquainted with the idea, encouraged to express their opinions freely, and urged to provide clarification so that the findings would be truly representative of their views.

SUMMARY

This empirical research employed a mixed method approach that included focus group interviews, individual interviews, and questionnaires to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The chapter started by discussing the researcher's

approach and conceptual framework and methodology of the study. Constructivism, social constructivism, and cultural context concepts were used to create the philosophical stance. Qualitative and quantitative methods were introduced at three different stages, namely, focus group interviews, questionnaires, and interviews (focus group interviews and one-on-one interviews). The data collection and data analysis procedures were presented. Throughout the whole project, the researcher was conscious of maintaining the trustworthiness and validity of the study through different means. The limitations, delimitations, and ethical issues of the study were acknowledged.

The following chapters encompass the three phases of the research and report the findings, along with a critique of the issues from each data source analyzed. The three phases were: Phase 1, focus group interviews in Chapter Four; Phase 2, questionnaires in Chapter Five; and Phase 3, interviews (focus groups and one-on-one interviews) in Chapter Six.

Chapter Four

Phase 1: Initial exploration of music professional learning needs of early childhood teachers and early childhood music learning and teaching

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the empirical analyzed data from Phase 1 of this research study. This phase of the study included three focus group interviews: one with practicing early childhood teachers, one with existing principals of early childhood schools and one with current lecturers of early childhood teacher training institutions (see Chapter Three). The focus group interviews (Phase 1) in this mixed method study initially explored the field's understandings about early childhood music learning and teaching. During the interviews, relevant questions and ideas for Phase 2 of the study were established and evaluated (see Chapter Five). Then, the focus group interviews in Phase 3 (see Chapter Six) were conducted to review the results of the Phase 2 full-scale questionnaire as well as to further explore the views of the early childhood education stakeholders and prominent leaders in order to generate insights. These three research phases were connected and influenced each other reciprocally.

Based on the views of the stakeholders in all these three the common topics related to music learning and teaching, as well as music professional learning needs teachers, were analyzed, reported and critically synthesized separately as three “findings” chapters. Except for the broad, overall synthesis at the end of each of these chapters, critical interrogation – including comparing and contrasting concepts and ideas with some clustering of ideas and issues across all phases – occurs in the Chapter Seven. This chapter reports the data from Phase 1 only, the analysis and summary of these findings are presented in three sections: first, music teaching in early childhood schools; second, music learning in formal and informal professional teacher training institutions/sectors; and third, music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers of music.

1. Music teaching in early childhood schools

To review music teaching in early childhood schools, three early childhood teachers and four principals from two focus group interviews provided basic school music related information for initial exploration. Although lecturers formed one of the focus groups in Phase 1, they were from early childhood teacher training institutions and did not formally link with any early childhood school. Therefore, the information about seven early childhood schools shown in Table 4.1 was provided

by the early childhood teachers and early childhood principals during the first two focus group interviews.

The school music-related information was summarized and presented in the Table 4.1, where “P” represented the principals, with P1 being the principal from school A, P2 was from school B, P3 was from school C and P4 was from school D. Similarly, “T” represented the teachers, with T1 being the teacher at school E, T2 was from school F and T3 was from school G. The information in the table was organized into eight items which included: frequency, time per lesson, equipment, contents, other resources, music curriculum and lesson planning, approach and trained teacher or not. The above codes for each focus group participant are also used for the following quotes from the interviews: “T” represents teachers; “P” represents principals; and “L” represents lecturers.

1 **Table 4.1 Music Provision in Hong Kong Early Childhood Schools**

	School A (P1)	School B (P2)	School C (P3)	School D (P4)	School E (T1)	School F (T2)	School G (T3)
Frequency	Daily – one lesson	Daily – one lesson	Daily – one lesson	Daily – one lesson	3 times per week	3 times per week	Not regular
Time/lesson	20 minutes	20–25 minutes	20–30 minutes	3-year old – 25 minutes 4/5-year old – 20 minutes	3-year old – 20 minutes 4-year old – 30 minutes 5-year old – 40 minutes	20–25 minutes	10–20 minutes
Equipment	Piano and other basic percussion instruments	Piano, digital piano and many percussion instruments	Piano and other basic percussion instruments	Piano and other basic percussion instruments	Piano and other basic percussion instruments	Piano and other basic percussion instruments	Piano and other basic percussion instruments
Content	Singing, movement and music games	Singing, movement, dance, etc.	Singing, dance, etc.	Singing, movement, dance, etc.	Singing, movement and music games	Singing, movement	Mostly singing
Other resources	A multi-purpose room	A multi-purpose room with mirrors and handle, AV system	A small multi-purpose room	A small multi-purpose play area	One music room shared by more than 20 classes	A multi-purpose play area	The classroom as music room
Music curriculum	No music curriculum	Music curriculum designed by the	Music curriculum designed by the	Commercial music	Music curriculum designed by one	Music curriculum designed by the	Commercial music

and lesson planning	Lessons are designed and led by the teachers	principal Lessons are designed and led by the teachers	principal Lessons are designed and led by the teachers	textbook adopted Teachers are responsible for leading the class according to the textbook	senior teacher Lessons are designed and led by the teachers	principal Lessons are designed and led by the teachers	textbook adopted Teachers are responsible for leading the class according to the textbook
Approach	Thematic and integrated approach	Thematic and integrated approach	Thematic and integrated approach	Thematic and integrated approach	Thematic and integrated approach	Thematic and integrated approach	Thematic and integrated approach
Trained Teachers	Principal and teachers are not music-trained A few teachers can play the piano; one can play the guitar	One music-trained specialist One teacher can play piano All teachers are interested in music and can sing in tune	Principal and teachers are not music-trained A few can play the piano; one teacher is trained in dance	Principal and teachers are not music-trained A few can play the piano	One music-trained senior teacher A few can play the piano	Principal and staff are not music-trained A few can play the piano	Principal and teachers are not music-trained Not many teachers can play piano

It appeared that music was a regular subject in six out of the seven early childhood schools and was scheduled from three to five times in a week for each class of children. The duration of the music lessons varied from 20 to 30 minutes per day. For comparison, early childhood schools in Hong Kong usually run six teaching sessions a day, with each lasting about 30 minutes. In such a context, music appeared to be considered an integral part of early childhood learning and teaching, since it was almost a daily activity taking up one-sixth of the whole day teaching period. In view of the frequency of and the time spent on music classes in early childhood schools, one could take the view that music was valued in these early childhood schools.

This basic music-related information about the seven early childhood schools contributed to the overall findings about the general provision of music education in Hong Kong. The findings presented in the following four sections relate to music teaching in early childhood schools, focusing on: teaching resources; curriculum planning; teaching performance; and dilemmas of adopting music-trained specialists.

1.1. Teaching resources

Regarding teaching resources, although music was usually a daily activity in these

early childhood schools, it was reported that the teaching needs were not fulfilled due to insufficient musical teaching resources, such as lack of suitable facilities, inadequate music equipment and/or insufficient financial support. These resource issues are explored below.

Lack of suitable facilities

There was generally no designated music room in the schools and the usual classroom is not comfortable enough for children to move around during music classes. Music lessons normally took place in a classroom or a small multi-purpose room. As Hong Kong early childhood schools always experience the problem of space, it is quite a luxury to have a music room purposely built in the school. The typical comments in this regard were:

“The school does not have enough space. We use a small area and call it ‘music and movement space’ for conducting music lessons.” (P3)

“The space is limited in my school; we don’t have a music room in school.” (T2)

In the wake of the overall space problem, some music rooms had to be converted for other uses; and so, these rooms were fully utilized for the conduct of music lessons as well as shared for other school activities. The typical comments were:

“I turned the purposely built music room into a multi-purpose room because

we don't have enough space in our school.” (P4)

“We have no music room in our school, only a multi-purpose room. Music lessons take place there [in the multi-purpose room], so do physical education lessons.” (T3)

Because of space constraints, music lessons in some schools had to be conducted in a small classroom with all classroom equipment and materials crammed together. It was noted that classrooms were far from desirable places for the conduct of music lessons as children were not able to move freely with other activities ongoing in such a small space. The typical comments from early childhood teachers were:

“We don't have a music room in our school. We can only use regular classrooms for the conduct of music lessons.” (T1)

“It is not ideal to conduct music lessons in the classroom as there are many things inside the classroom, such as tables, chairs, shelves, and other equipment. It may even be dangerous to conduct music activities [music movements] that require children to move around.” (P3)

Inadequate music equipment

Besides the music rooms, musical instruments and equipment such as cassette recorders, CDs and some AV equipment are considered relevant and important teaching resources for assisting music learning and teaching (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009). However, there did not appear to be enough music equipment to facilitate quality music teaching in the classrooms. A teacher supported this point:

“A music room cannot stand alone without music equipment to facilitate effective music learning and teaching. Even though I have a music room, I always run short of music equipment.” (T1)

“Our school musical instruments are either not enough or broken. The children are always fighting for instruments.” (T3)

Insufficient financial support

Maintaining music rooms can be a burden to the schools when they have to procure music equipment and exploit funding sources other than the regular operating monies. The teachers claimed that:

“I used to apply the quality education fund [from the Education Bureau of the Hong Kong Government]. This was the only way that I could buy some new musical instruments and equipment, or replace the old and broken equipment.” (T1)

“It is not easy to have a well-equipped music room as this involves money. The school can’t afford to maintain the musical equipment regularly.” (P3)

Campbell and Scott-Kassner (2009) suggested that the physical setting of the music classroom is important for children’s music learning. To create effective musical environments and facilitate music listening, performing and creating for children, various musical instruments, equipment or audiovisual resources should be provided so that children can be actively involved or engaged in an enriched musical classroom. However, it was difficult for these early childhood schools to provide a

favorable and enriched environment for music education. Whenever a school ran into a resource problem, they were re-deployed in such a way that music rooms were converted into regular classrooms. The result was staff not facilitating effective music teaching. On the other hand, some Hong Kong schools may afford to have their own music room but extra funding needed to be generated to maintain such a specialized room. The funding was for the procurement of new music equipment or the replacement of broken music instruments and equipment.

1.2. Curriculum planning

Successful music teaching highly depends on the availability of quality music curriculum. It is suggested that quality curriculum should be research based and set the direction for teachers to plan balanced, age appropriate and sequential activities for children (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009; Dees, 2004). Therefore, the curriculum designer should be experienced and qualified to challenge children artistically, creatively and aesthetically (Elliot, 2010). However, it was noted from the Phase 1 findings that most of the early childhood teachers engaged in developing music curriculum and lesson plans had little music knowledge or skills and limited sources of support.

As such, early childhood teachers were almost assumed to be the curriculum

planners. Findings of curriculum planning in early childhood schools are summarized and presented below in three sections: lack of knowledge base; lack of guidelines; and superficial integrated curriculum.

Lack of knowledge base

It was reported that early childhood teachers generally designed the day-to-day music lessons and led the music classes, while principals or experienced teachers were in charge of music curriculum planning. However, neither the principals nor teachers admitted gaps or issues about age appropriateness, comprehensiveness and/or the sequencing of music curriculum for guiding teachers in their planning and designing various music activities for children's learning and development. The shared examples of music curricula were superficial and simple. The typical comments supporting this perspective were:

“The music curriculum in our school is just a collection of songs that match the weekly theme. It is too vague. It cannot help me plan the music lessons.”
(T3)

“I just give very brief guidelines for teachers in planning their music lessons, such as the weekly theme for them to choose an appropriate song to teach in the music class.” (P1)

Lack of guidelines

Other than the fact that early childhood schools did not provide relevant music curricula, the related guidelines provided by the Hong Kong Government, which may be interpreted as the national curriculum for music in other countries, are either outdated or too brief. The typical comments included:

“There is really a lack of support from the Government. The most relevant music curriculum guideline was given in 1992. That was 18 years ago, and it is very outdated.” (P1)

“I wonder why the Education Bureau can’t produce a more detailed music curriculum [guideline] for us to follow. The ones we used were too simple.” (T3)

Although there was insufficient support from within the schools and the Hong Kong Government did not provide a comprehensive music curriculum as teachers’ planning direction, the teachers still had to plan and conduct music lessons according to their school’s need. Thus, the quality of the music lessons was subject to question. The typical comments that support this perspective were:

“The eleven teachers, including myself, in my school have not received any formal music training. The music teaching in our school is very free, and it is up to the teachers to design the lessons. I don’t put pressure on them because I don’t know music either. I don’t expect effective music teaching from our teachers.” (P1)

“Music teaching totally depends on the teachers’ abilities to plan and lead the class. There is no control about it.” (T3)

As teachers received limited music education or skill training, teachers did not have enough specific knowledge or skills to plan effective music curriculum and lesson plans. Although early childhood teachers have knowledge and understandings of children's learning and ways of teaching, it was still difficult for them to work from these abilities to plan comprehensive music curriculum when they lack specific music knowledge and skills. There were examples of some early childhood schools trying to adopt commercially designed music textbooks to deal with their pedagogical challenge. However, commercially designed music textbooks were created for common uses by all schools. These textbooks could neither fit in the school curriculum nor facilitate an integrated curriculum. Hong Kong early childhood education guidelines suggest that schools adopted thematic and integrated approaches for their curriculum (EDB, 2006a: 41); and, principals claimed:

“Commercial music textbooks are easy to follow but they don't fit our school curriculum.” (P3)

“We don't use commercial music textbooks because they cannot be connected to our weekly themes.” (P4)

Superficial integrated curriculum

Not only is there a global trend that suggests the integration between arts and other curriculum (Barry, 2008; Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009), integrated curriculum

is suggested in the Hong Kong early childhood curriculum guideline from the Education Bureau (EDB, 2006a). According to Table 4.1 above, it appeared that many of the participating schools claimed that they adopted both thematic and integrated curriculum (EDB, 2006a) approaches for their music teaching. However, the music lessons that existed in all these schools appeared to be stand-alone subjects that were not combined or integrated with other subject areas. Early childhood teachers implementing integrated curriculum need a solid foundation of music knowledge and skills, as well as of other learning areas, so that activities for children are meaningful and fulfill their learning needs (Richards and Shea, 2006). Children learn better when ideas and experiences make sense to them (see Chapter Two). Children also learn more effectively when knowledge is integrated in a sensible situation rather than as separate subjects. However, these early childhood teachers reported challenges with implementing an integrated curriculum; typical views were:

“It is difficult for us to adopt curriculum integration [with music]. Our music classes run separately from other lessons.” (T2)

“An integrated curriculum is an area that we need to work on so as to provide better learning experiences for children. I don’t think the teachers in our school have the abilities [to integrate music with other subject knowledge] at the moment.” (P4)

On the whole, quality curriculum is the center of music teaching and learning. However, music is unlike the important subjects in the Hong Kong education system. As the curriculum planners, teachers are not required to reach any standard of music before they can teach in early childhood schools. Unlike other learning subjects, teachers are required to reach secondary level (high school level in western school system) with at least five passes in core subjects such as language, math or science in the Hong Kong public examination. Unfortunately, music is not one of them. Music is usually a minor subject starting from primary to secondary school in Hong Kong. So, unless an individual has a personal interest and decides to learn a musical instrumental or study music as their special area in higher education, she/he usually gains little knowledge or skills before beginning a teaching profession. Moreover, there is no national music curriculum available but only the brief guideline (EDB, 2006a) which sets general principles for each learning areas. As such, participants of Phase 1 admitted that teachers could barely manage to plan a music curriculum for their schools.

1.3. Teaching performance

The participants generally felt dissatisfied with their school's music teaching and described the early childhood teachers' performance as an area of concern; typical

comments in support of this concern were:

“Music education in early childhood schools is weak compared to other subjects.”
(L2)

“The teachers are frantic and nervous when they teach music because they don’t think they are competent.” (T1)

“I feel that the skills of teachers in leading music activities and music appreciation are extremely questionable.” (P4)

Music teaching was challenging for many early childhood teachers. This was especially true for new or less experienced teachers. Some inexperienced teachers tried to avoid teaching music whenever possible, as reported by the participants of focus groups. A typical comment was:

“Music teaching is not easy. The new teachers of my school are so afraid of it [teaching music] to the extent of passing the responsibility to others [other teacher in the same class].” (P3)

When music teaching becomes a burden to many early childhood teachers, the schools seek ways to solve the problem. However, it is not an easy problem to be fixed quickly. Adopting a music-trained specialist may be one of the options for raising the music teaching standard. Some participants suggested adopting music-trained specialists as the music teachers in early childhood education, just like the special subjects, such as English or Mandarin teachers being hired in many Hong

Kong schools.

1.4. Dilemmas of adopting music-trained specialists

Music-trained specialists are music professionals with a profound knowledge in music. Teacher participants of Phase 1 suggested that schools could adopt music-trained specialists to teach music, just like native English specialists or Mandarin specialists were commonly adopted in early childhood classroom. However, it was not a common practice to have music-trained specialists teach in early childhood classes according to the participants. Some early childhood schools explored the possibility of appointing music-trained specialists to improve the quality of their early childhood music education. They experienced the following concerns when exploring the possibilities for adopting music-trained specialists: implications of funding; lack of comprehensive early childhood education knowledge; and lack of contact with children.

Implications of funding

The financial implication was one of the biggest concerns in adopting music-trained specialists to teach in early childhood schools. A music-trained specialist is not part of the teachers' team in school. Hiring extra music-trained specialists from outside

may not be affordable for many of the schools. Some typical comments in support of this view were:

“I don’t think it is possible to have music-trained specialists in the early childhood schools. They are too expensive, and the schools can’t afford them.” (T2)

“It is very expensive to hire a music-trained specialist in a school. This is a continuing practice and it creates an extra financial burden for the school.” (P4)

Adopting music-trained specialists to teach music in school is not just a one-off payment, but a long-term financial commitment. Due to the private nature of early childhood schools and lack of Government subsidy, extra funding for hiring music-trained specialists is a burden to many early childhood schools.

Lack of comprehensive early childhood education knowledge

Participants believed that music-trained specialists were strong in music. However, they had little knowledge and skills of comprehensive early childhood education. It appeared to be difficult for music-trained specialists to deal with a group of children considering their lack of child development knowledge and classroom management abilities. The following comments supported this perspective:

“Hiring music-trained specialists to teach children music is not a good idea. Although they are experts in music, they don’t have enough ability and skill

to handle a group of young children.” (T2)

“Music-trained specialists can create lively and creative music learning for children, but they can’t control them. The class can be chaotic, and the learning goal is not achieved.” (P2)

Music-trained specialists seldom receive early childhood teacher training at the same time. Participants of Phase 1 reflected that one early childhood teacher needed to be in the class very often to help the music-trained specialist manage the children in the classroom.

Lack of contact with children

Additionally, the contact hours music-trained specialists had with children were limited as they were usually hired as part-time teachers in the early childhood schools. Because of their limited contact with children, it was more difficult for music-trained specialists to effectively understand children’s current needs. Also, due to their limited time spent in the schools, there was also a challenge for music-trained specialists to coordinate with other teachers for implementing an integrated curriculum (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009). Some typical comments from the participants were:

“They [music-trained specialists] only come once or twice a week. They can’t even remember the children’s names. How can they understand the children’s [learning] needs to conduct effective teaching?” (L1)

“Music-trained specialists [part-timers] just come for music lessons. They don’t understand our whole curriculum, and it is difficult for them to integrate music teaching with other knowledge.” (P4)

Adopting music-trained specialists is not usual practice in many early childhood schools. There are many concerns reflected above by the Phase 1 participants. Before fixing all these problems, the early childhood teachers still assume the major role to conduct music in the schools. Although music-trained specialists will not be adopted in early childhood schools, their music knowledge and quality of music teaching were highly recommended to serve as the trainer or consultant for early childhood schools.

To summarize the findings of this theme, music is considered to be a significant learning area in schools’ daily schedule. However, the existing music provision within early childhood education (including teaching resources, music curriculum and teaching performance) was considered to be in need of improvement. Also, the appointment of music-trained specialists might not be an alternative toward improving music teaching in early childhood schools. Resource re-allocation and music professional learning involving music knowledge, skills and curriculum planning are suggested as necessary to improve music teaching in early childhood schools.

2. Music learning in formal and informal professional teacher training institutions/sectors

Since most early childhood schools entrusted the teaching of music to their early childhood teachers, teachers' learning of music is key to providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills. Initial music training for pre-service teachers in formal professional teacher training institutions and further music learning in other informal professional teacher training institutions/sectors played an important role in preparing these early childhood teachers' in music teaching, including music planning. The following research findings explored and reported these two sources of early childhood teachers' music learning: music training in formal early childhood professional teacher training programs and music learning in other informal professional learning programs.

2.1. Music training in formal early childhood professional teacher training programs

The early childhood professional teacher training programs offered by accredited Hong Kong institutions aim to qualified kindergarten teachers for working with local children. Music training is part of the program to prepare teachers with comprehensive early childhood education knowledge and skills. However, research participants including principals and lecturers pointed out concerns about the readiness of graduates to teach music. According to the Phase 1 findings, music

content of professional teacher training courses and time allocations were investigated in terms of their contribution to beginning teachers' music knowledge and teaching skills.

Music content of professional teacher training

According to the teacher and principal research participants, there appeared to be a vivid gap between the music training provided in the professional teacher training programs and what was actually required for teachers to 'perform' music well in early childhood schools. The music studies provided were not satisfactory to fulfil the mission of providing teachers with adequate music teaching abilities. The gap was especially linked to music listening and techniques for guiding children's music appreciation. It did not prepare teachers of music for engaging their students in music pedagogical knowledge building, such as music and movement, music appreciation activities, etc. The typical claims were:

“The content of music training in professional teacher training provides a lot of music education theories and resources, but it is not practical enough. I think you all understand that learning music needs practical experiences that teachers have to create for children. This is more important than anything else.” (P2)

“It is all about theories on music education, but I need all the skills to help me to teach music [to carry out music activities], especially, in music listening.” (T3)

Time allocation

According to the Phase 1 participants (teachers and lecturers) during focus group interviews, music in professional teacher training programs consisted of various features that are summarized in the Table 4.2. It gives an overview of the four main early childhood teacher training institutions in Hong Kong that provide basic and advanced professional teacher training.

Table 4.2 Overview of Previous *Recognized Basic Training (QKT)* and Current Basic Training Courses (CE) in Music for Early Childhood Teachers in Hong Kong

Institu- tion	Course title	Duration/ Mode	Total contact hours	Title of music module/unit of study	Time allocated to music	Percentage of music (%)	Required or choice
A	<i>Qualified Kindergarten Teacher Education Course</i>	<i>One-year, full-time</i>	555	<i>Enhancing Creativity and Self-Expression</i>	<i>Approx. 20 hrs</i>	3.6	<i>Core</i>
				<i>Music subject study</i>	<i>30 hrs</i>	5.4	<i>Elective</i>
	Certificate in Early Childhood Education Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Three-years, full-time ● Three-years, part-time ● Two-years, day release part-time 	1350	Enhancing Creativity and Aesthetic Development	Approx. 20 hrs	1.5	Core
B	<i>Certificate in Pre-primary Education</i>	<i>One year (distance learning)</i>	540	<i>Creative Music for Young Children</i>	<i>45 hrs</i>	8.3	<i>Core</i>
				<i>Creative and Mental Growth of Young Children Through Music, Art and Dance</i>	<i>45 hrs</i>	8.3	<i>Elective</i>
	Higher Diploma in Pre-primary Education	Three-years, part-time	1005	Creative Music for Young Children	45 hrs	4.5	Elective
				Creative and Mental Growth of Young Children Through Music, Art and Dance	45 hrs	4.5	Elective

C	<i>Certificate in Early Childhood Education</i>	<i>One year, full-time</i>	585	<i>Expressive Art: Music and Movement</i>	<i>Approx. 22.5hrs</i>	3.8	<i>Core</i>
	Diploma in Early Childhood Education	Three years, full-time or part-time	630	None	None	None	None
D	<i>Diploma in Child Care and Education</i>	<i>Two-year, full-time</i>	900	<i>Play Activities</i>	<i>Approx. 25 hrs</i>	2.8	<i>Core</i>
	Higher Diploma in Child Care and Education	Three-years, full-time	1620	Play Activities	Approx. 25 hrs	1.5	Core

Note: *Italics* = Basic training courses (*QKT*); **Bold** = Advanced training courses (**CE**)

It was noted that most early childhood teachers received about 20–25 hours of music studies in their one year basic course before entering the field. Early childhood teachers with advanced training received merely an additional module related to music teaching. Upon completion of a very limited formal preparation, these early childhood teachers graduated and were considered qualified teachers. They were assumed to have possessed the knowledge and skills required to lead class music activities and to plan a music curriculum when they were not confident. This was especially true when most of the student teachers did not have any previous music experience/studies at the commencement of their teacher training. One principal claimed:

“Student interns in my school told me that they would attend the music training near the end of their study and there would be only a few lessons. They had little confidence to teach music.” (P1)

Also, the participants pointed out where some early childhood teachers tried to take up an early childhood education degree program to deepen their specific subject, such as music. However, the participants believed that the structure of the formal degree programs at the institutions were repeats or similar to that of the advanced certification programs and so were unable to help teachers grow professionally in terms of music. Among the claims were:

“I would not consider taking the degree program because they [basic qualified teacher training program and advanced certification program] are all the same. All focus on teaching and learning, or some teaching approach. I prefer to learn something specific that I am interested in.” (T2)

“There may be one more module related to music in the early childhood education degree program. The module is still very short and focuses on music education theory, which cannot really help teachers to teach music effectively.”
(P2)

As summarized, formal music training in the professional teacher training program was reported as “insufficient” in terms of both time allocation and quality of the content. As a result, early childhood teachers could hardly connect their music learning to their own music teaching practice in the music classroom.

2.2. Music learning in other professional learning programs

As the initial professional teacher training programs could not meet early childhood teachers’ needs, this created an opportunity of teachers searching for other music professional learning to fill the gap. However, other than Hong Kong early childhood teacher training programs offered by government-accredited institutions, there was little professional learning available for practicing early childhood teachers to better equip their music learning. Recently, there have been only a few short courses or one-off workshops arranged by non-government organizations or the private sector for all of Hong Kong. The courses were neither systematic nor leading to any recognized qualification. The typical comments included:

“There are only a few professional learning programs in Hong Kong. I need to join some music workshops or short courses for primary or secondary school teachers to help me refresh my music teaching in kindergarten.” (T1)

“I can almost name all the existing music professional learning. There are only a few offered by private sectors and I have almost joined them all.” (T2)

“I think we are one of the few institutions [private early childhood education institution] trying to arrange professional learning in music education for early childhood education teachers. We used to organize a one-day music workshop for early childhood teachers. The response was extremely good. However, it is hard to organize the long term courses for teachers because the music trainers are expensive. It won't be any market when teachers cannot afford to pay. ” (L4)

In view of financial and time constraints, teachers could not afford to join the other informal music professional learning, which also led to fewer being offered. As such, many early childhood schools tried to arrange in-house training for their teachers to strengthen their music teaching. Among the claims were:

“Since there is no music education professional learning suitable for early childhood teachers, we need to invite trainers and organize in-house trainings for our school teachers during the school holiday. Our teachers found it very useful.” (P4)

“As we can't find suitable music training for our teachers to join, we [early childhood education school] used to arrange one-day or half-day music workshops for our early childhood teachers, and the response was extremely good.” (P3)

Although early childhood schools tried to arrange their own professional learning, they still faced limited human and physical resources to support such training. The typical claims were:

“It is not easy to organize a music workshop as it is difficult to find speakers

and trainers who are suitable and available.” (P3)

“These trainings [school-arranged music workshops] are only bits and pieces. However, the schools can’t afford to arrange many related trainings as they don’t have enough resources, such as funds, to invite trainers and buy appropriate equipment.” (T1)

In summary, initial early childhood professional teacher training programs with some music are usually the only music training that teachers received before they teach in the early childhood schools. The quality and quantity of the music provision in the programs can barely help teachers to accomplish basic music teaching in early childhood schools. As such, it is natural that teachers demand some further learning to better equip them with higher music competence. However, the quality and availability of informal music professional learning still cannot meet the needs. Therefore, new forms or types of professional learning programs to increase teachers’ music competences were strongly emphasized by the stakeholders.

3. Music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers

Teachers are the key factor contributing to the success of children’s learning. Becoming a more effective teacher means ongoing construction of one’s professional knowledge and practice through continual professional learning (McCormack, Gore, and Thomas, 2006). By reviewing the existing provision of professional learning, findings about the demand for new music professional learning and factors that

influence music professional learning are reported below.

3.1. Demand for new music professional learning

Since the existing formal and informal music professional learning cannot meet early childhood teachers' music learning and teaching needs, participants started to discuss and suggest new professional learning which could solve teachers' music learning needs. The typical comments were:

“I really hope that there will be some place in Hong Kong that will have new music professional learning for early childhood teachers. I am sure there is a need in the field, and it will benefit children in return.” (P2)

“The existing professional teacher training and further formal teacher training program may not be able to help teachers to teach music effectively. I think a new professional learning program can play this role.” (L2)

There appears the need for a new music professional learning program that would help teachers increase their capabilities as well as enable them to gain competitive qualifications. Research participants proposed some music competences and strategies for future music professional learning.

Music competences for music professional learning

The music knowledge and skills provided during professional teacher training were considered insufficient from the perspective of focus group participants. Their

perceived needs for greater music competences among teacher graduates can serve as guidelines for teachers' further and ongoing learning. In view of teachers' need to provide daily music lessons, the participants believed that teachers should be equipped with some knowledge and skills; these are categorized and summarized below: basic music theory; singing and instrumental accompaniment; music appreciation planning and leading; singing and instrumental accompaniment; and integrated curriculum planning.

Basic music theory

It is important for teachers to understand the central concept, tools of inquiry and structure of the discipline of this subject matter so that they can create meaningful learning experiences for children (Campbell, Thompson and Barrett, 2010). When teachers understand music theory knowledge and concepts, it helps to set direction for designing more appropriate activities. Basic music theory includes an understanding of music pitches, chords, intervals, rhythm, forms, phrases and contours of melodies (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009), which was also claimed to be important in all three focus group interviews. Research participants believed that basic music theory knowledge could help teachers grasp the concept of music, which would provide a framework and enable them to better incorporate music concepts into appropriate

music activities. The following are typical comments in support of this perspective:

“Basic music theory is the foundation teachers need to infuse music elements into music activities, such as singing, music appreciation, and movement. I think teachers should reach at least the grade 5 level in music theory.” (T1)

“The professional teacher training assumes that early childhood teachers have enough music theory background, which is not true for most of the early childhood teachers. It is difficult for teachers to incorporate music concepts to activities.” (P3)

As mentioned in the interview, grade 5 level of music theory referred to the fifth grade of music theory of the *Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music* (ABRSM, 2011). The examination covered the basic understanding of music elements, such as keys, pitches, chords, intervals, rhythm, forms, phrases, contours of melodies, etc. It is the most popular music theory examination in Hong Kong (Hiebert, 1993). The grade 5 music theory examination is also the pre-requisite of all the advanced musical performance examinations. When teachers mentioned grade 5 music theory, they referred to this music examination or they may just have wanted to express an example of basic understanding of music theory and concepts. Although early childhood children only experience or participate in preliminary music knowledge, music concepts and skills, both the literature and my research participants believed that teachers with more subject qualifications can positively influence the qualities of children’s learning. Participants also believed that this basic music theory can help

teachers frame their music teaching and thus contribute to children's musical development (see Chapter Two).

Singing and instrumental accompaniment skills

According to the participants, singing is a major activity in many early childhood schools in Hong Kong. It is believed that teachers should be equipped with singing ability and song-leading techniques so as to be able to guide, lead and be a vocal model for children (see Chapter Two). Research participants believed that singing was the most joyful activity in early childhood music education. Participants stated that a better singing technique could help teachers deliver more effective music teaching. Also, children singing alone and together, with or without the accompaniment of musical instruments were all identified as good learning experiences. However, participants pointed out that some teachers depended on instrumental accompaniment during song teaching as they lacked confidence to be effective singing models. To give the correct pitch for children, the piano was noted as the most common accompaniment instrument for singing in early childhood music classrooms in Hong Kong. As such, instrument accompaniment was also considered an important skill for teachers. The supporting claims were:

“I feel that singing is a very major part of children's music class and teachers should know at least one instrument to accompany children's singing, such as the

piano, guitar, etc.” (P2)

“I think teachers’ singing technique is most important, as well as the ability to choose and lead songs” (T2)

Planning and leading music appreciation activities

Music listening is considered to be the initial foundation of all the music learning (Garner, 2009; refer to Chapter Two). Music appreciation knowledge and teaching techniques for music listening are also important elements (Campbell and Scott-Kassner, 2009). However, the professional teacher training offered limited music studies for students (see Table 4.2). Participants pointed out that the content related to music listening was especially insufficient. Typical claims on this point were:

“Teachers should be able to lead music listening activities and introduce children to music appreciation skills, which can help children to build up a lifelong interest of music.” (P4)

“Music appreciation is very important for children. It is the beginning of music learning. Teachers should be taught to plan and lead the music listening activities.” (T1)

Integrated curriculum planning skills

Integrated curriculum is one of the suggested curriculum approaches in the Hong Kong curriculum guideline (EDB, 2006a) for early childhood education. Therefore, adopting an integrated curriculum should be common practice in early childhood

schools (EDB, 2006a: 41). To achieve this end, early childhood teachers need to be able to integrate music with other subjects, and this integration is part of the important music competences of early childhood teachers. As mentioned in the previous section, this was a challenge for many early childhood teachers. Therefore, the participants were keen to include this area among the necessary music competences. Some comments were:

“An integrated curriculum is becoming more and more important. I really hope that teachers can adopt it in music teaching.” (P3)

“As we do not have enough knowledge and skills to conduct an integrated curriculum, I would expect this is part of it [music competences].” (T3)

In summary, suggested music competences, as explored and cited by the participants, can be organized into four categories: basic music theory (at least grade 5 level), incorporating music concepts in musical activities; singing technique and instrumental accompaniment skills (at least one instrument); music appreciation knowledge and teaching technique; and, integration of music with other subjects. Participants also believed that music competence should link to teachers’ practice. The typical comments were:

“I think new professional learning should be able to help us [early childhood teachers] to feel confident about music teaching, internalize the theory, and make it practical and related to our teaching.” (T1)

“I guess teachers need to build up the link between music theory and concept

to create effective pedagogy.” (L3)

“I think teachers need practical and useful music knowledge and skills training, which can be applied to music teaching.” (P1)

According to the research participants, the most important aspect of professional learning was linking the music content knowledge to music pedagogical practices.

With regard to the actual expected music competence suggested by the stakeholders above, only a new professional learning program or approach was expected to help teachers gain music knowledge and skills, as well as apply them in their daily music teaching. On the whole, suitable music professional learning should help early childhood teachers be able to utilize all these music knowledge and skills in conducting creative music education for children.

Approaches for music professional learning

Besides the concern about the content in new professional learning, Phase 1 participants expressed their concerns about strategy and structure of professional learning. One of the suggestions about such courses was that they be more flexible and affordable for early childhood teachers and early childhood schools. The typical comments included:

“I think it might be good to have a part-time course during a Saturday or weekday evening. Attending courses during the summer or winter holiday was

also preferable.”(T2)

“Part-time and flexible training would be more suitable for practicing teachers. It will be better to consider how much time they can spare and their financial ability, too.” (E3)

Because the schools did not have sufficient government funding to send all their teachers to attend professional learning in one specific subject, it was suggested that an experienced teacher from a school should participate in professional learning first; then, she could function as a “train the trainer” plus become the music leader or music mentor in their schools. Among the comments were:

“I think it is more possible to send out one teacher to be trained so that the teacher can then help other teachers in the school. It’s just like planting the seed first, from which can grow many.” (L2)

“I think training the trainer can help schools to develop their music education. Once the teacher trainer can train other school teachers, the school can save money and also help teachers to grow professionally.” (L3)

From the perspective of social constructivism, collaborative learning (Helterbran and Fennimore, 2004), which involves mentoring, coaching or facilitating, is an effective means to create a supportive learning environment for teachers (see Chapter Two). The concept of “train the trainer” was one of the suggested ways to support collaborative learning experiences. New or inexperienced teachers can learn from experienced teachers. Experienced teachers can serve as the mentor or coach to the

new teachers to create adult lifelong learning environments within schools. From a financial consideration, this kind of learning would also be more cost effective. Schools should be more willing to support those experienced teachers to attend the professional learning program, who can then be teacher trainers helping the other teachers in their school.

3.2. Factors that influence music professional learning

In suggesting the content and structure of a new form of professional learning, many factors that influence teachers' adult education should also be considered and tackled so that the program is possible. According to andragogy-in-practice, adults' learning can be influenced by unique learning situations, such as educational policy, political climate or socio-cultural environment (see Chapter Two).

Hong Kong is one of several Chinese countries; but it used to be the colony city of Britain. It is also an economic-oriented and very competitive city (Yeung, Lee and Kee, 2008). With this background, Hong Kong has a unique local and socio-cultural situation, which influences the development of music professional learning. Research participants of Phase 1 reviewed such factors and discussed the following areas: school support, parent lobby and Government's role.

Schools' support

Early childhood schools in Hong Kong usually operate under very tight time constraints, such as three hours or less than three hours. Principals have to make decisions based on what is considered to be important and allocate school time accordingly. Unfortunately, music has often not been considered “important”. The principals recognized that:

“We cannot place all subjects as equally important. The school has only three hours a day. We need to see which subject is more important. Obviously, music is not the one.” (P3)

“We are not an arts school to be focusing on areas such as music, dance, and art. We need to develop a lot of different subject areas immediately. We can't concentrate on music.” (P2)

As stated before, the Hong Kong education system is highly examination oriented and focused on academic learning activities (see Chapter One). Music has always been a minor subject and without value in the public examination. Therefore, attention has not given to music learning and teaching starting from early childhood education. Although early childhood schools always formally scheduled music as one of the daily activities (see Table 4.1), music can be cut whenever academic learning needs more time in their classes. Principal participants expressed their struggles to give music priority although they believed that music is good for children's balanced development.

Teacher participants of Phase 1 believed that it was important to receive full support from schools so that teachers can further develop their music specialization through professional learning. Professional learning can help them with career advancement. Typical claims were:

“It is almost impossible to seek for music professional learning without schools’ support. If schools do not need music, we won’t spend our precious time to develop it. Also, it is very expensive. It will be a financial burden for us without schools’ subsidy.” (T3)

“Honestly, it is hard for teachers to join the professional learning without schools’ approval. We are not affordable to purely spend time and money for our own interest.” (T1)

As the cost of professional learning involves both time and money, teacher participants expressed their practical needs when seeking professional learning. They stated that their own interest cannot support them to seek further professional learning. It seems that even schools cannot support them financially for professional learning at the moment; they would expect that the cost of professional learning can be paid for through their career advancement.

Parents’ control

In the process of evaluating which learning areas are important and allocating learning time in the classroom, early childhood schools do not always consider children’s

developmental needs but rather parents' preferences (see Chapter One). As mentioned, Hong Kong is a highly competitive and knowledge-based economy city. Most parents believed children's achievement in academic subjects can help them to achieve a better future (see Chapter One). As such, music remains a minor subject in the Hong Kong education system, and so receives less attention in the children's learning. Two principals summed this up:

“Our focus depends on the parents' views. Generally, parents prefer schools to train their children to excel in academic subjects, such as English, Chinese, and Mathematics. Music and dance are considered as interests to be instilled in children.” (P3)

“Based on the Hong Kong education system, music education in the school can only be a minor subject. Parents prefer music to be part of children's after-school activities. They hope their children can gain excellent music skills through musical instrument training.” (T2)

On the whole, parents have not given music education the priority it deserves in early childhood education. It seems that many parents only focus on their children's musical instrumental training rather than general music learning in the early childhood classroom. Without understanding the importance of music education for young children, teachers' music learning and teaching are a lesser concern for parents. Being the primary income source of early childhood schools, parents have become a powerful control feature. Parents' interests can highly influence schools' directions.

Therefore, helping parents understand young children's holistic health and balanced development, which involves music, can help schools to improve their music education and support teachers to seek further professional learning.

Government's role

Participants highlighted the important role played by government with regard to early childhood music education. The Hong Kong Government is the policy maker of education, for example, in the initiative to conduct education reforms (EC, 2001).

Society's demand for quality education started from early childhood and moved to higher education since then. Teachers were required to equip themselves with professional learning, including music. After making policies, the Government should provide guidance and support to make sure the policy can be well implemented.

Participants suggested that the Government could help school principals, teachers, parents and the whole society to better understand and support the growing demand for children's whole-person development. This would include children having access to relevant music education. Among the strong claims were:

“Government support is the very first and a powerful source that can set the direction for schools, teachers, and parents.” (L4)

“It will be very effective if the Government can support music education by recognizing its status and releasing funding.” (P2)

“Without Government funding support, early childhood schools and teachers can do only a little to improve music education and encourage professional learning for teachers. It’s the Government’s responsibility to encourage teachers to provide quality teaching and promote music education.” (T1)

Education reform for quality early childhood education did increase the demand of music professional learning. However, it also increased the teaching workload in general and pressure over teaching jobs for teachers. The typical comments were:

“Teachers are very busy nowadays. There are not only teaching tasks, but assessment portfolios, administration work, paperwork, etc. Even if there is some good professional learning on music teaching, I don’t think teachers will be able to spend time for it.” (P3)

“Quite a lot of teachers are upgrading their qualification by studying certificate or degree courses. How will we have time for music professional learning?” (T2)

Besides the increased and demanding workload from the schools, teachers also needed to upgrade their formal qualifications as qualified early childhood teachers and so it was more difficult to seek out and do music professional learning.

On the whole, participants of Phase 1 believed that the Government, early childhood schools and parents were three important stakeholders who could contribute to the development of music professional learning. Providing funding to support the development of music professional learning is the vital role of

Government. Schools could strongly encourage their teachers to seek further music education training through practical ways, such as offering financial support or time off, and expressing words of appreciation. Parents were another major stakeholder who could work with schools and teachers to provide children with whole person and well-balanced development through music education. Through the synergistic cooperation between Government, schools and parents, early childhood teachers could be more empowered to further develop their music knowledge and skills.

SUMMARY

During Phase 1, the participants initially explored early childhood music teaching in early childhood schools; music learning in formal and informal institutions/sectors; and, music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers. Participants concluded that early childhood music education was one of the core activities in children's daily schedule but it was also less focused compared with other learning areas in early childhood education, such as language, mathematics, science, etc.

Besides teachers' limited background of music knowledge and skills, the insufficient provision of teaching resources and inadequate support of music curriculum from schools were all combined factors. Although music-trained specialists had been brought up as a solution for raising the quality of music teaching

and learning, financial implications and their limited professional early childhood knowledge became dilemmas for schools. As such, early childhood teachers are still perceived as the most likely agents for achieving the goal of higher quality music learning and teaching for young children. Therefore existing teachers' music competence became the key issue to meet this challenge.

It was learned from the focus group participants that quality and quantity of the existing formal music professional learning were insufficient to meet teachers' teaching needs. Moreover, the availability of informal music professional learning meant strong expectations for new music professional learning to better reach the goal of higher quality early childhood music education. Research participants summed up and suggested a list of music competences concerning teachers' music knowledge, skills and pedagogical needs of music teaching. The comprehensive knowledge of music learning was suggested and it includes four areas: basic music theory; singing and instrumental accompaniment skills; planning and leading music appreciation skills; and integrated curriculum planning skills. The suggested music competences were noted in light of continuous professional learning for teachers to acquire skills as more qualified and effective music teachers.

Besides the content of professional learning, there are still many key stakeholders involves in developing any continuous professional learning framework

for practicing early childhood teachers. It is expected that a combination of Government initiatives, schools' and parents' support, and teachers' own commitments could result in a more effective range of music professional learning opportunities for practicing teachers. Interviews with these early childhood education stakeholders set the scene of the whole study and assisted with developing the questionnaire for the next phase (see Phase 2 in Chapter Five). The following Chapter Five reports the findings from Phase 2 through the quantitative data generated from two questionnaires.

Chapter Five

Phase 2: Further research about music professional learning needs among early childhood teachers and early childhood music learning and teaching

INTRODUCTION

This chapter continues to report the analyzed data with that collected from Phase 2; Phase 2 included the pilot questionnaire with 18 early childhood teachers (Appendix A) and the full-scale questionnaire (Appendix F) from 264 early childhood teachers (see Chapter Three). As mentioned in the previous chapters, the questionnaires were formulated based on the professional views expressed by the first focus group participants of Phase 1 (see Chapter Four). The results of the full-scale questionnaire were later reviewed during the second focus group interviews and one-on-one interviews of Phase 3 (see Chapter Six). Briefly, the purpose of the pilot study was to identify the particular concerns among the target population of early childhood teachers and then to probe ideas/issues for constructing the full-scale questionnaire. Thus, only the final results of the full-scale questionnaire are tabled and investigated in Phase 3. Therefore, the data from this phase links back closely to the previous Phase 1 and the framework was further developed and expanded in Phase 3. This multi-phase process reflects the purpose of mixed method research (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann and Hanson, 2003). The questionnaires were developed to provide a

more holistic view of teachers' perspectives about the provision of music teaching to children and music learning within formal and informal professional teacher training programs, as well as their music professional learning needs. The results of both questionnaires are presented separately below to further explore and investigate the issues raised about early childhood music learning and teaching in Hong Kong.

1. The pilot questionnaire

Pilot questionnaire data was collected from early childhood teachers who had the same background as the full-scale questionnaire respondents. This questionnaire was sent to 27 early childhood teachers who were working in different early childhood schools; the response rate was 67 per cent (18 responses). The following section outlines the findings from the pilot study with a focus on three areas: music teaching in early childhood schools; music learning in formal professional teacher training institutions; and, music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers.

1.1. Music teaching in early childhood schools

Based on the responses received from these 18 respondents to the pilot questionnaire (refer to Appendix A) and their profile, which has already been listed in the research methods chapter (see Chapter Three), the findings related to various aspects of music

provision as summarized in Table 5.1. The categories within the table cover: frequency and duration; curriculum and lesson planning features; and music training and/or provision of music-trained specialists.

Table 5.1 Music Provision in Early Childhood Classrooms

Aspect of curricula provision	Timing or responsible person	Questionnaire Response Occurrence (*N=18)
1. Music class in school	All classes (ages 3–6 yrs) Only 3 year olds	15 3
2. Frequency per week (in Hong Kong most early childhood schools are open Monday to Friday)	5 times 4 times 3 times 2 times	4 4 5 6
3. Duration of each lesson	45 mins 30 mins 20 mins Less than 15 mins	1 8 8 1
4. Class size (no. of children)	25–29 20–24 15–19 Under 14	6 7 2 3
5. Curriculum designed by	Principal Vice Principal Class Teachers	3 3 14
6. Lessons designed by	Principal Vice Principal Class Teachers No reply	0 1 16 1
7. Music training of early childhood teachers	Yes No	2 16
8. Music specialist employed	Yes No	2 16

**N = total number of research questionnaire participants*

From the above Table 5.1, music appeared to have been given due emphasis and it was included as one of the main class activities in most of these early childhood schools. In 13 respondents' schools (more than 70 per cent), music was treated as a separate subject and was scheduled to be taught over three to five sessions a week, each session lasting 20 to 45 minutes. Usually, schools run about three hours (180 minutes) a day and therefore music lessons took up from 11 per cent to 25 per cent of the total learning and teaching time. In terms of overall school time allocation, it seems that music was one of the core learning areas in these early childhood schools.

From the findings, most schools (89 per cent) did not employ music-trained specialists and so almost four out of five schools (77 per cent) expected their early childhood teachers to design and lead the music lessons. Thus, the quality of music education was totally dependent on early childhood teachers. This fact supports the idea that developing and increasing teachers' music competence was a major issue for determining the quality of early childhood music education.

According to the findings noted in Table 5.1, 16 out of 18 teachers had not received any training to be music specialists. Only two (11 per cent) of them received some training in musical instrument skills, such as playing a piano. Their music backgrounds did not appear to be strong. Yet, it was always the early childhood teachers, not music-trained specialists, who were expected to assume responsibility for teaching music in their classes. The data showed that 16 out of 18 of the schools

(more than 80 per cent) did not have trained music specialists. Early childhood teachers were assumed to be the music teachers and it is quite typical in Hong Kong as well as in other parts of the world.

Moreover, the Phase 2 findings showed that early childhood teachers were not only assumed to play the music teaching role, but also the role of designer of the music curriculum and lessons. Eighteen teachers (88 per cent) planned specific everyday music lessons and 16 teachers (77 per cent) designed the overarching music curriculum. These findings matched with the findings of Phase 1. As early childhood teachers took up this responsibility, they were expected to have enough music knowledge and skills to effectively design a music curriculum and teach music.

1.2. Music learning in formal professional teacher training institutions

Overall, most of the respondents (83 per cent) expressed their satisfaction with the professional early childhood teacher training programs offered by the Hong Kong institutions. More than half of the respondents (51 per cent) from the questionnaire indicated their qualification as Qualified Kindergarten Teacher education (QKT, the previous minimum qualification requirement) and 38 per cent of the teachers received the Certificate Teacher training program (CE, recent minimum qualification requirement). Therefore, music provision in the respondents' previous professional early childhood teacher training programs refers to these two basic teacher training

programs.

A list of comprehensive music competences for early childhood teachers was adopted here and Table 5.3 displays early childhood teachers' learned or expected music competences (see Chapter Two). This list was also included in the full-scale questionnaire of this study (see Appendix F). Eighteen items of music competences had been used in many different research projects (see Chapter Three). These eighteen items were analyzed and divided into three categories according to Schulman's framework of teachers' knowledge (Schulman, 1986): content knowledge, curriculum knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. The categories are shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Category of Early Childhood Teachers' Knowledge of Music from Pilot Questionnaire (Appendix A, Part 3, question 2 and 3; Part 4, question 3).

Name of teacher's knowledge of music	Item in questionnaire
Music content knowledge	1–4
Music curriculum knowledge	16–18
Music pedagogical content knowledge	
Music making	5–11, 15
Music creating	12
Music listening	13–14

From the above table, music content knowledge (items 1–4) includes music theory, literature, singing technique and understanding children's voices, which teachers should acquire as the foundation of music teaching. Curriculum knowledge (items 16–18) is about techniques to plan music or integrated curriculum. Pedagogical

content knowledge (5–15) covers the most items and it aims to bridge theory and practice. It includes three practical learning areas - music making, music listening and music creating.

Table 5.3 below encompasses 18 areas or skills of music competence (see Chapter Three). The same list was used to potentially find out three different aspects of music learning participants' views about what assisted most with their various music competences.

Table 5.3 Teachers' Learnt, Expected and Preferred Music Content from Their Previous Early Childhood Professional Teacher Training Program (Appendix A, Part 3, question 2 and 3; Part 4, question 3)

Potential or possible music competences	Music content in professional teacher training courses N=18	Expected music content in professional teacher training courses N=18	Desired music content from ongoing/later professional learning options if required by school N=18
1. Music theory and reading notation	6	7	5
2. Music literature, history and style	3	3	4
3. Singing technique and degree of accuracy	7	(10)	(10)
4. Characteristics of children's voices	8	(14)	9
5. Selecting appropriate songs	(12)	(13)	7
6. Leading and teaching songs	(14)	(16)	8
7. Playing the piano accompaniments in standard music texts	6	7	8
8. Improvising and playing the piano accompaniments with provided melody	2	5	5
9. Improvising and playing the accompaniment on other instruments, e.g. guitar	4	9	5
10. Using rhythm instruments	4	9	8
11. Developing and leading movement activities	(12)	(15)	(12)
12. Composition techniques to create music or songs	5	(10)	3
13. Developing listening lessons	6	(12)	6
14. Selecting recordings for children	7	(11)	6
15. Developing and leading music reading activities	5	5	4
16. Developing music curriculum	5	(15)	(13)
17. Using music to supplement other curricular areas	8	6	4
18. Using integrated music curriculum	6	7	5

Note: () = Top counts from the respondents' choices with 10 or >10 selections of the items

Based on the above music competences, three questions sought to understand teachers' perspective related to these competences. First of all, music competences that teachers gained in the previous music professional teacher training; second, music competences that teachers expected to gain in the previous music professional teacher training; and, the last, music competences teachers desired to gain from other professional learning (this item is reported in the next section).

Music competence that teachers gained in the previous professional teacher training

In Table 5.3, the respondents stated that what they learnt most about in their teacher training courses was song selecting and leading, as well as developing and leading movement. Therefore, music making within pedagogical content was the focus of the music competence that teachers have learnt. The findings were also similar to the focus group interviews of Phase 1.

Music competences that teachers expected to gain in the previous professional teacher training

The second column of Table 5.3 outlines respondents expected forms of music competence during their professional teacher training; they generally expected more than they actually learnt. Music competence, in their reckoning, (except the above learnt items, personal singing technique) was about understanding the characteristics of children's voices. It was indicated as one of the important aspects of basic music

theory and technique. Respondents also indicated composition technique, as well as choosing music for listening and leading music appreciation. Further, respondents indicated music curriculum development and planning as a preferred music competence. Thus, expected music competence can be summarized across four areas: music making, music creating, music listening and music curriculum designing. These four areas of music knowledge almost cover all music subject knowledge as Shulman denoted that teachers should encompass both theoretical and practical knowledge in the subject matter (Shulman, 1986). It helps teachers' growth in subject knowledge and it can help teachers feel confident in their teaching.

1.3. Music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers

Although the results from the pilot questionnaire revealed that teachers cast doubt on their music competence and their confidence to conduct music teaching; they expressed their interest in teaching music with young children and their preference to participate in relevant professional learning. The following section reports teachers' preferences for music professional learning as: subject content, subject; format; and, support from schools/Government; as well as examining reasons for seeking music professional learning.

Music content preference of professional learning

The third column from Table 5.3 included teachers' desired aspects of music competence from any professional learning they undertook when such study was required by their schools. Singing technique, developing and leading movement activities and music curriculum designing were the major areas that they expected to be included in such professional learning programs. Music competences that teachers chose mainly focus on pedagogical content knowledge and curriculum knowledge. The findings reflected the fact that teachers tended to be more 'practical' and they preferred more hands-on music-making activities and curriculum development knowledge and skills.

The following Table 5.4 includes 'learning features' from six different pilot questions and shows the respondents' expectations and preferences for such music-focused professional learning.

**Table 5.4 Early Childhood Teachers' Music Professional Learning Preferences
(please refer to Appendix A, Part 4, Question 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7)**

<i>Professional learning features</i>	<i>Teachers' preferences/ reasons/ responses</i>	<i>Occurrence of responses N=18</i>
Subject preference of professional learning (Part 4, Question 1)	Language Mathematic Science Social Information Technology Art Physical Education Music	9 2 3 1 7 10 7 13
School support for professional learning (Part 4, Question 3)	Workload deduction Paid leave for professional learning Financial support On-job training After school training None	4 2 6 7 7 7
Government support for professional learning (Part 4, Question 4)	Financial support Provide training Tax deduction of professional learning Recognition of professional learning None Not sure and do not consider	6 7 1 3 5 4
Formats of professional learning (Part 4, Question 7)	Part-time Summer and Winter Weekend Full time Others	11 7 6 1 1
Reasons for seeking professional learning (Part 4, Question 5)	Personal interest Career prospect Job satisfaction Schools' request Not sure and do not consider	12 6 9 3 1
Reasons for not seeking professional learning (Part 4, Question 6)	Financial support Heavy workload No time Not my priority Not sure and do not consider Others	5 12 12 2 0 2

Subject preference of professional learning

Most of the participants in the pilot questionnaire chose music as the most preferred subject of professional learning, followed by art and language. From the array provided in Part 4, Question 1, they valued music as the most important subject and the one that they wanted the most help and assistance with. The findings reflected that these early childhood teachers were eager to seek professional learning for better equipping their music teaching in relation to their beliefs that their previous study was inadequate and so they had insufficient knowledge and skills.

Format preference of professional learning

Most respondents (61.1 per cent) desired professional learning that was offered as a part-time course or during summer or winter holidays (38.8 per cent). Teachers expressed their preference for flexible professional learning. Also, most of the early childhood teachers expressed the desire that their schools provide them with on-the-job (38.8 per cent) or after school (38.8 per cent) professional learning. The findings reflected that practicing teachers considered their existing job situation when seeking further professional learning. They preferred that professional learning balance with their current teaching job.

Support from schools and/or Government

The above table shows that many teachers expected Government to provide financial support and organize music training for them; however, not all the teachers had such expectations. Half of the teachers (50 per cent) did not expect any support from their schools or the Government. For a long time, the Hong Kong Government neither funded early childhood education nor directly supported teachers in any kind of professional learning. Early childhood schools always depended on tuition fees from parents to survive until the voucher system started from 2006. Schools could support teachers' professional learning in terms of funding through the voucher system. However, schools' support totally depended on whether music was a key priority of a school. Historically, supporting teachers' music learning was never the usual practice of Government.

Reasons for seeking professional learning

The early childhood teachers cited personal interest and job satisfaction as the two major reasons for choosing professional learning. The results reflected that teachers did not receive pressure from schools to seek music professional learning. Teachers expressed that the existing teaching workload was too heavy to give them time for professional learning. The data showed that this obstacle was quite strong and thus their motivation was weak. Therefore, it seems that teachers' workload can be critical

for teachers pursuing better music teaching through professional learning.

In summary, the pilot questionnaire explored the topic of early childhood teachers' music teaching in early childhood schools and teachers' music learning in formal professional teacher training programs, as well as music professional learning needs for these early childhood teachers. The results from the pilot questionnaire indicated that music was a core learning area in early childhood schools. Early childhood teachers play the important role in music teaching as well as music planning. Teachers indicated their satisfaction about their previous music training in the formal professional teacher training institutions. However, the satisfaction of the program did not mean they were content with what they had learnt. Teacher respondents did not appear satisfied about the music content and they expected such content to focus on more pedagogical content knowledge and curriculum knowledge. They also strongly desired comprehensive music subject knowledge to strengthen their music competences through other music professional learning. Such learning provides music content, structure, and format ideas. Overall ideas generated in the pilot questionnaire provided direction for both developing a full-scale questionnaire and later creating a new music professional learning.

2. Full-scale questionnaire

After the first and smaller pilot questionnaire, a full-scale questionnaire (see Appendix F) was created from the pilot questionnaire (see Chapter Three) and sent to 365 early childhood teachers; the response rate was 68 per cent. The wealth of data available from the full-scale questionnaire provided ideas and perspectives from the wider field for greater understanding of the Hong Kong music professional learning needs of practicing early childhood teachers as well as their views about early childhood music learning and teaching. After the revision of the pilot questionnaire, the full-scale questionnaire was changed to better explore the over-arching topic and it included information about teachers' informal music professional learning experience. What follows is a discussion of the findings across three areas which are almost the same as the topics of the pilot study (refer to Table 5.1): music teaching in early childhood schools; music learning in formal and informal professional teacher training institutions/sectors; and, music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers.

2.1. Music teaching in early childhood schools

This section again seeks to explore teachers' general understanding of music education in early childhood schools, teachers' actual teaching performance and other

situations in music teaching. The results are reported under three topics: music in early childhood classrooms; teachers' willingness and confidence to teach music; and teachers' background and its impact on music teaching.

Music in early childhood classrooms

Based on the responses to this questionnaire (see Appendix F), six different aspects of overall music provision in early childhood schools' classes were analyzed and grouped in Table 5.5: music classes in early childhood schools; frequency per class; duration; number of students in each class; person in charge of both schools' curriculum and lesson plan designs.

Table 5.5 Music Provision in Early Childhood Classrooms

<i>Aspect of curricula provision</i>	<i>Timing/responsible person</i>	<i>Questionnaire response percentage occurrence (%)</i>
1. Music classes in schools (N=261)	All classes (3–6 yrs old)	88
	None	12
2. Frequency per week (N=256)	5 times	46.1
	4 times	10.5
	3 times	22.7
	2 times	14.5
	Once	1.2
	No regular time	2.7
	Others	2.3
3. Duration of each lesson (N=260)	45 mins or more	7
	30 mins	43.1
	20 mins	40.3
	Less than 15 mins	3.1
	No regular time	0.8
	Others	5.8
4. Number of students in each class (N=259)	30 or more	13.9
	25–29	35.9
	20–24	19.3
	15–19	20.1
	Under 14	7.7
	Others	3.1
5. Curriculum designed by (N=189)	Principal	27.8
	Vice Principal	17.4
	Class Teachers	49.8
	Music-trained specialists	5
	Others	0.4
6. Lessons designed by (N=189)	Principal	7.4
	Vice Principal	6
	Class Teachers	80.7
	Music-trained specialists	4.5
	Others	0.4

N = Number of respondents as per totals beside each “aspect”.

From the data presented above, it can be seen that the provision of music in early childhood schools was similar to that found in responses to the pilot questionnaire (see Table 5.1). Music classes were conducted mostly five times a week or three times a week. Each lesson lasted for 30 minutes or 20 minutes. Music also appeared to be one of the core activities in most schools. Besides the music teaching role, teachers were also the main lesson planners and curriculum designers. Some principals and vice principals of early childhood schools also were involved in music curriculum designing. Moreover, only a few schools adopted music-trained specialists (5 per cent) to teach music, which is typical in Hong Kong early childhood schools. Overall results indicated the similarity of music provision in these early childhood classrooms with those in the pilot questionnaire as well as the findings of Phase 1.

Teachers' willingness and confidence to teach music

In the full-scale questionnaire, two questions (Appendix F, part 1, question 10 and 11) were added after revising from the pilot questionnaire to help more fully understand respondents' preferences and levels of confidence for teaching music (see Chapter Three). Although most early childhood teachers had these multiple roles while teaching music, they (84 per cent) positively expressed their willingness and confidence to teach music in their early childhood schools; their willingness and confidence are outlined in Tables 5.6 and 5.7.

Table 5.6 Early Childhood Teachers’ Willingness to Teach Music (refer to Appendix F, Part 1, Question 10)

Willingness to teach music	Number	Percentage (%)
1 Extremely willing	24	9.3
2 Very willing	72	27.9
3 Willing	141	54.7
4 Unwilling	19	7.4
5 Very unwilling	2	0.8
Total (<i>N</i> =258)	258	100

Table 5.7 Early Childhood Teachers’ Confidence to Teach Music (refer to Appendix F, Part 1, Question 11)

Confidence to teach music	Number	Percentage (%)
1 Extremely confident	5	2.0
2 Very confident	32	12.5
3 Confident	143	55.9
4 Not confident	75	29.2
5 Least confident	2	0.8
Total (<i>N</i> =256)	256	100

The data in Tables 5.6 and 5.7 indicates that 91.9 per cent of the teachers were “willing” to “extremely willing”, and 80.4 per cent were “confident” to “extremely confident” to teach music. The mean and standard deviation of teachers’ willingness and confidence to teach music presented in Table 5.8. Teachers’ willingness responses resulted in a mean of 2.62 (from 1 to 5 which indicate from extremely willing to unwilling); this mean (2.62) was determined to showed that early childhood teachers overall were in between of “very willing” and “willing” to teach music in early childhood classroom.

Table 5.8 Mean and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Willingness and Confidence to Teach Music

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Willingness to teach music	258	4	1	5	2.62	.785
Confidence to teach music	256	4	1	5	3.14	.711

Also, the data presented in Table 5.9 below shows that 31.6 per cent of teachers stated they lacked confidence though they were “willing” to “very willing” to teach music.

Table 5.9 Two Way Tabulation of Teachers' Willingness vs Confidence

Willingness vs confidence	Q11 Confidence for teaching music (N=256)				
Q10 Willingness to teach music (N=258)	1 Extremely confident	2 Very confident	3 confident	4 Quite diffident	5 Very diffident
1 Extremely willing	5	6	11	2	0
2 Very willing	0	26	39	7	0
3 Willing	0	1	89	51	0
4 Unwilling	0	0	3	14	2
5 Very unwilling	0	0	1	1	0

From the above Table 5.8, the mean for teachers' confidence with music teaching was 3.14; this mean placed the overall findings in between “confident” and “not confident”. Also, the standard deviation for confidence (.711) was lower than

willingness (.785). From these results, findings reflect a gap between early childhood teachers' willingness (2.62) and confidence (3.14) in music teaching. Although these teachers were willing to teach music, their confidence did not match their willingness. To explore the reasons for these findings, the following section explores teachers' qualification backgrounds and work experiences and how these factors relate to their teachers' music teaching.

Teachers' backgrounds and its impact on music teaching

In order to explore the relationship between teachers' backgrounds and their music teaching, the following Table 5.10 outlines teachers' years of working experience, their qualifications and their willingness and/or confidence to teach music in their early childhood classroom and their satisfaction about both schools' music curriculum and their previous music training in professional teacher training programs. After the presentation of the descriptive statistics, a chi-square test is presented in Table 5.11 and discussed in terms of the correlation between teachers' working experience, qualifications and other factors.

Table 5.10 Teachers’ Backgrounds and Their Music Learning and Teaching

Background and features	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Work Experience (Yrs)	259	37	1	38	13.77	7.537
Qualification	262	3	1	4	2.56	.685
Willingness (music teaching)	258	4	1	5	2.62	.785
Confidence (music teaching)	256	4	1	5	3.14	.711
Satisfaction (music curriculum)	256	4	1	5	3.02	.597
Satisfaction (professional teacher training program)	254	3	2	5	3.00	.573

Table 5.11 Early Childhood Teachers’ Backgrounds and Impact on Music Learning and Teaching (Chi-square test)

Teachers’ willingness, confidence and Teachers’ satisfaction background level	Part1 Q10 Willingness to teach music	Part1 Q11 Confidence to teach music	Part2 Q6c Satisfaction with school music curriculum & music lesson	Part3 Q1 Satisfaction with own teacher previous training
Part1 Q2 Working experience	0.316 (not sig.)	0.000 (sig.)*	0.107 (not sig.)	0.099 (not sig.)
Part1 Q6a Qualifications	0.174 (not sig.)	0.008 (sig.)*	0.866 (not sig.)	0.076 (not sig.)

*Assume sig. at the level of 0.05

Based on Table 5.11, there appeared to be some correlation between teachers’ qualifications, work experience and their confidence in music teaching. Teachers who had more teaching experience (.000) and higher qualifications (.008) appeared to be more confident in teaching music. This relates with other research that revealed

correlations between teachers' background and their confidence in music teaching (Russell-Bowie, 2010). Other research also found that a correlation between teachers' teaching and teachers' subject qualifications and their teaching practices (Garbett, 2003; Goldhaber, 2002). Therefore, teachers who have more work experiences and qualifications are more likely to be confident in their music teaching.

Need for music-trained specialists

While respondents indicated their satisfaction with the music curriculum and music lessons in schools, more than half of the respondents (56 per cent) believed that a music-trained specialist should teach early childhood music as they alone could provide quality teaching. The respondents indicated that music-trained specialists, by virtue of their being "more professional", "more qualified" and "more creative", could provide good music teaching. Some of the open comments below Q1, Q2 and Q3 respectively represent examples) reflecting their general views about music-trained specialist were:

"Music-trained specialists' music class was more lively and creative. They know how to integrate music concepts and plan quality lessons. I really feel they are more professional." (Q1)

"I think children will learn better in music-trained specialist's class. I feel that every school should have one music-trained specialist to provide quality music education for children." (Q2)

“I can provide regular music class but I believe they [music-trained specialists] were more qualified to teach music than us as they have received more music training and have more music teaching experience.”(Q3)

Respondents believed that such specialists were well-equipped with subject knowledge and skills to better contribute to children’s learning and development. Therefore, more than half (56 per cent) of the respondents believed that music-trained specialists were a better choice and one solution for quality music teaching. Although teachers who are strong in subject knowledge are more likely to help children learn music, it is not the usual practice in Hong Kong early childhood education to have music-trained specialists (refer to focus group interviews in Phase 1). The respondents of Phase 2 did not seem to consider the financial implications and various technical problems (see Chapter Four) that Phase 1 focus group participants did. Respondents might simply have believed that quality music learning and teaching can be solved by adopting music specialists. Although they were satisfied with their regular music teaching delivery, teachers’ believed that music-trained specialist can provide better quality music teaching and children will learn well with their professional music teaching.

2.2. Music learning in formal and informal professional teacher training institutions

The full-scale questionnaire again was planned to collect responses about teachers’

perceptions of their formal professional teacher training programs. Questions about “informal” music professional learning were added to collect broader views. The following sections report early childhood teachers responses about both formal and informal music learning programs.

Music learning in formal professional teacher training programs

The results of the questionnaire indicated that most early childhood teachers (84 per cent) were satisfied with the music training during their professional teacher training. However, their “preferred” music content said otherwise. Tables 5.12 and 5.13 below review ‘learned’ music content and preferred or ‘expected’ music content that was not provided in their previous formal professional teacher training.

Table 5.12 Teachers Learnt Music Content in Their Previous Professional Teacher Training Program (refer to Appendix F, Part 3, Question 2)

Music competence aspects and skills	Teachers learned most music in professional teacher training (from “1” to “5”) N=228					Total count from “1” to “5”
	1 The most	2	3	4	5 The least	
Music theory and reading notation	3	4	2	4	7	20
Music literature, history and style	1	1	3	0	6	11
Singing technique with high degree of accuracy	8	7	12	10	9	46
Characteristics of children’s voices	4	7	3	6	6	26
Selecting appropriate songs	40	20	24	15	15	(114)
Leading and teaching songs	34	28	28	19	25	(134)
Play the piano accompaniments in standard music texts	6	3	4	10	7	30
Improvise and play the piano accompaniments with provided melody	2	1	2	2	6	13
Improvise and play the accompaniment on other instruments, e.g. guitar	7	9	9	5	15	45
Using rhythm instruments	12	28	21	32	25	(118)
Developing and leading movement activities	66	49	37	20	5	(177)
Composition technique to create music or songs	2	4	13	7	11	37
Developing listening lessons	6	25	24	29	19	(103)
Selecting recordings for children	1	4	6	6	9	26
Developing and leading music reading activities	0	1	2	2	9	14
Developing music curriculum	23	23	17	26	22	(111)
Using music to supplement other curricular areas	2	10	9	8	13	42
Using integrated music curriculum	25	15	11	19	16	(86)
Others	1	0	0	1	0	2

Note: *() = Top five counts from the respondents’ choices with 80 or >80 selections of the items.

Table 5.13 Teachers Expected Music Content in Their Previous Professional Teacher Training Program (refer to Appendix F, Part 3, Question 3)

Music competence aspects and skills	Teachers expected music content in the professional teacher training (from “1” – “5”) N = 221					Total count from “1” to “5”
	1 The most	2	3	4	5 The least	
Music theory and reading notation	14	6	10	15	9	54
Music literature, history and style	10	9	6	10	15	50
Singing technique with high degree of accuracy	16	18	11	14	17	76
Characteristics of children’s voices	21	17	20	14	11	(83)
Selecting appropriate songs	15	7	5	7	6	40
Leading and teaching songs	12	9	14	7	11	53
Play the piano accompaniments in standard music texts	6	14	8	9	5	42
Improvise and play the piano accompaniments with provided melody	7	3	11	9	6	36
Improvise and play the accompaniment on other instruments, e.g. guitar	5	8	6	7	8	34
Using rhythm instruments	5	14	18	16	16	69
Developing and leading movement activities	15	11	16	12	8	62
Composition technique to create music or songs	8	15	14	20	11	68
Developing listening lessons	4	12	10	6	7	39
Selecting recordings for children	4	9	8	16	10	47
Developing and leading music reading activities	2	5	11	7	7	32
Developing music curriculum	22	23	18	7	11	(81)
Using music to supplement other curricular areas	20	23	23	17	18	(101)
Using integrated music curriculum	47	22	14	18	21	(122)
Others	0	1	1	1	1	4

Note: *() = Top five counts from the respondents’ choices with 80 or >80 selections of the items.

In the above Tables 5.12 and 5.13, “developing music curriculum” (111) and “using integrated music curriculum” (86) were two overlapping items; they repeatedly appeared with high ratings which reflected that teachers had learnt these skills but they expected more. It might also indicate that these items were important music competences to teachers to teach music. Apart from these two items, respondents also expressed their desire to understand the characteristics of children’s voice (83; Table 5.13). The findings showed that singing is the important basic music content knowledge and performance skill which can help teachers to equip themselves in leading singing activities. Teachers most preferred (‘expected’) to learn using integrated music curriculum (122). As mentioned “integrated curriculum” is indicated in the *Early Childhood Curriculum Guidebook* (EDB, 2006a) and it has become an increasingly important component in many school reform initiatives (Barry, 2008). As a global trend and local expectation, early childhood schools and teachers are seeking to adopt integrated curriculum as part of their overall teaching (EDB, 2006a)

Music learning in other informal professional teacher training programs

Besides formal music learning offered by professional teacher training programs, most respondents (83.8 per cent) expressed (see Appendix F, Part 4, Question 10) that they did not join any music professional learning recently or during the last two years. Although

the respondents chose “music” as their priority “subject” for professional learning, workload, time constraints and lack of financial support stopped them from joining this most preferred professional learning.

Around 20 per cent of the respondents had joined some kind of music professional learning during the last three years. Schools’ did not request them to join music professional learning and teachers received no pressure from early childhood schools, nor any support for music professional learning. They indicated that their own personal interest and self-achievement drove them to join further music professional learning programs to increase their music competence. Although 20 per cent was comparatively less significant, this was a group of teachers who were self-motivated and self-directed to commit themselves in music professional learning without external influences, including support and hindrance.

2.3. Music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers

As a result the vital role of teachers in early childhood education, professional learning is an important means to enhance teachers’ competence. Respondents were invited to indicate first their preference for professional learning, and then their preferred subject, music competences and structure of music professional learning.

Preferred early childhood teaching inquiry and subject area of professional learning

Teachers preferred the content of professional learning opportunities to encompass professional aspects (knowledge and skills) of early childhood education and various subject areas (knowledge and skills) (see findings in Table 5.14), plus specific early childhood music competences (see Table 5.15).

Table 5.14 Early Childhood Teachers’ Teaching Inquiry Preferences of Professional Learning (refer to Appendix F, Part 4, Question 1).

Learning area	Teachers’ preferences of professional learning. Occurrences N=246					Total count from “1” to “5”
	1	2	3	4	5	
Child development	105	33	18	18	26	200
Teaching and learning	18	43	37	42	32	172
Observation, record and assessment	7	15	18	22	44	106
Curriculum design	33	47	43	34	29	186
Children’s health	23	21	19	21	11	95
Teaching method	28	34	49	31	23	165
Children, parent and community	4	7	3	7	7	28
Early experience of academic subjects (e.g. language, social service, maths, science, IT, etc.)	2	15	10	19	16	62
Arts education (e.g. Early PE, Art, Music, Dance)	43	23	37	34	38	175
Other	1	1	0	0	1	3
None of the above	1	0	1	0	0	2

Table 5.15 Early Childhood Teachers’ Subject Area Preferences of Professional Learning (refer to Appendix F, Part 4, Question 2)

Subject area	Teachers’ preferences of professional learning. Occurrences N=246					Total count from “1” to “5”
	1	2	3	4	5	
Language	83	20	20	28	22	173
Mathematics	2	32	26	22	29	111
Science	6	18	28	39	35	126
Social Science	10	18	18	25	32	103
Integrative Technology	24	29	26	32	35	146
Art	45	54	47	42	18	206
Physical Education	16	22	43	31	38	150
Music	71	53	35	27	27	213
Others	0	0	0	1	1	2

From the foregoing tables, it can be seen that the respondents identified “child development”, “curriculum design” and “teaching method” as their preferred “professional” knowledge during future/hypothetical professional learning. Considering “subject” areas, “music” was their most preferred aspect of curricula followed by “art” and “language” for future professional learning. It was interesting that “children’s arts education” (one of the items in the ‘professional’ preference which included teaching methods for art and music) was not chosen as the priority of ‘professional’ knowledge; but, “music” and “art” were two priority ‘subjects’ for their professional learning. The findings reflected that the respondents perceived that subject knowledge of “music” and “art” was more helpful than the teaching inquiry of arts, “children’s arts education”. Therefore, it seems these teachers were searching for specific subject knowledge to increase their

music competence and not ways to teach music, though they are interrelated.

Preferred music competences of music professional learning

The respondents were asked to choose their preferred music competences for future professional learning when required by their schools. This question aimed to understand if there were any differences between teachers' personal desires and job requirements of music competences for professional learning. Their replies were synthesized and the salient points are presented in Table 5.16.

Table 5.16 Teachers' Preferred Music Content for Professional Learning (refer to Appendix F, Part 4, Question 3)

Various music competences	Preferred music competences in professional learning Occurrence N=243					Total count from "1" to "5"
	1	2	3	4	5	
Music theory and reading notation	17	7	5	6	10	45
Music literature, history and style	7	7	6	7	9	36
Singing technique with high degree of accuracy	16	19	12	15	13	75
Characteristics of children's voices	14	11	13	10	8	56
Selecting appropriate songs	15	14	6	7	21	63
Leading and teaching songs	19	10	19	26	16	(90)
Playing piano accompaniments in standard music texts	14	15	5	13	10	57
Improvising and playing piano accompaniments with provided melody	8	6	4	6	3	27
Improvising and playing the accompaniments on other instruments, e.g. guitar	1	11	6	8	5	31
Using rhythm instruments	7	25	31	15	25	(103)
Developing and leading movement activities	37	23	30	21	18	(129)
Composition technique to create music or songs	3	12	24	17	16	72
Developing listening lessons	4	18	11	14	9	56
Selecting recordings for children	2	10	11	11	7	41
Developing and leading music reading activities	2	4	5	9	9	29
Developing music curriculum	38	31	20	22	16	(127)
Using music to supplement other curricular areas	9	17	13	18	13	70
Using integrated music curriculum	52	30	25	17	25	(149)
Others	1	0	0	0	0	1

Note: *() = Top five counts from the respondents' choices with 80 or >80 selections of the items.

According to the above findings, the top five elements of music competences that these research participants preferred for their professional learning (when required to participate by their schools) were:

- using integrated music curriculum,
- developing a music curriculum,
- developing and leading movement activities,
- using rhythm instruments, and
- leading and teaching songs.

The most preferred music competences from the pilot questionnaire were similar to the content teachers learned during their previous professional teacher training with that content focused on music-making. However, the full-scale questionnaire results covered more areas than the pilot questionnaire. Two sets of findings reflected that the major focus of early childhood music teaching shifted from mainly pedagogical content knowledge (see Table 5.2, item 5–15) to curriculum knowledge (see Table 5.2, item 16–18). Hong Kong early childhood curriculum guidelines (EDB, 2006a) were released in 2006 and gradually adopted by early childhood schools. For example, “integrated curriculum” was suggested for adopting in early childhood schools (see Chapter One). Also, quality curriculum planning was aimed at meeting a whole child development goal. As teachers sought to implement integrated curriculum from 2006, this made “using integrated curriculum” and “developing a music curriculum” more important parts for teachers’ knowledge; and thus, it probably became the most preferred music competences for

professional learning when the full-scale questionnaire was completed in 2006.

Preferred structure of music professional learning

Given a chance to join professional learning, respondents preferred part-time courses provided by government-accredited early childhood professional teacher training institutions. The most preferred duration of the course was six to twelve months and the tuition cost should range from \$310 to \$1230 (USD). The expectations of structure and details of the professional learning reflected teachers' practical needs which accommodate their affordability and time schedule.

SUMMARY

In summary, Phase 2 findings from the questionnaires helped the researcher explore: music teaching in early childhood schools; teachers' learning in formal and informal professional teacher training programs, as well as teachers' music professional needs. On the whole, the findings indicated that music was perceived as one of the daily learning activities in terms of the school time allocation. Music learning and teaching were generally consistent with the data collected in Phase 1. Data also showed that early childhood teachers played a vital role in early childhood music education as their multiple responsibilities including music teaching, lesson and curriculum planning. However, more than half of the respondents were still driving themselves to complete the raised

qualification expectations of early childhood teachers. Most of the respondents expressed their willingness to teach music but there was a gap between willingness and confidence. With limited support for early childhood music education plus insufficient music background, respondents indicated 'music' as their most preferred subject during future professional learning. Teachers seemed to understand their inadequacies in music and so expected that professional learning could help them teach music better as well as become better lesson planners and curriculum directors.

A review of previous professional teacher training programs or courses through the questionnaire sought to find out how both previous professional teacher training and future continuous professional learning could help teachers deepen their music competences. Most of the respondents reported satisfaction with their previous professional teacher training though noted many preferred music competences that had not been covered during that professional teacher training. Respondents chose their most preferred music competence from a provided list as outlined earlier. In order to increase teachers' music capacities, continuous professional learning with appropriate music competences seems to be the way forward.

Although it appeared that there were not many respondents joining music professional learning sessions, respondents indicated that Government policy and school support would help them seek further professional learning. Help such as releasing some

workload could create more room for teachers. Also, respondents stated they would be more willing to join professional learning if Government and schools provided useful professional learning and financial support. External support has often served as a motivation to sustain teachers cultivating quality music teaching through continuous learning. If schools and Government joined forces, this could create a better environment for developing music professional learning.

In summary, Phase 2 continued to more broadly explore the topic of music learning and teaching in Hong Kong as well as music professional learning needs. The results of the full-scale questionnaire were later reviewed with the Phase 3 focus group participants; these discussions created another in-depth exploration that is reported in Chapter Six.

Chapter Six

Phase 3: Continuing investigation of music professional learning of early childhood teachers and early childhood music learning and teaching

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss the research findings from Phase 3. The second round of three focus group interviews included the early childhood teachers, early childhood school principals and lecturers of early childhood teacher training institutions from Phase 1 (see Chapter Three). Additionally, one-on-one interviews with three prominent leaders of early childhood education in Hong Kong were included in Phase 3 of this research study, for their professional perspectives of music professional learning for early childhood teachers (see Chapter Three).

During all these Phase 3 interviews, the findings and analysis of the full-scale questionnaire (part of Phase 2) were tabled and discussed with participants. The aim was to collect their comments and views about the results from the larger-scale questionnaire, plus their further professional views about any other music professional learning topics.

As context to reporting these findings, it is useful to recall that there was a Hong Kong early childhood education review in 2006 (EDB, 2006b) with a series of recommended changes to early childhood education (see Chapter One). This review

changed policy and influenced developments across all areas of early childhood education.

The coding of the Phase 3 research participants' responses was the same as in Phase 1: early childhood teachers (T); early childhood school principals (P); lecturers from professional teacher training institutions (L). Also, there was a new code for prominent leaders (E) as 'experts' of early childhood education participating in Phase 3.

Phase 3 was the last component of this study, which sought to further explore the topic and link the context and findings from Phase 1 and 2 to this Phase. The overall interrogation, critical analysis and deeper discussion of the issues raised from these three phases are presented in Chapter Seven. This phase further investigated: music teaching in early childhood schools; music learning in formal and informal professional teacher training institutions/sectors; and, music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers.

1. Music teaching in early childhood schools

The findings related to music teaching in early childhood schools not only provided specific examples of early childhood music education but provided hints regarding the demand and development of teachers' music professional learning.

In Phase 3, the full-scale questionnaires' findings of Phase 2 were reviewed and

further examined in relation to changes in Hong Kong education policy on 2006. Data from both the second focus group interviews and one-on-one early childhood education leaders' views are reported, explored and discussed. Based on Phase 3 participants' professional experiences and views, this section includes: music provision in early childhood schools; dilemmas of adopting music-trained specialists; music value in early childhood schools; and, implications of changed Hong Kong policy.

1.1. Music provision in early childhood schools

During the interviews, Phase 3 participants found that some Phase 2 full-scale questionnaire results were identical with their understandings and professional experience in the field; this was the case for such aspects as the frequency and duration of music learning, and, of course, class sizes and student ratios, which are defined by Government regulations. In addition, participants also expressed different views, interpretations, clarifications and further concerns based on the questionnaire results, as well as their views about current early childhood music education. The analysis of findings is organized in three parts: music classes in early childhood schools; music curriculum planning; and, music teaching.

Music classes in early childhood schools

Phase 3 research participants generally agreed with the results gathered in the Phase 2 full-scale questionnaire about the provision of early childhood music classes and they believed that early childhood schools treated music as a core subject. However, Phase 3 participants did not perceive the improvement of music classes or the satisfaction with music learning that the Phase 2 respondents did. The typical comments in support of this concern were:

“I agree with the results of the questionnaire that showed that early childhood schools tried to make music an important subject in their schools. However, I do not agree with the satisfaction result of the music education provided so far. Music is still not classified as important learning areas in early childhood education” (T1)

“I do not think music class in early childhood schools is satisfactory although the result of the questionnaire showed that 80 per cent of teachers feel satisfied about the provision. If teachers are satisfied with current standard of early childhood education music education, I do not think there will be any room for teachers to grow and change.” (P3)

Phase 3 participants generally believed that the development of music education in Hong Kong early childhood schools was similar to a few years before (from 2006 to 2008) when they did first focus group interviews. Although they believed that early childhood schools had increased their concerns about the quality and performance of many aspects and subjects, such as language, these participants did not include music. From their points of view, the standard of music education had not changed or had only improved slowly

over the years of the research study. Typical comments were as follows:

“I do not think there was any improvement in music learning and teaching since we met [first focus group conducted three years before]. After education reform, I did not really feel that the quality of music in early childhood schools has become any different. There is still no one to pay attention to the development of music education, including Government or schools.” (T1)

“I am sure early childhood education as a whole is growing but music education grows very slowly. Most of the schools make more effort to improve academic subjects, such as language or mathematics, rather than music.” (P2)

“It usually takes a while for all subjects to grow and develop after education reform or policy change, especially, for minor subjects. I guess music is not the priority yet.” (E1)

In summary, the findings revealed that music classes in Hong Kong early childhood schools and music professional learning for teachers developed slowly. Although music education was recognized as one of the important learning areas especially after education reform in Hong Kong, it seemed little effort has been made to really improve the quality of music education by related parties, such as Government, schools, etc.

Music curriculum planning

Phase 3 participants reviewed the quality of early childhood music curriculum and music lesson planning from the Phase 2 full-scale questionnaire; and, they generally did not identify with the Phase 2 teachers' satisfaction with music curriculum design. On the contrary, in these participants' views and experience, music curriculum within early

childhood education was almost non-existent. Related comments were:

“I am not sure what kind of music curriculum they were talking about. I do not think they talked about the appropriate music curriculum in detail to guide the music lesson and teaching.” (T2)

“Honestly, I do not think teachers had the ability to evaluate the music curriculum. They [teachers from questionnaire] might simply think that the music lesson was the given music curriculum.” (T1)

“I do not think there are many schools that have their own music curriculum. I guess more than half of the schools used commercial music textbook.” (L2)

Phase 3 participants believed that early childhood schools paid little or no attention to music curriculum and depended extensively on teachers' efforts to plan and conduct music lessons. As many teachers reported that they had no ability to plan or assess music curriculum, they mainly used commercial textbooks as references for planning their daily music activities or they depended on guidelines offered by the school. Participants' representative comments were:

“I planned music activities by using many commercially designed textbooks as reference. I combined, rearranged, and found relevant songs to match with the theme.” (T2)

We do not have a proper music curriculum but have very simple guidelines in our school. We asked a senior teacher to lead and plan the music guidelines for every year. I believe that there are many schools similar to ours.” (P2)

As regards the current situation during Phase 3 (2008), participants suggested that early childhood music curriculum design should not merely depend on classroom teachers but

needs to be supported by some experienced teachers or experts. Typical comments were as follows:

“I do not think we [non-music-trained] have the ability to improve the music curriculum. School should provide support for us.” (T2)

“If possible, I really want to have a music-trained specialist to help in the school’s music education. They can review and design effective music curriculum for our school. They can demonstrate the music teaching and give on-the-job training for teachers.” (P2)

“I think Government should take initiative to provide financial support and a music expert for schools and help schools to develop appropriate music curriculum.” (E3)

Although respondents in the Phase 2 questionnaire were satisfied with the existing early childhood education music curriculum in schools, the review by Phase 3 early childhood education stakeholders included their belief that music curriculum was an underdeveloped area. There was a need to further devote efforts for developing and supporting music learning. Phase 3 teachers suggested that early childhood schools should support them by providing effective curriculum and expert assistance; while Phase 3 early childhood principals expected music-trained specialists and lecturers from professional teacher training institutions to provide expertise and support; and, Phase 3 prominent leaders of early childhood education expressed the need for both financial support and curriculum reform from the Education Department of the Hong Kong Government if thorough change of music curriculum was to happen.

Music teaching

In Hong Kong, early childhood teachers are mostly assumed to be teaching music as well as other usual subjects. Most of the early childhood teacher respondents during the Phase 2 questionnaire expressed their willingness to teach and were confident in teaching music. Reviewing the results of the Phase 2 questionnaire with the Phase 3 participants, there were two different kinds of responses and opinions among Phase 3 participants about earlier positive responses about music teaching. Some Phase 3 participants believed that the Phase 2 results reflected teachers' level of comfort and confidence to maintain the current routine of music classes. Representative comments were as follows:

“Teachers do not have choice but need to teach every day. Their confidence is built up by their daily practice.” (T2)

“I am not surprised about the result as music is one of the daily activities in early childhood schools. Also, teachers should feel confident to teach every day. Those teachers who showed their lack of confidence might be new teachers or very weak in music.” (L1)

“I think they would not feel teaching music too difficult when it became part of the routine. Keeping to the routine is not too hard for them. Of course, they are willing and feeling confident.” (L2)

“I think to maintain the routine of music class should not be too difficult. After all, this is the most favorable class for children.” (E2)

Although some Phase 3 participants believed that teachers should be willing and feel confident to teach music, others commented that the Phase 2 questionnaire results were

quite unexpected to them. From their impressions and experiences in the field, they had assumed that early childhood teachers felt inadequate and not confident to teach music.

The typical comments to support these claims were as follows:

“At first, I was surprised about such a positive result. However, I guess teachers are just satisfied with what they offer children.” (T2)

“I did not expect that they would feel confident about music teaching. If this was true, maybe they were just too satisfied with what they have done so far. They simply did not experience any pressure from schools or do not know what the quality music teaching should be.” (T1)

“Teachers are satisfied with their own music teaching only because they do not know what the quality of music education should be. It also proved that schools did not know the quality of music education and did not put any pressure on teachers” (E1).

Although Phase 3 participants had two different views about early childhood music teaching in early childhood schools, they generally believed that early childhood teachers can maintain the daily music routine but probably cannot offer higher quality music education for children.

Based on the Phase 2 questionnaire, Phase 3 participants also noticed and pointed out the inconsistent results about adopting music-trained specialists as teachers of music.

Although Phase 2 teacher respondents showed their willingness and confidence in teaching music, they preferred music-trained specialists to teach music. Phase 3 participants believed the results reflected that teachers were not truly satisfied with the

school music curriculum and willing to teach music. The respondents from the

questionnaire were less confident to deliver quality music teaching and believed that music-trained specialists could teach music better than them. Their views were as follows:

“If teachers [questionnaire result] really feel confident about their music teaching, they would not think that music-trained teachers can deliver better music education to children.” (T1)

“It is obvious that teachers want to pass their burden to music-trained teachers. I think teachers know that they do not have enough ability and training to teach good music” (P4)

“Early childhood teachers believe that they can offer music class daily but music-trained teachers can offer professional and quality music education for children.” (L3)

“This shows that early childhood teachers are not really willing and do not feel confident to teach music. I guess they really feel that they do not have sufficient knowledge, ability, and exposure to teach music education as good as music-trained specialists.” (E2)

Phase 2 teacher-respondents expressed their “willingness” and “confidence” to maintain the music routine. Phase 3 participants believed that quality music teaching can only be delivered by music-trained specialists.

On the whole, Phase 3 participants concluded that the quality of music provision in early childhood schools was slowly improving. By reviewing Phase 2 findings about music classes in schools, music curriculum planning and music teaching, Phase 3 participants believed that early childhood teachers were able to maintain regular music classes; but, it seemed unlikely they could plan relevant music curriculum and provide

quality music teaching.

1.2.Dilemmas of adopting music-trained specialists

As mentioned in Phase 1, it was not a common practice to have music-trained specialists teaching music in early childhood schools. The problems identified in Phase 1 about engaging music-trained specialist were: (1) financial implications, (2) they were not trained in early childhood education, and (3) less understanding, via minimal contact time with children for music-trained specialists (see Chapter Four). Phase 2 full-scale questionnaire findings confirmed that less than 10 per cent of schools engaged music-trained specialists (see Chapter Five). Despite the many constraints in engaging music-trained specialists in early childhood school, Phase 2 respondents (56 per cent) strongly believed that music-trained teachers were more professional and they could offer effective music teaching. However, even if this were one of the options for improving early childhood music education, Phase 3 participants believed that music-trained specialists were not available in the field. Typical comments were as follows:

“I think there are not many suitable music-trained specialists available in the pool [early childhood schools]. Even schools want to have one; it is not easy to find someone who is suitable.” (E2)

“It is not possible to find music-trained specialists both willing and able to teach early childhood education in music in this field.” (P3)

Although Phase 2 respondents believed that music-trained specialists could solve the quality issue of music education, there were neither many early childhood teachers with music-training nor music-trained specialists interested in teaching early childhood children. Also, without an early childhood teacher qualification, they can only act as special subject teacher even if they are available. Thus, adopting music-trained specialists to teach early childhood music is not always possible or desirable.

1.3. Music value in early childhood schools

The quality of early childhood music learning and teaching was not only affected by existing music curriculum, teaching resources or support, but also greatly influenced by the educational value given to music across the Chinese society in Hong Kong (Yeh, 2001). The following two aspects reported from the Phase 3 findings reflect the development of music professional learning: economic growth and academic emphasis.

Economic growth

As mentioned in the background of early childhood education in Chapter 1, Hong Kong is a very competitive society that emphasizes education as a means to success in life (Kennedy, 2005; Morris, and Adamson, 2010). Moreover, economic growth in Hong Kong has an impact on demanding quality education (Hanushek, Dean, Jamison and

Ludger, 2008) including early childhood education (Ho, Campbell-Barr and Leeson, 2010). Typical Phase 3 comments in this regard were:

“The society is getting rich and it makes education more and more important. Moreover, the birth rate in Hong Kong is getting less and less. Nowadays, parents demand better education [early childhood education] to increase their children’s competitive power in the society. Teachers definitely need to be well equipped to fulfill this expectation.” (P3)

“The quality concern of early childhood education generally increases because of the economic growth in this decade. Although music may not be the most emphasized subject, the required standard of all learning areas are generally higher than before.” (E1)

With the growing awareness of all learning aspects of early childhood education, the role and function of teachers’ professional learning is shifting not only for nurturing individual development, but also for expanding the human capital of a society. Education has another function which connects with the development of the knowledge-based economy (Ho, Campbell-Barr and Leeson, 2010). Both children and teachers’ knowledge are recognized as the key to productivity and economic growth. In response to the economic development in Hong Kong, high quality music and other professional learning areas are required to prepare teachers with better competence to meet children’s learning needs as well as to nurture the “right” people for this growing society.

Academic emphasis

Academic and examination oriented learning methods (Tam and Chan, 2010) help children to be “smart” and “clever”, which is a link to securing a seat in a good university and ultimately a successful career. These expectations begin very young, even starting from early childhood children in Hong Kong as mentioned before (see Chapter One). Therefore, emphasis on core subjects such as language, mathematics, science and so on were designed and included in the main primary and secondary curriculum and also early childhood curriculum documents. Music was not part of the core subjects in the Hong Kong public examinations and was not perceived as an important learning area. Typical comments supported this claim were:

“Our Chinese see education as a career investment. ‘Good’ education leads to ‘good’ primary, secondary, and university education, which can secure high status, satisfactory salary, and positive career path. Music is less related toward this concept.” (T2)

“Our society sees education as the stepping stone of a successful career and high status in the society. Academic learning and examination makes it easy to assess children. Through the examination, it is easy to choose the best individual from this process. In this case, Chinese, English, mathematics, science and the subject included in the examination are important. Music is just minor – to add to the fun of the learning.” (P4)

Students’ achievements were appraised in academic subjects such as Chinese, English, and Mathematics. All the academic subjects became important in the education system for university admission. As early childhood education is considered the beginning of the

formal schooling for children, this contributes to the pressure on the whole education system to promote subjects that enhance chances of admission to a good university. When there are time conflicts, schools usually choose academic subjects, whereas music is seen as something that adds fun to children's learning. Typical comments were as follows:

“Nowadays children have always been pushed to study and cannot enjoy the fun of learning. Even for young children, academic learning is their major activity.” (T1)

“When this is the trend and all schools offer academic learning for children, do you think parents will choose our school if we do not follow?” (T2)

“Music is very important for children. However, people see music as part of the extra curriculum activities. Music in the school only adds fun for children.” (L1)

“I know music is very important for children. With all these academic pressure, music in school can help to release children's learning pressure.” (E2)

Phase 3 participants believed that many people accept the importance of music learning and teaching in early childhood education. However, in most decision-making such as resource allocation (music rooms and equipment), music was not given priority in the overall early childhood education system. Participants claimed that:

“Whenever it needs to spend more time for writing activities or mathematics, music or physical education [PE] lesson is the first to be cut.” (T1)

“There are only three hours of school time, we always need to adjust and permit important work [academic work] to come first.” (P3)

When prioritizing school resources, music and other non-academic subjects became less

important. This has been especially the case for older groups of children in early childhood schools, such as five-year-old classes, when children needed to work hard to prepare for entry into primary schools. Music classes were readily cut and replaced by more academic work. It is an ongoing dilemma of early childhood schools. Thus, when schools cannot support teachers to equip their music knowledge, skills and competences, teachers are not motivated or encouraged to improve their inadequate music competences.

In summary, music is classified as one of the core subjects for aesthetic development and plays an important role in children's balanced and wholesome development. However, music is still one of the minor subjects in many schools. 'Quality' early childhood education means "academic" for many parents and has become the norm in society (Early, Bryant, Pianta, Clifford, Burchinal, Ritchie, Howes and Barbarin, 2006; Ho, 2008). Early childhood schools usually struggle between children's rights and parents' expectations/market needs. Parents are a strong lobby who influence schools' survival. When there was a resource conflict, early childhood schools appeared to choose the parents'/market priority to survive.

1.4. Implications of changed Hong Kong policy

As Government took the initiative to conduct education reform (EC, 2001) and an education review (EDB, 2006b), this raised the status of early childhood education and

increased the demand for higher quality teaching and learning. According to the education reform, music was confirmed as one of the six areas that develop children as whole individuals (EDB, 2006a). Thus, enhancing the professional music competence of early childhood teachers and raising the quality of music teaching became significant. However, education reform also created both positive and negative influences toward music professional learning. These were: funding support of professional learning, parents' influences and change of professional expectations.

Funding support of professional learning

The adoption of a voucher scheme contributed to professional learning by allocating a fixed percentage of extra funding from parents' tuition fees for early childhood schools according to schools' choice (see Chapter 1). According to Phase 3 participants, they believed that the financial support from the voucher scheme could create better professional music learning opportunities. Typical comments were as follows:

“When early childhood music education has been emphasized, teachers' competence should be equipped to match to the expectation through funding support.” (P4)

“Education review can really help to provide more resources for school. It [Government] had already allocated money for schools and it all depended on how schools used it.” (L4)

Parents' influences

Principals and early childhood leaders from Phase 3 pointed out that the voucher scheme mainly offered subsidies to parents for their children's three years of early childhood education. However, the Government instructed schools to use part of these fees for teachers' professional learning. As parents were funded through the voucher scheme to choose a school for their own child, it was parents' right and choice to decide their children's education direction. Parents' powerful lobby became stronger because of this policy changed. When parents' continued to demand academic learning in schools, music was not taken into account when children's future prospects were believed to be made more secure by achieving academic excellence. Typical claims by Phase 3 participants supported these views:

“I do not think the voucher scheme really support schools in providing appropriate education program for children. The voucher scheme suggests that financial support is directly transferred from Government to parents. Therefore, parents' view can dominate the provisions of the school program.” (P4)

“I hope that Government can fund schools directly so that schools can provide appropriate educational programs for children to develop them. Schools' development should not be led by parents.” (E1)

Additionally, the powerful parent lobby was dominant in demanding certain provisions within early childhood education, but usually not much music (Chan and Leong, 2005).

As the society in Hong Kong has always valued education to prepare children for jobs

commanding high incomes as mentioned earlier, the overall education system was dominated by powerful parents. Representative comments were as follows:

“Parents see education as the foundation of their children’s future career and prospects. Children are always pushed to work hard in studies so that they can enter an ideal school and university. Music is not as important as academic subjects.” (T2).

“Music or other minor subjects are not important in the school. However, children are pushed to learn the musical instrument outside the school, which is an additional credit considered at the time of entry to their ideal primary school.” (P1)

As the direction of schools’ curriculum is highly influenced by parents, the need to please parents and maintain schools’ enrolments became paramount. Some early childhood schools had no choice but to offer a mainly academic learning program for children.

Change of professional expectations

The expectations of quality education through the reform and review were not limited to music education but connected to early childhood teachers’ professional learning. This included the requirement for teachers to upgrade their early childhood qualifications and other professional learning. Phase 3 participants pointed this out by making the following comments:

“The voucher scheme mainly sponsors teachers to upgrade their teaching qualification. Early childhood teacher has no time to spend on professional music learning as they need to meet the raised basic requirement as an early childhood teacher.” (T1)

“I believe that teachers should complete their basic early childhood teacher qualification first and then seek for further specialized qualifications.” (E3)

As such, teachers not only needed to enhance their professional learning, but most important, pay extra effort to acquire new qualifications. This raised qualification expectation became the most importantly benchmark to give teachers’ survival and permission to teach. The education review (EDB, 2006c) indicated that early childhood teachers had to complete this required qualification before 2012 and now at the end of 2011 there are still many teachers who have not met this requirement to be considered qualified. Thus, this qualification process was the primary concern during the research study years over other professional learning. Typical claims were:

“After education review, the basic qualification as an early childhood teacher has been raised to Certificate level [advance level]. The financial support from the voucher scheme mainly sponsors teachers to upgrade their teaching qualification. There are still many teachers who do not meet the basic requirement. Teachers should upgrade their qualification instead of seeking music professional learning.” (P4)

“Early childhood teachers do not have time to spend on music professional learning as many teaches need to complete their basic qualification as an early childhood teacher.” (T1)

“I believe that teachers should complete their basic early childhood teacher qualification first and then seek further specialized qualifications.” (E3)

In summary, recent economic growth and education reform created a high hope for higher

quality early childhood education. In order to increase the quality of early childhood education, the voucher scheme provided funding and created chances for teachers to seek both formal professional teacher training and other informal professional learning. However, the voucher scheme required teachers to complete the new standard of qualification and it became the top priority over other learning. Also, the voucher scheme supported early childhood children's tuition fees and subsidized parents directly from Government. Thus, schools needed to respond to parents' expectations and market needs (Fung and Lam, 2008; Ho, 2008). Although market competition may push teachers to improve their teaching quality in all aspects, the directions of the Hong Kong school curriculum and program practice were to meet academic excellence according to parents' choices (Fung and Lam, 2008). Therefore, the voucher scheme was a coin with two sides which created hopes for music professional learning by providing funding but also raised harsh extra expectations and qualification requirements for teachers.

2. Music learning in formal and informal professional teacher training institutions/sectors

Early childhood professional teacher training courses have always intended to equip early childhood teachers with many abilities, including music competences and pedagogical abilities to teach effectively in early childhood schools. Through reviewing the results of the Phase 2 full-scale questionnaire, the researcher and Phase 3 participants also further

investigated teachers' existing music learning in formal early childhood professional teacher training programs and explored music learning in other informal ways.

2.1. Music learning in formal professional teacher training programs

Phase 3 participants generally agreed that music training in professional teacher training courses had not changed much since the education reform and review. Their views about professional teacher training were basically the same as previous opinions. They believed that the mission of the music training to develop and enhance teachers' music competence was not fulfilled. Typical Phase 3 comments about professional teacher training were that it was "too short", "too theoretic", "not practical enough"; these were similar to comments made by these same participants during the first focus group interviews in Phase 1. Phase 3 responses included:

"I have found that the time spent on music in a teacher training course is very short. The content is very theoretical though there are some practical pedagogical activities. I feel that teachers cannot digest them in a few lessons." (P2)

"New teachers always feel inadequate to teach music. They would prefer an experienced teacher to lead music if they have a choice." (P1)

"I did not really learn anything in music education during the teacher training. I learnt it when I worked in the kindergarten." (T2)

"The music training is getting less when compared with the time I was a student. Music education has become a four-lessons module and not a whole year course." (P3)

Although the Phase 2 results showed that respondents were satisfied with music education offered in the professional teacher training courses, this was different between both focus groups. Phase 3 participants believed that such responses related to teachers' educational and music background. The teacher-respondents from the questionnaire were mostly waiting to be equipped with the raised basic requirement qualifications. This meant that they might not feel competent enough to evaluate music in professional teacher training institutions as they were novices of early childhood music education. Related comments were as follows:

“I think teachers will definitely feel satisfied when there is no comparison. They are simply satisfied with the fun and interesting content compared with other subject modules.” (T1)

“Early childhood teachers who are unsatisfied with the music education training must have a music background. I believe that only those who know music have ability to evaluate the music training program.” (E1)

Also, prominent leaders from Phase 3 believed that the time spent on music training in professional teacher training programs was not enough. However, they explained that it was the program structure that was difficult to change. Typical comments were:

“We have discussed at the head level about the category of music education. Certificate courses should be comprehensive enough to cover all the areas. Only language has been specialized in response to the social need but not music.” (E3)

“Although I thought it was not enough, it was hard to increase the hours. Teacher

training is based on the guideline and framework of early childhood teacher education provided by Government.” (E2)

In addition, Phase 3 participants revealed that there was not enough time allocated and the content was not practical enough, which was reflected in new teachers’ generally inadequate music teaching skills. Phase 3 leaders of early childhood education admitted that the inadequate time allocation was a problem in professional teacher training courses. However, it was difficult to change because of the time and length constraints of the recent program structure. Hence, there was a need for further and other music professional learning among practicing teachers.

2.2. Music learning in other informal professional teacher training programs

As mentioned above, early childhood teachers could enhance their music competence through professional learning. Although there were a few years between the first and second focus group interviews, Phase 3 participants expressed that there were still not many systematic music professional learning opportunities for early childhood teachers; in fact, the variety and quantity of offerings were very limited: only short-term courses, workshops or seminars. These did not lead to any formal qualification and were without recognition by early childhood schools. Phase 3 participants commented:

“There was not much music professional learning available in the field. I have attended almost all of them. They were only short courses and workshops. I do not

think they helped much.” (T1)

“They [music professional learning] are all voluntary and depend on teachers’ self-interest. They do not lead to any qualification after completion.” (E1)

“They are all bits and pieces which are not well designed for early childhood teachers. I do not think they can develop early childhood teachers with needed music competence.” (P3)

As there seemed to be inadequate and insufficient music learning in both formal and informal professional teacher training programs, Phase 3 participants hoped that some new professional learning approaches and programs would be created. They believed that there would be a demand for new forms of professional learning for early childhood teachers’ ongoing music improvement.

3. Music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers

Since the existing music professional teacher training courses did not meet the expectations of quality education nor bridge the gap of existing quality needs of education, this created a space for new professional learning approaches. Through the professional views and frontline experience of Phase 3 participants, the following section reports ideas about the demand for new music professional learning and expectations about teachers’ music competences.

3.1. Demand for new music professional learning

Although Phase 3 participants believed that there was a need for early childhood teachers to enhance their music competence through systematic and well-designed professional learning, there were no such programs available in the field. In addition, it was not considered possible to include extra music during formal early childhood teacher training programs. Thus there seemed to be a space for creating new professional learning approaches and/or programs to better accommodate teachers' learning gaps. Phase 3 participants generally agreed with suggestions made by Phase 2 respondents that training should accommodate teachers' needs and job situations. The comments to support this claim were as follows:

“I agreed that it might be the practicing teachers' need. One-year certificate course should be conducted as part-time, or during winter or summer break.” (L4)

“I agree that it should be a one-year course to study deeply about music education for young children. The course should be long enough to include the necessary music knowledge and skills.” (T1)

“I think a part-time, summer or winter break course should be better to accommodate early childhood teachers' need as it will not interrupt their existing job.” (P2)

Traditionally, professional learning was assumed to have a course-work format. However, Phase 3 participants suggested that the format of professional learning for early childhood music education be more creative and not limited to course-work. Participants believed an interactive style with a music expert could be one option. Typical comments related to this

claim were as follows:

“I think early childhood music professional learning should be more creative in terms of format, such as recruiting music-trained specialists or experienced teachers as mentors to help the inexperienced teachers.” (L2)

“Music professional learning can be a mentor credit program requiring a one-on-one mentor guidance to guide teachers.” (P4)

“Music-trained specialists can help deliver training to those potential teachers who are interested and are good at music to be the early childhood trainer. The potential teacher can later help train other school teachers.” (L3)

Phase 3 participants also suggested that collaborative (Helterbran and Fennimore, 2004) and integrated professional learning (Rasmussen, Hopkins and Fitzpatrick, 2004) should be offered to help equip early childhood teachers and accommodate them as adult learners’ needs. Participants pointed out:

“I think professional learning can be a credit system, which can include course work, music class visits, mentor system, and so on. When they collect enough credit from each module, they can attain certain qualifications.” (E2)

“Early childhood teachers vary in their different music abilities. I think integrated and collaborative style of learning should be able to accommodate their needs, such as involving peer visit, field study, mentors’ coaching, and so on.” (L4)

Phase 3 participants believed that professional learning should come after required formal qualifications as an early childhood teacher. They suggested that music professional learning be recognized as part of an advanced teachers’ early childhood teacher qualification. It should not be “bits and pieces” with no formal recognized qualification.

Participants' suggestions were as follows:

“I do not want teachers to waste their time learning all these bit and pieces courses. Professional learning should fall into formal recognized qualification courses so that teachers do not need to have extra study burden.” (E3)

“I guess teachers should complete their required qualification as a teacher before they can spend time on professional learning. Professional learning should be different from basic teaching training, that is, professional learning should not just focus on general study but should focus on a special subject. The subject training qualification should be added as teachers' qualification.” (E2)

On the whole, Phase 3 participants suggested that various new music professional learning approaches for early childhood teachers should be established. Participants suggested a course-work format for enhancing teachers' music competence or creative approaches with collaborative, interactive, integrated content and multi-learning processes, which could have music-trained specialists as mentors. Field study course-work or peer visits could be combined as a collaborative learning style. Participants also suggested that teachers must be well equipped as generic early childhood teachers first, then seek further professional learning to strengthen their special subject expertise, such as music.

3.2. Expectations of early childhood teachers' music competences

Phase 3 participants believed that generally early childhood teachers' music skills, knowledge and music competence all needed to be strengthened to provide better quality music teaching. Phase 2 responses about music competences reflected a big group of

teachers' expectations for their music learning. Combining ideas from Phase 2, Phase 3 participants perceived teachers' learning needs two dimensions: first, early childhood teachers' weaknesses in music and how they wished to be equipped, such as singing skills, planning and leading music appreciation skills; and second, teachers' perceptions of the priority of music education, such as being part of an integrated curriculum. Comments such were:

“It really reflects the content of the existing music class in early childhood schools. I can understand why they chose singing, children's singing technique, and children's voice characteristic. Singing seems the only parameter in their music teaching.” (L2)

“The result of the questionnaire indicated teachers' worry and concern about integrated curriculum. Because integrated curriculum planning was the requirement in Government's early childhood education curriculum guideline, they believed that it was most important and also difficult to combine music and other learning areas.” (P1)

Phase 3 participants did not offer any further details for music content in professional learning; they agreed with Phase 2 participants by identifying integrated curriculum, curriculum design and children's singing as teachers' three most important music competences. Moreover, Phase 3 participants emphasized music content as the basis of music subject learning, and children's singing and voice characteristics were special skills which reflected teachers' self-perceived weaknesses in their music teaching. Other music theory and literacy were also important for teachers to build up their foundation of music teaching. They pointed out:

“Music making is important. However, it needs solid music theory, literacy and other specific music knowledge to support all these activities. Without music subject knowledge as the foundation, pedagogical skills and activities are shallow.” (P2).

“I don’t think teachers know how to plan integrated music curriculum without solid understanding of music subject knowledge. Teachers are weak in music teaching because they didn’t even know how to play music and what music is.” (E2)

In summary, Phase 3 respondents suggested music subject knowledge with theory and content knowledge were the foundation to increasing teachers’ music competences. Pedagogical knowledge and curriculum planning skills would come after helping teachers increase their teaching effectiveness and children’s music learning outcomes.

SUMMARY

The findings of Phase 3 supported the view that early childhood music professional learning is crucial to increase teachers’ music competence and raise their quality of music teaching, and ultimately contribute to the quality of children’s music learning. Exploration of the performance of existing early childhood music learning and teaching by the Phase 3 participants highlighted the need for more and more relevant music professional learning.

First of all, insufficient resources for early childhood music teaching – including facilities, financial support and curriculum guidelines – reflected the lesser focus on music in early childhood schools. Economic and political factors shaped the status and value of

early childhood music education in Hong Kong. The related policy and the voucher scheme encouraged teachers' generic professional learning while also creating a professional requirement and greater expectations.

Second, the quantity, quality and availability of formal professional learning were unable to adequately prepare teachers' music competences while other informal professional learning did not satisfactorily supplement formal programs.

Third, suitable adult learning approaches and more appropriate music content were identified as important strategies when deciding on new music professional learning programs and options. Because traditional approaches do not fully accommodate teachers' learning needs, interactive, collaborative and creative approaches should be created. Moreover, comprehensive music subject knowledge should be a major part of all music professional learning.

In summary, Phase 3 participants continued to explore the research topic while critiquing the findings of Phase 2. The findings of Phase 3 linked to the data from Phase 1 (see Chapter Four) and Phase 2 (see Chapter Five). The overall interrogation and in-depth critical analysis of Phases 1, 2 and 3 are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven

Critique of collective views about music professional learning for early childhood teachers

INTRODUCTION

While Chapters Four to Six reported the findings from three phases of this research, the aim of this chapter is to provide broader collective views and a critique of data gathered in the three phases (see Chapter Four for Phase 1, Chapter Five for Phase 2 and Chapter Six for Phase 3) to answer the research questions within the context of the previous literature review in Chapter Two. After this discussion chapter, a framework of music professional learning for early childhood teachers is developed. The framework will be discussed in the next chapter.

In order to summarize and interrogate the findings clearly and systematically, three themes have been derived from the research questions (see Chapter 1). These themes are adopted to present the analyzed data in Phase 1 to Phase 3 and now are also used in this chapter to discuss the overall findings: music teaching in early childhood schools; music learning in formal and informal early childhood professional teacher training institutions/sectors; and, music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers.

1. Music teaching in early childhood schools

Adult learning is deeply influenced by the social environment and they are more likely to

participate in learning and learn better when they understand the purpose and contribution to society (Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005). Early childhood teachers as adult learners are inspired to seek further music professional learning when they see their music learning can contribute to their music teaching. However, there are also many factors that impact on this process. The following section summarizes the findings and discusses two factors in relation to teachers' music teaching in early childhood schools: professional requirements and expectations plus academic discourse.

1.1. Professional requirements and expectations

Professional requirements and expectations of teachers closely link to the learning outcome. Historically, the requirement of a qualified early childhood teacher was lower than for primary and secondary teachers (see Chapter One). The recent raised professional requirement of early childhood teachers under education reform and review created several issues which greatly influence the need for development of music professional learning. The issues related to early childhood teachers' professional requirements and expectations are: awareness of quality music teaching and the priority of professional learning.

Awareness of quality music teaching

In Hong Kong, the Government took initiatives to raise the status and public recognition of the importance of early childhood education during the education reform (EC, 2001). It affirmed the role of early childhood education as the foundation of children's lifelong learning. In order to achieve this assertion, early childhood teachers as implementers were highly encouraged to engage in continuing professional learning. The Hong Kong Government established the Hong Kong early childhood voucher scheme (Cheng, 2006; EDB, 2007c) to provide schools and teachers with financial assistance for their professional upgrading. The voucher scheme was the first of its kind in the education development in Hong Kong (EDB, 2008b; Yuen, 2007). Other than providing financial assistance, it was interpreted as the Hong Kong Government's recognition of the value of professional learning among early childhood educators. Also, music became one of the core learning areas after this education reform and formed an integral part of quality teaching for children's wholesome development. To improve music teaching, teachers recognized their need to undertake further music professional learning. Although early childhood teachers were motivated externally, this initiative created the awareness of higher expectations of quality early childhood education and motivated teachers to seek further professional learning, including music.

Priority of professional learning

It is noted in earlier chapters that teachers lacked confidence in conducting music lessons with little prior learning in music, and music professional learning appeared to be the priority among other professional learning options. Also, in order to be eligible to join the voucher scheme, early childhood schools were required to take part in quality audits (internal self-evaluation for continuous improvement and external school review) conducted by the Education Bureau. Beside the quality need of early childhood education, it also created a heavier workload for schools going through all these formal reviews. As well as being involved in these reviews, teachers were also required to up-grade their formal professional qualification with a teacher development subsidy. Teachers were expected to gain the advance level of qualified kindergarten teachers (Certificate Kindergarten Teacher Education) before 2012 so that schools could obtain approval to become eligible early childhood schools for joining the voucher scheme. Teachers were stretched in the contestation of general or generic early childhood qualification upgrading versus the acquisition of professional learning to contribute to the quality teaching of specific learning areas, such as music.

1.2.Academic discourse

Hong Kong society continues to be greatly influenced by Confucius belief (Hue, 2008)

and academic excellence (Leung, Yeung and Wong, 2010). In response to the majority needs, academic learning becomes the focus of teachers' professional learning. Although the high value of early childhood education also brought out the importance of music, the emphasis of academic discourse deeply influenced meeting the demands for children's music learning and teachers' music professional learning. It was reflected in the schools' resource allocations and parental choices.

Resources allocation – market driven

The resources allocated to the teaching and learning in early childhood schools reflected what the school considers to be important and strategic teaching and learning elements, though the schools may have claimed otherwise. In Hong Kong, early childhood schools claimed that music was one of the important subjects and always scheduled music as one of the daily lessons. In practice, early childhood schools usually scheduled most of children's learning time on academic topics and content, especially older children who were nearly ready to go to primary schools. Early childhood schools needed to schedule a lot of the classroom teaching time to "drill" children and prepare them to be academically outstanding for admission to preferred primary schools. Early childhood schools set apart most of their resources for academic orientated subjects, such as language, mathematic, etc. Music became a minor subject and received fewer resources, which included less

school facilities distribution, funding allocations and expertise support as stated in the earlier findings (see Chapters Four and Six). Although early childhood schools understood the value of music education and the importance of music professional learning, they were always highly susceptible to academic learning pressures and conforming to parents' expectation/market-driven needs.

Parental choice – powerful customers

Hong Kong early childhood schools are all privately run and their survival mainly depends on the tuition fees received from parents (see Chapter Four). As such, parents become powerful customers whose choices influence schools' strategies. Although the Hong Kong Government introduced the voucher scheme with the aim to reduce parents' financial burden, to support professional upgrading and to improve educational quality, it also valued and created hope for developing more professional learning opportunities, of which music could be one of the subjects. However, under the voucher scheme the financial subsidy was tagged to each child and so where a financial subsidy goes depends on parental choice (Fung and Lam, 2008; Yuen and Grieshaber, 2009). Early childhood schools received funding only when children enrolled and studied in their schools. Since many parents were concerned whether schools could provide vigorous academic training and help their children progress smoothly to their target primary schools, the voucher

scheme augmented the academic discourse, even though this may not have been the intention of the Hong Kong Government. Music learning succumbed to academic training. Music professional learning of teachers to better equip them to provide quality music education became valueless in this context. Parents became super-powerful customers in the context of the early childhood education market and the voucher scheme.

Andragogy-in-practice denotes that the goal and purpose of learning helps adult learners to shape their learning experience, which can be divided into three levels: individual, institutional and societal (Holton, Swanson and Naquin, 2001). In this research, early childhood music professional learning was defined as enabling teachers to take an active role in their school music teaching, to improve their music teaching skills (individual), to cultivate the quality of music teaching across the field of early childhood education (institutional), and finally to contribute to the artistic, cultural growth of the young generation and meet their fullest potential as lifelong learners (societal). These goals identified with the official educational goal of early childhood education in Hong Kong and music education was seen as an important and integral part to provide wholesome early childhood education.

Although music education and music professional learning were highly valued and encouraged by many early childhood stakeholders, the emphasis of academic discourse dominated early childhood education. The prescribed value of music professional learning

did not receive actual financial support and resources allocation from early childhood schools. In addition, the preference of academic learning from early childhood parents was not favorable to the development of music professional learning. Thus, there two contrasting aspects existed between prescribed and subscribed value of music professional learning. This dichotomy of the value of music education existed in the society, and deeply influenced the development of music professional learning. More effort and contributions from early childhood stakeholders were highlighted as conditions to create more favorable learning situations and bridge the gap between rhetoric value and recognized value of children's music and music professional learning for educators.

2. Music learning in formal and informal early childhood professional teacher training institutions/sectors

Teachers' music background determined how keen early childhood teachers' demand was for music professional learning. Pre-service early childhood teachers usually depend on formal early childhood professional teacher training programs for their knowledge and skills for music teaching. When these practicing teachers needed further training during their work situation, they sought other learning opportunities to better equip themselves.

The following findings are discussed: music provision in formal professional teacher training programs; and, music provision in other informal professional teacher training programs.

2.2. Music provision in formal professional teacher training programs

Quality education greatly depends on how teachers facilitate students' learning in their classrooms. Teachers' qualifications, quality teaching practices and children's learning are inseparable (Garbett, 2003; Hedges and Cullen, 2005; Hirsh and Killon, 2009). In Hong Kong, most early childhood teachers acquire their music competence during their pre-service teacher training or in-service teacher training when practicing teachers seek higher level programs in professional early childhood teacher training institutions.

Pre-service professional teacher training programs meet the formal requirement for early childhood teacher and incorporate various professional knowledge and pedagogical skills for entering the field. At the time of this research, music professional learning was one of the core modules in pre-service programs in most of the Hong Kong government-accredited early childhood teacher training institutions. It was stated in the earlier chapter that most of the early childhood teachers were lacking music background and highly depended on the music training from the professional teacher training courses/programs. However, stakeholders of early childhood education reported that the music provision from professional teacher training programs was not adequate (contact hours of music training were very limited; see Chapter Five). After completing

pre-service teacher training, early childhood teachers still lack confidence in conducting music classes or maintaining music routines in early childhood schools.

Constructivism asserts that student teachers continuously build up their knowledge and experience based on their previous learning (Kroll, 2004). However, the teacher training courses/programs provided teachers with insufficient time to dwell on basics and construct meaningful music knowledge. Moreover, it was even more challenging for student teachers to assimilate knowledge and experiences into their existing understanding as they generally lacked previous music backgrounds. Unfortunately, the higher-level early childhood teacher training programs identified during the research adopted similar content structures with little emphasis on developing students' (teachers') music competence. Thus, the need for other music professional learning opportunities is suggested.

2.1. Music provision in other informal professional teacher training programs

Except music professional learning in formal professional teacher training programs/courses, previous findings revealed that there were only a few music related professional learning courses offered by informal bodies. These were workshops, short, incoherent courses or in-service training organized by private education institutions or

non-government organizations. Constructivists believe that learners learn best when new information is presented in a holistic context, as this enables learners to more fully understand how parts connect with the whole (Morford, 2007). The existing fragmented and one-shot short courses or workshops of music professional learning appeared to help little to bridge to the new standard or increase teachers' achievements in music teaching. It was noted that effective professional learning should link with teachers' practice in their current teaching and encourage them to explore continuous learning; but existing music professional learning did not seem to be doing this.

Moreover, the existing music professional learning options did not lead to any formal or recognized qualifications. Professional learning without recognized qualification cannot link to teachers' careers advancement; and, it was difficult for teachers to spend time out of their heavy workloads. Also, without recognition, teachers seldom received support from schools, such as release from their work or financial subsidies. Without support from schools, teachers found it difficult to commit to professional learning. Therefore, the availability, quality and recognition of music professional learning were all important forces that affected the demand for early childhood music professional courses.

Having qualified early childhood professionals without relevant, specialized early childhood studies far exceeded the supply of Hong Kong early childhood teachers, which

was a cause for concern to research participants. However, as we move ahead in the new millennium, and with the Hong Kong education reform and review confirmed, it is imperative that every effort be made to comprehensively meet the challenges facing early childhood education. Early childhood teachers are certainly playing an important part in taking responsibility for the challenges (Chan and Chan, 2003). The Government and the entire community should join forces to ensure that working teachers have access to relevant professional training so that they can better meet the learning rights and needs of young children.

3. Music professional learning needs for early childhood teachers

Adults learn differently from children (as discussed in Chapter Two). Incorporating learners' preferred learning approaches and offering early childhood teachers effective, sustainable and professional learning programs can help them attain successful learning goals (Hargreaves, 2002); and, the most effective learning can probably be attained through identification of adults' learning styles. It was the purpose of this research to explore the appropriate professional learning options which would best meet both adults' developmental needs and their preferred music competences to improve their music teaching (Chan and Leong, 2006; Cunningham, 2006). Analyzing the three phases'

findings about proposed music professional learning for teachers encompassed both strategies and music competences.

3.1.Strategies

Learning strategy is a way of learning and it relates to learners' motivation and achievement of learning. Learning strategies also determine the approach for achieving learning objectives (Lai and Chan, 2005). Based on the findings of this research, two approaches for music professional learning for early childhood teachers are suggested: an extended music module within professional teacher training courses; and a collection of multi-method music professional learning sessions or options.

Music module approach to professional teacher training

At the time of this study, the current music professional learning was a learning module offered by government-accredited professional (pre-service and in-service) teacher training institutions as part of early childhood teacher training courses/programs. Music training in these learning modules formed a significant component of music professional learning for early childhood teachers. Research findings revealed that the music module in the professional teacher training programs benefited teachers' music teaching.

However, findings also identified that the quantity and quality of existing music

learning modules had limitations in equipping teachers with the better music competence. Existing music modules were designed by professional experts in the early childhood teacher training institutions and usually organized as one-way teaching. Although some music modules included group work or discussions with peers, the findings reflected that they did not fully cater for teachers' individual needs nor solve their pedagogical challenges in the music classroom. Therefore, "multi-method" music professional learning options are suggested.

Multi-method approaches to music professional learning

In pursuit of the goals of gaining better music competence and benefiting young children's musical development, research study stakeholders of early childhood education suggested a multi-method approach to music professional learning. The main concept of "scaffolding" through social connection could be applied to further enrich teachers' learning within this multi-method approach to music professional learning.

Professional mentors' support

Learners can reach their higher potential when there is assistance and help within social context. This is especially beneficial for teachers when music is full of practical activities and the adult learners engage with different strategies, approaches and capabilities for

learning. Professional mentors could support diverse teachers in their real life learning contexts by helping them tackle actual everyday pedagogical practice challenges in their classroom. This way of learning is learner-centered which can help foster multiple solutions and is particularly important for motivating teachers to construct their own music knowledge.

Professional mentors could be music-trained specialists, experts in the areas of early childhood music education or experienced teachers with profound music knowledge and pedagogical skills. Professional mentors would create meaningful and coherent knowledge; link new knowledge to teachers' previous experience; and, they could also observe and monitor the progress and development of teachers' growth in music. Early childhood teachers can also be generally and positively influenced by these interactions, interpersonal relations and communication processes.

Music-specialists' support

Music-trained specialists are strong in their subject knowledge and skills. With their profound music subject knowledge, they should be able to generally help improve quality early childhood music education. Research study teachers' indicated a strong preference for (56 per cent) and positive comments about having music-trained specialists provide professional musical expertise for in-class support. As proficient subject knowledge can

increase one's confidence in teaching music, early childhood teachers could further develop by working with music specialists in their classrooms. Schools could consider instigating a collegial strategy that involves collaboration, co-operation and communication between a music-trained specialist and general early childhood teachers. Moreover, such collaboration can foster mutual trust and lead to professional growth in both teachers and music specialists. Because of the financial implications of adopting music-trained specialists in schools, several schools could consider sharing a music specialist.

Peers or senior teachers' support

Of course, there is a funding implication if providing music professional learning for all teachers. Due to limited resources and financial support from Government, it seems impossible for schools to support all teachers seeking music professional learning, even if schools put a strong emphasis on music education. Many research stakeholders suggested that early childhood schools support one or more "seed" teachers to receive music professional learning and later the "seed" teachers would become the trainers or mentors in their work places to assist other teachers with acquiring more in-depth music knowledge and skills. This "train the trainer" as approach could well be an effective way of advancing the quality of music education in schools, as a "seed" teacher who

understands his/her school and teachers well would probably be a most suitable assistant to others.

In summary, this research study explored strategies for approaches to early childhood music professional learning. Such continuous music professional learning should take account of active learning experiences by modeling skills and teaching strategies. The teachers require opportunities to trial ideas and demonstrate skills if they are going to make a long-term impact on classroom music. This might be best achieved through professional learning which creates opportunities to resolve difficulties, reflect on daily events and review practice through feedback. These new understandings and skills could then be transferred and realized into effective everyday teaching, particularly with the support of either professional mentors, peers or senior teachers.

On the whole, ideal learning approaches and experiences should enable teachers to engage in the meaningful examples of music making, music creating and music listening for their musical contexts in the classroom. This way teachers could gain real teaching practice and pedagogical options via scaffolding. Such a multi-method strategy of music professional learning would foster interactions, exploration, communication and collaboration and is recommended.

3.2. Music competences

One of the major aspects of designing appropriate music professional learning was to investigate teachers' music learning needs to help them achieve their educational goals.

This was explored in the context of being different from other subject areas, with unique requirements of music content, knowledge, skills and practices; these are illustrated in Figure 7.1 below.

Figure 7.1 Music Competences of Early Childhood Teachers

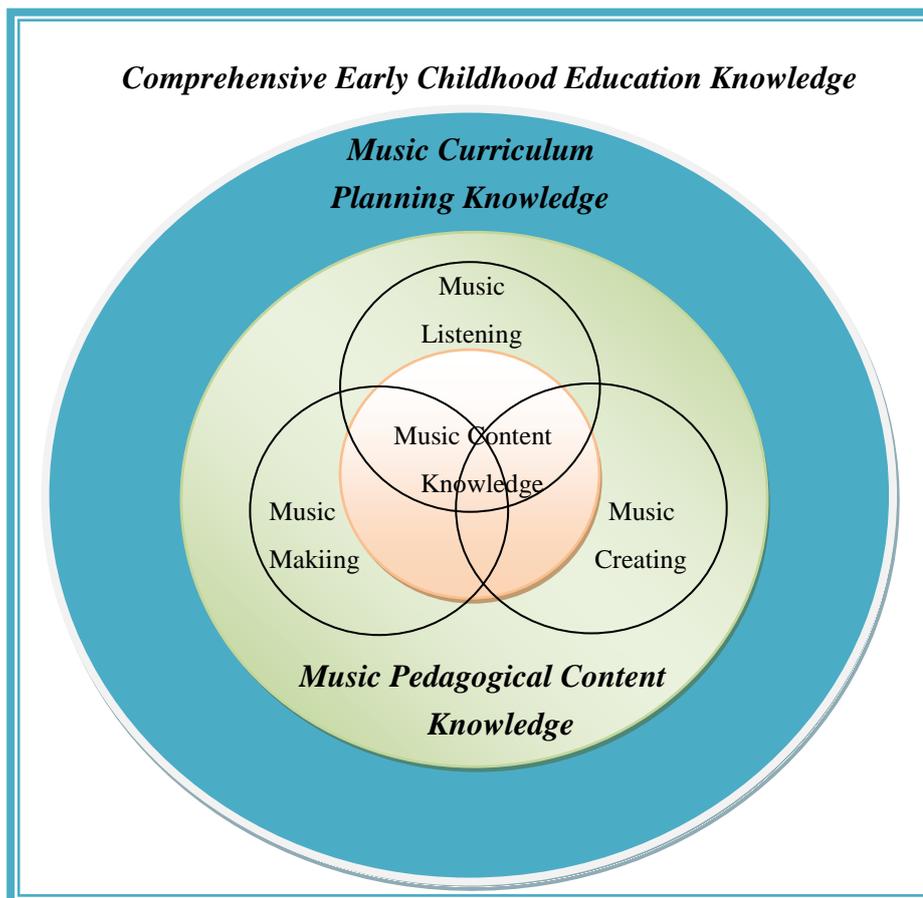


Figure 7.1 illustrates the relationships of music curriculum planning knowledge, music pedagogical content knowledge and music content knowledge, as well as comprehensive

or generic early childhood education understanding and practices. Musical content is the centre and foundational to a teacher's knowledge. Pedagogical content knowledge – including music listening, making and creating as bridges to musical concepts – is the middle circle. Curriculum knowledge and its planning is the outer part of one's music competences and include the full range of designing after understanding subject content and pedagogical skills. Finally, the outer square represents general or broad early childhood education as the umbrella that all music teaching and learning is within. The following sections explore: comprehensive early childhood education knowledge; music curriculum planning knowledge; music pedagogical content knowledge; and music content knowledge (competences in Figure 7.1).

Comprehensive early childhood education knowledge

Early childhood music professional learning should be the balance between general education, early childhood education knowledge and specific music subject knowledge.

Teachers need both theoretical and practical understanding and knowledge about all aspects of early education as suggested by Shulman's model of teacher knowledge (Shulman, 1987) according to most of the early childhood stakeholders in this research.

Teachers who have generic subject knowledge may not be proficient at music teaching.

The early childhood stakeholders did not identify with the idea of replacing early childhood teachers with music-trained specialists; this position was based on a lack of

comprehensive early childhood education knowledge. Without understandings of general child development, learning and teaching, nor classroom management skills to work with a group of children, music-trained specialists probably could not effectively teach early childhood music. It was believed that teachers firstly need comprehensive early childhood education knowledge in order to facilitate children's broad development; then, refining one's music teaching could take place via effective music professional learning.

Music curriculum planning knowledge

Curriculum planning knowledge informs teachers actual planning and their conducting of appropriate music activities. Because integrated curriculum planning across other subjects (not music) is stated in the Government curriculum guideline (EDB, 2006a), teachers only need prerequisite procedural and pedagogical knowledge for a successful transition from a separate-subject to a multi-disciplinary approach. They also need multiple levels of planning and sufficient music knowledge and understanding about children's development. Without music subject structure, theory and ideas as the foundation, adding it to integrated curriculum planning may well be shallow and fragmented. Therefore, curriculum knowledge should form the core part of any music professional learning sessions so that teachers will be able to move from subject-centered to interdisciplinary curriculum.

Music pedagogical content knowledge

Music teaching demands the integration of key musical concepts, ideas, structure and principles into everyday activities in the classroom. Thus, teachers need certain pedagogical abilities such as music listening, music making and music creating. Music listening is fundamental to music learning while music making and creating are dominant music activities in children's music classroom (for details refer to back to Chapter Two).

Music content knowledge

Professional music teachers or musicians are required to be proficient in musical concepts, which include music theory, aural skills, music history and performance skills (Gould, 2009). A broad understanding of overall musical concepts (refer to Chapter Two, Table 2.1) would support teachers' understanding music materials and their placement in classrooms; and so, musical concepts ought to be a major component of music professional learning for early childhood teachers.

SUMMARY

Chapter Seven included summarized findings from Chapters Four to Six, with some discussion of broad ideas and issues. Implications from study findings related to music

professional learning for early childhood teachers were also discussed. The findings and literature contributed to the development of a framework of learner's music professional learning for early childhood teachers is presented in detail in the next chapter.

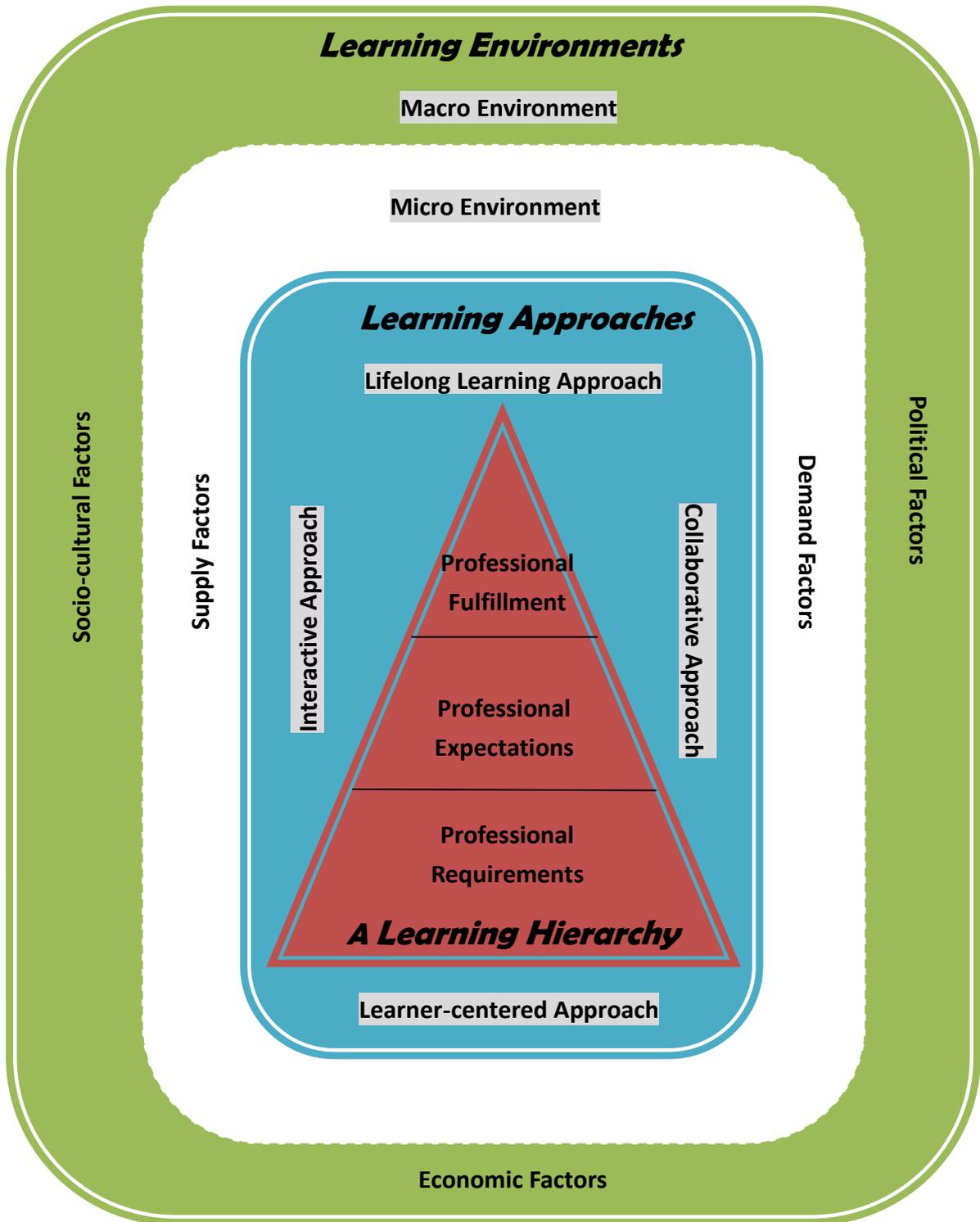
Chapter Eight

Creating a music professional learning trio framework

INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to present a holistic framework for designing and supporting early childhood music professional learning opportunities for teachers. The framework was developed to address more fully the continuous professional learning needs of Hong Kong early childhood teachers based on the research findings reported in previous chapters. “A music professional learning trio framework” is the title of this framework and it offers a comprehensive approach to early childhood music professional learning; it combines a constructivist and social constructivist approach with andragogy as the epistemological position. “Trio” is a metaphor of a musical form which comprises three singers or musical instruments in a musical composition and each play equal and important parts to produce a rich music ensemble. In this research study, “trio” was adopted to depict the interactions and perhaps contestations of three educational components – learning environments, learning approaches and learning hierarchy – that shape music professional learning for early childhood teachers. Figure 8.1 illustrates the music professional learning trio framework; and below each aspect of the framework is explored and explained.

Figure 8.1 A Music Professional Learning Trio Framework



1. Learning environments

Learning is not simply a program or a course in which a person enrolls. It is embedded within the social environment. The learning environment directs, if not dictates, what learning should take place. This is particularly true when professional learning is to address an individual teacher's role or workplace; this aspect evolved in response to the influences of both the macro environment and the micro environment.

1.1. Macro environment

Macro environment refers to broad and extensive external influences. It embraces forces in relation to political, economic, socio-cultural and technological aspects as mentioned in Chapter Two. However, professional music learning in early childhood education is not technologically driven and participants in the research were less concerned about technological forces that may directly affect learning; so, to do justice to the research, technological forces were excluded. Thus the predominant forces of the macro environment embrace socio-cultural, political and economic factors.

Socio-cultural factors

As explained earlier, Hong Kong is basically a Chinese society though it was once a British colony. Over 95 per cent of its population is Chinese and life is deeply influenced by Confucius belief as mentioned in Chapter Two. Music used to be attached with high value to maintain harmony in society advocated by Confucius, thus being highly regarded as an endowed talent within individuals. On the other hand, Hong Kong Chinese parents exploit education as an important tool for their children to achieve life success and put a lot of emphasis on their children's academic excellence and attaining outstanding results in public examinations. The function of music as a catalyst for social harmony subsided to the "education-for-upward-mobility" discourse over time. Though there has been an emphasis on well-balanced early childhood education, the contestation of different discourses, such as "academic success" and "education-for-upward-mobility", which are rooted in Confucianism, has created a level or layer of second-class learning which is often known as "minor subjects". Music is one of these minor subjects; and it is viewed as supplementary and for adding fun to academic learning. As music is not the emphasis of the school curriculum, practicing teachers are neither encouraged nor supported to seek further music professional learning to improve their music competence.

Political factors

Education reform has been the major political factor in Hong Kong. This profound and influential reform, followed by a review, intended to change the educational culture of Hong Kong including bringing a fundamental change of early childhood and music education. The Hong Kong Government intended to raise the status of early childhood education by raising teachers' entry teaching qualifications and encouraging teachers to pursue further studies, including music.

Economic factors

The wider income gap coupled with a lower birth rate pushed demands for higher quality provision of early childhood education. The birth rate in Hong Kong is one of the lowest in the world (less than one child is born per household). It is rather common in Hong Kong that children at the age of two start going to the best early childhood schools. Parents, especially those who are well-educated and can afford to pay higher tuitions fees, are inspired to send their children to schools with academic excellence while providing well-balanced education, including areas such as music.

The influences of the macro environment including socio-cultural, political and economic factors are blended in society. All these impacts are seen as important

external forces in the music professional learning framework and form the outer circle of the framework. These broad influences have positive or negative attributes to the development of the professional learning for teachers, in relation to different roles and responsibilities to create and set the scenes for the development of music professional learning.

1.2. Micro environment

Micro environment refers to a smaller scale or individual level of external influences. In this research, the micro environment reflected both supply factors and demand factors.

Supply factors

As mentioned in the previous chapters, music (professional) learning for early childhood teachers was provided by formal institutions and informal organizations. However, it was noted that the music training provided was considered to be inadequate, in terms of quantity and quality as mentioned in Chapters Four and Six, and there was concern about the quality of professional learning offered by informal organizations.

Demand factors

Demand is the most influential force that results in supply or not. Direct demand for music professional learning comes from early childhood teachers, with indirect demand based around early childhood schools and parents. Teachers are considered to have the front role in music teaching and they also create the direct demand for music professional learning. Teachers' inadequate music competence and teaching effectiveness, coupled with their insufficient music background does affect their desire for improving their music teaching abilities. Early childhood schools do not actually engage in music professional learning but they influence their teachers seeking or not seeking professional learning. Parents create another indirect demand or lack of it, and this is a powerful force influencing whether music professional learning is developed and presented or not. As mentioned in the previous chapter, parents' view of quality music education to nurture children's full potential significantly influences the focus of early childhood schools and, ultimately, the focus of teachers' professional learning.

Supply and demand factors are an economical concept that creates another layer of external environment influencing the framework of music professional learning. It outlines teachers' needs and the provisions of professional learning. They also provide better information for the development of music professional learning.

2. Learning approaches

Incorporating learners' preferred, most effective and sustainable way of learning professionally assists with attaining learning goals and gaining experience. The most effective music professional learning approaches link with adults' learning styles and incorporate exploration of their personal concerns, as well as consideration of children's music developmental needs. Following the research study, four learning approaches seemed to facilitate better music professional learning: lifelong learning, interactive learning, collaborative learning and learner-centeredness.

2.1.Lifelong learning approach

A lifelong learning approach is connected to the utilitarian view of the education system when Government promoted continuous or ongoing learning to support economic development in Hong Kong. Thus, lifelong learning refers to a person's initial education and subsequent continuous learning with different learning aspects throughout one's professional career. After completing initial professional education qualifications, early childhood teachers faced the major change in early childhood education under Hong Kong's education reform. In order to catch up and stay in touch with the current educational ideas, materials and methods, lifelong learning is the way

for teachers to fulfill these ongoing professional challenges. Music professional learning as part of early childhood teachers' professional careers is the focus here in response to this changing society.

2.2. Interactive learning approach

Interactive learning approach refers to both the style and process of pre-service professional teacher training courses/programs and of music professional learning opportunities for practicing early childhood teachers.

Interactive style

Interactive style in a music professional learning module can help adult learners maintain interest, motivation and participation in music concept building and also internalize music concepts via hands-on, active, involvement activities. It also helps teachers to experience the nature of music learning from the perspective of children.

Interactive process

Interactive learning approach also refers to the connection with other people during a music professional learning session. The interactive approach evolves as an attitude of teaching. Teachers do not focus on passing knowledge to children, but establish a

learning environment or rapport for children to interact with the teachers as well as with other children to construct knowledge. It is especially suitable for music learning when interactive activities, such as music and movement and musical games can be adopted to promote learning and teaching. Children can be actively engaged in the learning and teaching process.

2.3. Collaborative learning approach

Collaborative learning approach applies to early childhood teachers in their professional learning to further acquire music knowledge and skills to fulfill teachers' aspiration for expanding their effective music teaching as mentioned in Chapter Two. Early childhood teachers acquire music knowledge and skills through collaboration with their peers (other early childhood teachers) in group discussions and observation, through interactions with mentors' support and through professional educators' guidance.

2.4. Learner-centered approach

Learner-centered approach is also considered an effective way of learning that helps teachers more actively participate truly in meaningful learning. Early childhood teachers' music backgrounds, prior experiences and individual interests can be

sources for better meeting each teacher's unique learning needs.

Adult preferred and research based learning approaches are a positive attribute to the development of music professional learning. Learning approaches bridge the external influences and lead into professional level. With a suitable learning environment in place, these learning approaches play an important role when designing professional learning for teachers.

3. A learning hierarchy

Early childhood teachers' professional learning needs can be portrayed in a hierarchy (Figure 8.1). This learning hierarchy is represented in the shape of a pyramid. The learning hierarchy helps us understand early childhood teachers' learning from or at three levels. In the model, the teacher as professional is presented by moving up one level at a time, with the largest and fundamental level at the bottom being "professional requirements"; the above second level represents one's "professional expectations" and the third top level represents one's "professional fulfillment".

3.1. Professional requirements

A professional requirement is the passport to a career in early childhood education. At the time of this study, the Hong Kong Government had set the entry-teaching

requirement as the Certificate in Kindergarten Teacher Education (three years full-time or equivalent part-time teacher training offered by government-accredited teacher training institutions). The research findings showed many teachers' major concern with meeting this new basic and generic requirement. Although quantity and quality of music training within this basic professional qualification was considered limited, these fundamentals prepared teachers with basic abilities to teach music in early childhood classrooms.

3.2. Professional expectations

Professional expectations refer to teachers' perceptions of what society wants from them and their responses to meet the quality needs of education through all different means of upgrading their professional abilities. For early childhood teachers living in Hong Kong, pursuing professional excellence through continuing professional learning is almost their only choice if they are committed to furthering their professionalism. In Hong Kong, teachers are expected to have learned and be highly competent but to continue strengthening their teaching. Many early childhood teachers who have met initial professional requirements may be affected by external influences.

3.3. Professional fulfillment

This level of being a professional pertains to early childhood teachers' full potential and desire with self-motivation to obtain higher quality music professional learning and then undertake music teaching of a greater standard. Although many teachers still struggle with professional expectations or even basic/initial professional qualifications, some teachers exceed these and are willing to reach for higher music competence and grow through professional learning even when there is no external support. There is a profound challenge for early childhood teachers to reach this higher destination of learning and so achieving better professional fulfillment. Professional fulfillment is a way forward for many early childhood teachers and an aspiration which creates motivation and vision for early childhood teachers' professional learning odyssey.

In this framework, teachers' personal professional needs are bounded by the basic qualification, social expectation and their view of self-fulfillment. A learning hierarchy is the core part in the framework to understand teachers' personal professional development, especially in music learning. With these external learning environments and appropriate learning approaches' influences, teachers' professional learning moves forward as the learning hierarchy.

SUMMARY

In Chapter Eight I presented a framework of music professional learning for early childhood teachers. A music professional learning trio model is a framework with three broad components: learning environments, learning approaches and a learning hierarchy. These three aspects interact with each other and comprise a complicated process of learning; the model provides hints for more effectively developing ongoing music professional learning of practicing early childhood teachers over time. A final review of the whole study and the research questions, as well as an exploration of the role and responsibility options for early childhood stakeholders, with suggestions for possible future research, are presented in the next Chapter Nine.

Chapter Nine

A further pathway for early childhood music professional learning for teachers

INTRODUCTION

With the framework for early childhood music professional learning presented in Chapter Eight, this chapter commences with an overview of the research study, reviewing the research study questions, and follows with some role and responsibility options for early childhood stakeholders. The final section outlines possibilities for future research, then a final note from the researcher.

1. Overview of the research

The research conducted for this thesis explored the professional learning needs of early childhood teachers in music education. The purpose of the research was to gain a broad insight into the perspectives and understandings of early childhood stakeholders about early childhood education in Hong Kong, with a focus on music teaching and learning. This was a mixed method research study where the researcher reviewed global and local literature before a range of empirical data was gathered through a three-phased research study. The findings from the three phases were

presented separately in Chapters Four to Six while the analysis of the three-phase findings were presented in Chapter Seven. A music professional learning framework is developed and presented in Chapter Eight and the final revision of the research study and exploration for further research directions are suggested in the last Chapter Nine.

2. Reviewing the research study questions

The research was expressed through a main research question and three guiding questions. These three questions were formulated to help address the main one. The following section aims to review how this research study answered each guiding question and ultimately the main question.

Main research question:

What kinds of professional learning would empower Hong Kong early childhood teachers and facilitate their higher competence of quality music teaching for young children?

The mixed method was used, including both qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques, together with the review of global and local literature, with the aim of addressing the research questions. A range of empirical data was gathered in a three-phased research study to collect related data. The following three guiding

questions explore three research aspects specifically and all these data sources contribute to the big picture of the research study.

2.1. Guiding question one

From the perspective of Hong Kong practicing early childhood teachers, principals and teacher educators, what kinds of music training already exist in the professional teacher training institutions or private sectors for early childhood teachers? What are the implications for teachers' continuous professional learning of music?

Early childhood stakeholders in three focus group interviews including early childhood teachers, early childhood principals and lecturers, plus one-on-one interviews with prominent leaders of early childhood education were carried out during Phases 1 and 3 to explore the music training that existed in Hong Kong professional teacher training institutions or private sectors for early childhood teachers. Also, questionnaires in Phase 2 for early childhood teachers were also used to collect more related data and broad information about early childhood teachers' music training in Hong Kong.

From the data, music provisions in both formal and informal early childhood professional teacher training institutions/sectors were reviewed. Related strategies, approaches and competences were explored to better meet teachers' continuous music professional learning needs (refer to Chapter Seven) and later contribute to the development of a framework of music professional learning for early childhood

teachers.

2.2. Guiding question two

From the perspective of Hong Kong practicing early childhood teachers, principals and teacher educators, what kinds of early childhood music education programs for young children already exist in early childhood schools? What are the implications for early childhood teachers' continuous professional learning in order to provide higher quality music learning for young children?

Using the same methodology as above, early childhood music education programs for young children in early childhood schools were also reviewed and investigated from the perspective of early childhood principals, teachers and teacher educators.

Although music teaching was one of the “second class” and minor subjects in early childhood schools due to the academic emphasis in the Hong Kong education system, awareness, motivation and expectation of quality early childhood education through global and local education reforms inform the continuous and further music professional learning opportunities for early childhood teachers (refer to Chapter Seven).

2.3. Guiding question three

What are the ongoing music professional learning needs of Hong Kong early childhood teachers?

Throughout the research study, the ongoing music professional learning needs of Hong Kong early childhood teachers were also explored. Approaches, strategies, styles and competences of music professional learning were explored and suggested through the perspective of early childhood stakeholders.

A music professional learning framework (refer to Chapter Eight) was developed to offer an understanding of the professional learning needs which can empower Hong Kong early childhood teachers and facilitate teachers' higher competence of quality music teaching for young children.

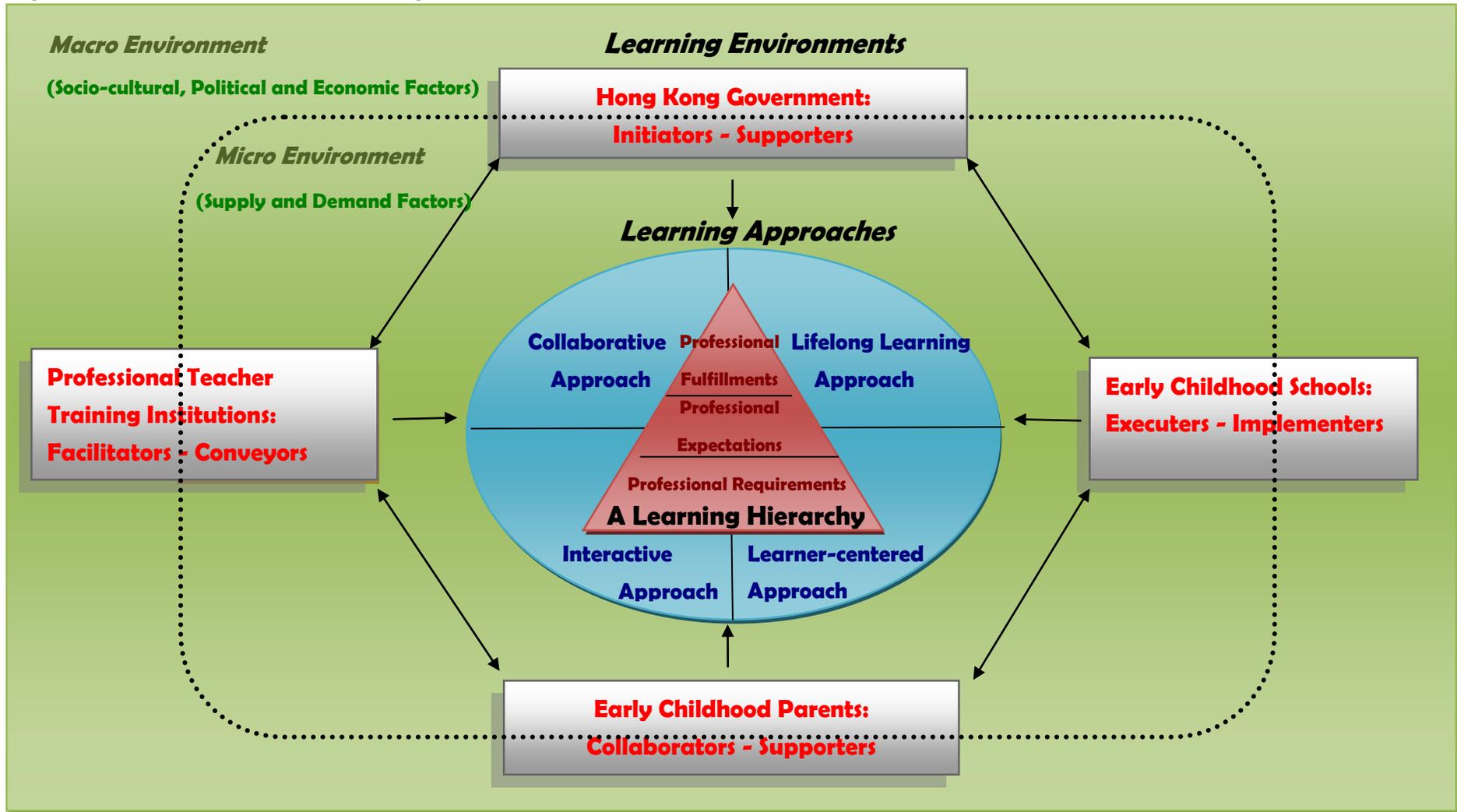
With this understanding, early childhood major stakeholders including the Hong Kong Government, professional teacher training institutions, early childhood schools and parents have important roles and responsibilities. For example, developing strategies about how they might segment and position themselves for contributing to the success of music professional learning.

3. Some role and responsibility options for early childhood stakeholders

As the provision of music professional learning involves many Hong Kong early childhood stakeholders, their specific positions and characteristics can significantly influence having a favorable learning environment for the success of this professional learning. These early childhood stakeholders are variously involved in the process of

setting up, developing, facilitating, implementing, supporting and advocating early childhood music professional learning. As a way forward with using the “music professional learning trio model”, options are suggested about specific roles and responsibilities for each early childhood stakeholder. The following Figure 9.1 illustrates the role and responsibility options of four early childhood stakeholders in the music professional learning trio framework: Hong Kong Government: indicators/supporters; professional teacher training institutions and lecturers: facilitators/conveyors; early childhood schools and principals: executers/implementers; and early childhood parents: collaborators/supporters.

Figure 9.1 Music Professional Learning Trio in Practice



3.1. Hong Kong Government and Education Bureau: initiators and supporters

The Government is usually responsible for the formulation of policies and the introduction of legislation to ensure that quality education is being provided for Hong Kong's young people. The Education Bureau in the Hong Kong Government oversees the implementation of education programs that are designed to bring these program objectives to fruition (EDB, 2010b). Traditionally, early childhood education in Hong Kong has been governed by market forces with little engagement from the Hong Kong Government. Recently, the Hong Kong Government has taken an active role by initiating and conducting education reform and review. This has brought about a shift of paradigm and value in early childhood education as the corner stone for lifelong learning, and music plays an integral component of quality early childhood education. However, this top down policy creates the dichotomy of prescribing and subscribing the value of music professional learning. In order to actually support music professional learning and put the policy into practice, first of all, the Hong Kong Government should take an active role in promoting early childhood music education by confirming its educational value in cultivating children's holistic development. Second, Government should directly fund early childhood schools rather than the parents. When the latter happens, the survival of early childhood schools will not solely

depend on parents. Then both early childhood principals and teachers would be more empowered to exercise their professionalism in implementing a truly quality education that also values music. The place of music professional learning as stated in the education reform agenda would then stand a chance of becoming a reality. Third, Government should then initiate direct funding for professional teacher training institutions to create appropriate and effective music professional learning for practicing teachers. The Government should take the initiative to support music professional learning based on the concepts represented in the framework of the music professional learning trio model.

3.2. Professional teacher training institutions and lecturers: facilitators and conveyors

Professional teacher training institutions have a major and special role preparing prospective and practicing teachers within their teacher education programs. With the support from the Hong Kong Government, professional early childhood teacher training institutions should be able to carry out this mission through also creating ongoing effective and appropriate music professional learning for teachers. Professional teacher training institutions should be responsible for conveying higher quality, suitable music knowledge and pedagogical skills for teachers. With appropriate learning content and approaches of professional

learning, such education would not only facilitate teachers' music learning abilities but also strengthen recognition of teachers' qualifications and provide greater quality assurance to the early childhood schools where teachers are employed. In short, professional teacher training institutions and lecturers ought to be excellent conveyors and facilitators within this music professional learning framework.

3.3. Early childhood schools and principals: executers and implementers

Early childhood schools are in a front line position and directly involved within children's overall emotional, physical, intellectual and aesthetic development. With an the education goal for music set by the Government, early childhood schools are responsible for executing it through providing relevant daily music learning opportunities for children and for supporting teachers to implement this quality music teaching. With a consistent direction from Government and professional teacher training institutions, early childhood schools and principals should be able to hold on to their professionalism and set a stronger direction for music curriculum and related teaching practices. Early childhood schools are also the implementers and executers who allocate enough resources and provide

teachers with suitable professional learning opportunities for benefiting children's music learning.

3.4. Early childhood parents: collaborators and supporters

Currently, early childhood parents are powerful customers in early childhood schools in Hong Kong. The way they appraise their children's achievement in academic learning heavily influences schools' education directions. In order to change the culture of early childhood education and more fully nurture children's total development, it is important for parents to redefine their value of music within children's development and education. It is important for parents to play a collaborative role and work with teachers and schools as a team to encourage quality music learning and teaching for the benefit of children. Parents' supporting roles in helping schools and teachers to continue seeking better teaching quality by reflecting, evaluating and supporting schools' curriculum and teachers' teaching can help teachers set a clearer direction for their professional learning.

4. Possibilities for future research

After going through this research process, there are a number of areas worthy of further research. The following opportunities for more research could contribute to

further the lifelong development of early childhood music professional learning.

First, further research could involve direct classroom observation through case studies (Gerring, 2007; Yin, 2003) to find out actual music provision in early childhood classrooms from the teachers, principals and researchers' perspectives. Case studies have many valid and important educational purposes and they also permit researchers to study the specific and unique processes of early childhood music learning in naturalistic settings. They are suitable to provide more detailed and precise evidence than other data sources through classroom observation. Case studies could improve educators' understandings and providing better models for improving teaching. This is an especially appropriate research method when little research has been done in this area in Hong Kong.

Second, participatory action research (Krimerman, 2001; Ozanne and Saatcioglu, 2008; Savin-Baden and Wimpenny, 2007) about music professional learning is another approach that could induce effective participation and a change of music teaching practices. Action research is in the context of focused collaborator efforts to improve the quality of a program and its performance. It is typically designed and conducted by practitioners who cooperatively plan and analyze data to improve their own practice. This approach could greatly contribute to increasing teachers' music teaching standards through experiential involvement.

Moreover, when action research is done by a team of early childhood teachers, it also brings out collaborative or cooperative efforts in the field.

Third, further research is suggested to explore music professional learning expectations for pre-service student-teachers with varied music backgrounds. The learning needs of pre-service student-teachers are different from in-service practicing teachers, as they are novices to the field. Some research concerning pre-service teachers' psychological needs including their stress and burnout (Austin and Miksza, 2011; Barnes, 2010; Ryan, 2009) in music teaching has been done. Further research can explore how their beliefs and attitudes toward music can influence their music teaching. It is also worthwhile researching and suggesting new ideas and/or ways to provide initial training for future early childhood teachers.

Fourth, further research is also suggested to explore music professional learning related to Chinese music in early childhood music curriculum. Although Hong Kong people are deeply influenced by Confucius, western educational styles and curricula dominate schools and universities (Chen-Hafteck and Xu, 2008) because of the British colony background of Hong Kong. Children often learn English songs or western classical music in the music classroom (Cheung, 2004). Hong Kong people ignored Chinese music and did not know much about

traditional Chinese nursery rhymes (Chen-Hafteck and Xu, 2008) until the political change of Hong Kong. Chinese music has been introduced to the curriculum in recent years generally. It is worth exploring the effects and impact of the current effort in incorporating more Chinese traditional culture in music professional learning.

A FINAL NOTE

Though it may be too early to draw definitive outcomes, this research study on early childhood music professional learning does point to an initial set of conditions that can serve as a starting point toward the re-development of early childhood music professional learning. The suggested framework and stakeholder roles are in accord with contemporary literature and the research findings. This research suggested that favorable learning environments, appropriate learning approaches and a learning hierarchy broadly influence music professional learning for early childhood teachers as adult learners. These professional teachers have been greatly influenced by Chinese Confucius belief, and at the same time affected by global changes and the unique socio-cultural, economic growth of a city like Hong Kong. This collective framework for a new music professional learning lens has been developed in the midst of efforts to increase quality education through a

series of reforms. The roles and responsibilities for different stakeholders of early childhood education add to the complicated research topic. If all these elements are in place, it is likely that more appropriate music professional learning will emerge; and it has the potential to expand early childhood teachers' music competence as well as to result in children reaching their fullest potential through effective music teaching.

References

- ABRSM (Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music) (2011). Retrieved from www.abrsm.org/en/home.
- Adamson, B. and Morris, P. (2000). Changing Hong Kong's school. In Adamson, B., Kwan, T. and Chan, K.K. (eds), *Changing the Curriculum. The Impact of Reform on Primary Schooling in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 195–215.
- Applefield, J.M., Huber, R., and Moallen, M. (2001). Constructivism in theory and practice: toward a better understanding. *High School Journal*, 84 (2): 35–53.
- Aschroft, K. (2005). *Emerging Models of Quality, Relevance and Standard in Ethiopia's Higher Education Institutions*. Proceedings of 3rd Conference on Private Higher Education Institutions. Addis Ababa: St Mary's Printing Press, pp. 15–36.
- Austin, J.R. and Miksza, P.J. (2011). Trying on teaching: effects of a precollegiate music teacher recruitment program. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*. Available at <http://jmt.sagepub.com/content/early/2011/02/22/1057083711401712.full.pdf+html> (retrieved January 2012).
- Ball, D.L., Thames, M.H. and Phelps, G. (2008). Content knowledge for teaching. What makes it special? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 59 (5): 389–407.
- Ballantyne, J. (2005). Effectiveness of pre-service music teacher education programs: perceptions of early career music teachers. Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, Centre for Innovation in Education.
- Ballantyne, J. (2006). Reconceptualising pre-service teacher education courses for music teachers: the importance of pedagogical content knowledge and skills and professional knowledge and skills. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 26: 37–49.
- Barnes, G.V. (2010). Teaching music: the first year. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 185 (summer): 63–76.
- Barry, N.H. (2008). The role of integrated curriculum in music teacher education. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 18 (1): 28–38.
- Baumgartner, L.M., Lee, M.Y., Birden, S. and Flowers, D. (2003). *Adult Learning Theory: A Primer. Information Series Center on Education and Training for Employment*. College of Education, The Ohio State University.
- Berk, L.E. (2008). *Child Development* (8th edn). London: Allyn and Bacon.

- Blair, D. (2009). Stepping aside: teaching in a student-centered music classroom. *Music Educators Journal*, 95 (3): 42–45.
- Bolam, R. and McMahon, A. (2004). Literature, definitions and models: towards a conceptual map. In Day, C. and Sachs, J. (eds), *International Handbook on the Continuing Professional Learning of Teachers*. England: Open University Press.
- Borko, H. (2004). Professional development and teacher learning: mapping the Terrain. *Educational Researcher*, 33 (8): 3–15.
- Boud, D. and Middleton, H. (2003). Learning from others at work: communities of practice and informal learning. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 15 (5): 194–202.
- Bresler, L. (1993). Music in a double-bind: instruction by non-specialists in elementary schools. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 115: 1–13.
- Brophy, T.S. (2001). Developing improvisation in general music classes. *Music Educators Journal*, 88 (1): 34–42.
- Brown, A. and Danaher, P. (2008). Towards collaborative professional learning in the first year early childhood teacher education practicum: issues in negotiating the multiple interests of stakeholder feedback. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 36 (2): 147–161.
- Brown, R., Care, E. and Deans, J. (2007). The link program: investigating the relevance and implications of preschool theory and practice for primary school Teacher professional development. *Australian Research in Early Childhood Education Journal*, 14 (2).
- Brownlee, J., Petriwskyj, A., Thorpe, K., Stacey, P. and Gibson, M. (2011). Changing personal epistemologies in early childhood pre-service teacher using an integrated teaching programme. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 30 (4): 477–490.
- Bruner, J.S. (1983). *Child's Talk: Learning to Use Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bullard, J. (2003). Constructivism: does your practice match your conceptual framework? *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 24: 157–162.
- Bullard, J. and Hitz, R. (1997). Early childhood education and adult education: bridging the cultures. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 18 (1): 15–22.
- Burnard, P. (2000). Examining experiential differences between improvisation and composition in children's music-making. *British Journal of Music Educators*, 17 (3): 227–245.

- Burns, R.B. (2000). *Introduction to Research Methods* (3rd edn). Melbourne: Longman Cheshire Pty Limited.
- Butler, A., Lind, V.R. and McKoy, C.L. (2007). Equity and access in music education: conceptualizing culture as barriers to and supports for music learning. *Music Education Research*, 9 (2): 241–253.
- Caffarella, R. and Merriam, S.B. (2000). Linking the individual learner to the context of adult learning. In Wilson, A.L. and Hayes, E.R. (eds), *Handbook of adult and continuing education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 55–70.
- Caldwell, B.J. (2006). *Re-imagining Educational Leadership*. Camberwell, VIC: ACER Press.
- Campbell, L.M, Campbell, B. and Dickinson, D. (2003). *Teaching and Learning Through Multiple Intelligences* (3rd edn). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Campbell, M.R., Thompson, L.K. and Barrett, J.R. (2010). *Constructing a Personal Orientation to Music Teaching*. New York: Routledge.
- Campbell, P.S. and Scott-Kassner, C. (2009). *Music in Childhood: From Pre-school Through the Elementary Grades* (3rd edn). New York: Schirmer Books.
- CDC (Curriculum Development Council) (1992). *Music Activities in Kindergarten*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Education Department.
- CDC (Curriculum Development Council) (2002). *Arts Education. Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1–Secondary 3)*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong SAR Government.
- Chan, C.W. and Leong, S. (2005). Educational reform and early childhood music education in Hong Kong: perspectives of pre-school principals. Paper Presented at the ASME XV National Conference – A Celebration of Voices. Melbourne: University of Melbourne.
- Chan, C.W. and Leong, S. (2006). Innovative vision for early childhood music teacher education in Hong Kong: perspectives of pre-school principals, teachers and pre-school teacher educators on education reform. In W.L. Sims and R. Tahir (eds), *Proceedings of the 27th World Conference of the International Society of Music Education* [CD-ROM]. Kuala Lumpur: University of Technology Mara.
- Chan, K.S. and Chan, L.L. (2002). Reforming ECE in Hong Kong: meeting the challenges. In Chan, K.S. and Mellor, E.J. (eds), *International Developments in Early Childhood Services*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc. pp. 81–96.
- Chan, K.S. and Chan, L.L. (2003). Early childhood education in Hong Kong and

- its challenges. *Early Child Development and Care*, 173 (1): 7–17.
- Chau, Y.L. (2003). Facilitating children's musical connections in Taiwan: rethinking the music curriculum for pre-service early childhood educators. *Early Childhood Connections*, 9 (1): 28–34.
- Cheng, C.C.H. (2006). Vouchers may lead to a revolution in our schoolrooms. *South China Morning Post*, 13 October. Available at www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/menuitem.06f0b401397a029733492d9253a0a0a0/?vgnnextoid=e9a859b157821110VgnVCM100000360a0a0aRCRD&s=Archive (retrieved December 2010).
- Cheng, K. (2007). A study on applying focus group interviews in education. *Reading Improvement*, 44 (4): 194–198.
- Cheng, K.M., Jin, S.H. and Gu, X.B. (1999). From training to education. Lifelong learning in China. *Comparative Education*, 35 (2): 119–129.
- Cheng, Y.C. and Chow, K.W. (2002). Systems of teacher education: international perspectives and future developments. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education and Development*, 5 (2): 1–28.
- Chen-Hafteck, L. and Xu, Z. (2008). Pulling the river: the interactions of local and global influences in Chinese early childhood music education. *Art Education Policy Review*, 109 (3): 9–16.
- Cheung, J. (2004). Mapping music education research in Hong Kong. *Psychology of Music*, 32 (3): 343–356.
- Colardyn, D. and Bjornavold, J. (2004). Validation of formal, non-Formal and informal learning: policy and practices in EU Member States. *European Journal of Education*, 39 (1): 69–89.
- Colwell, R. (2006). Music teacher education in this century: Part I. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 108 (1): 15–27.
- Conner, M. (2000). *Andragogy and Pedagogy*. Available at www.learnativity.com/addragogy.html (retrieved September 2009).
- Cook, S. (1995). Yue Ji. Record of music: introduction, translation, notes and commentary. *Asian Music*, 26 (1): 1–90.
- Cranton, P. (1994). *Understanding and Promoting Transformative Learning: A Guide for Educators of Adults*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research Design. Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (2nd edn). London: Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (2nd edn). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. and Plano Clark, V.L. (2007). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Creswell, J.W., Plano Clark, V.L., Gutmann, M.L. and Hanson, W.E. (2003). Advanced mixed methods research designs. In Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (eds), *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 209–240.
- Cribbin, J. and Kennedy, P. (2002). *Lifelong Learning in Action. Hong Kong Practitioners' Perspectives*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- CSD (Census and Statistics Department) (2011). *Hong Kong 2001 Population Census Summary Results*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government Printer. Available at www.censtatd.gov.hk/major_projects/2001_population_census/summary_results_of_2001_population_census/index.jsp (retrieved October 2011).
- Cullen, J. and Hedges, H. (2005). Subject knowledge in early childhood curriculum and pedagogy: beliefs and practices. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 6 (1): 66–79.
- Cunningham, D.D. (2006). The seven principles of constructivist teaching: a case study. Available at www.odu.edu/educ/act/journal/vol17no1/cunningham.pdf (retrieved February 2008).
- Custodero, L.A. (2002). Seeking challenge, finding skill, flow experience and music education. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 103 (3): 3–9.
- Cutieta, R.A. and Stauffer, S.L. (2005). Listening reconsidered. In Elliott, D.J. (ed.), *Praxial Music Education: Reflections and Dialogues*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Teacher quality and student achievement: a review of state policy evidence. *Educational Policy Analysis Archives*, 8 (1). Available at http://cw.marianuniversity.edu/mreardon/755/document%20repository/LDH_1999.pdf (retrieved March 2009).
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful Teacher Education: Lessons From Exemplary Programs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Darling-Hammond, L. and Bransford, J. (eds) (2005). *Preparing Teachers For a Changing World: What Teachers Should Learn and Be Able to Do*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Day, C. (2000). Teachers in the twenty-first century: time to renew the vision. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 6 (1): 101–115.
- Day, C. and Gu, Q. (2007). Variations in the conditions for teachers' professional learning and development: sustaining commitment and effectiveness over a

- career. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33 (4): 423–443.
- Dees, J.J. (2004). Development of a music curriculum for an early childhood non-music major college level course. Master thesis, Texas Tech University. Available at <http://etd.lib.ttu.edu/theses/available/etd-07022008-31295019476935/unrestricted/31295019476935.pdf> (retrieved January 2011).
- Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. California: Sage.
- De Vaus, D.A (2002). *Surveys in Social Research* (5th edn). London: Allen and Unwin.
- DeVries, R. (2002). What does research on constructivist education tell us about effective schooling? PhD Thesis. Professor and Director Regents' Center for Early Developmental Education. University of Northern Iowa.
- DeVries, R., Zan, B., Hildebrandt, C., Edmiaston, R. and Sales, C. (2002). *Developing Constructivist Early Childhood Curriculum*. New York: Teacher's College Press.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and Education. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. New York: Macmillian.
- Díaz-Maggioli, G. (2004). *Teacher-centered Professional Development*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Dunn, R., Beaudry, J.S. and Klavas, A. (2002). Survey of research on learning styles. *California Journal of Science Education*, 2 (2): 75–98.
- Dunn, R., Thies, A.P and Honigsfeld, A. (2001). *Synthesis of the Dunn and Dunn Learning Style Model Research: Analysis From a Neuropsychological Perspective*. Jamaica, NY: St John's University, Centre for the Study of Learning and Teaching Style.
- Early, D.M., Bryant, D.M., Pianta, R.C, Clifford, R.M., Burchinal, M.R., Ritchie, S., Howes, C. and Barbarin, O. (2006). Are teachers' education, major, and credentials related to classroom quality and children's academic gains in pre-kindergarten? *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 21 (2): 174–195.
- Early, D.M. and Winton, P.J. (2001). Preparing the workforce: early childhood teacher preparation at 2- and 4-year institutions of higher education. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 16 (3): 285–306.
- EC (Hong Kong Education Commission) (2001). *Reform of the Education System*

- in Hong Kong. Summary.* Hong Kong: Government of HKSAR. Available at www.e-c.edu.hk/eng/reform/index_e.html (retrieved April 2010).
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2006a). *Guide to the Pre-primary Curriculum.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government.
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2006b). Review on Pre-primary education. Press Release. Hong Kong: Hong Kong SAR Government, 10 May.
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2006c). Quality of ECE hinges on pursuit for self-improvement and professionalism. Press Release. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government. Available at www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200605/10/P200605100160.htm (retrieved June 2009).
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2007a). Kindergarten education in Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Hong Kong SAR Government. Available at www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=916&langno=1 (retrieved June 2006).
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2007b). Post-secondary education. Hong Kong: Hong Kong SAR Government. Available at www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=7001&langno=1 (retrieved December 2009).
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2007c). New initiatives in pre-primary education. Hong Kong: Government of HKSAR. *Education Bureau Circular No. 1/2007.* Available at www.edb.gov.hk/UtilityManager/circular/upload/EMBC/EMBC07001E.pdf (retrieved February 2010).
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2008a). The quality of learning and teaching is at the heart of school improvement. Available at [www.edb.gov.hk/FileManager/EN/Content_6387/message%20on%20lo%20from%20pas%20\[qa\].pdf](http://www.edb.gov.hk/FileManager/EN/Content_6387/message%20on%20lo%20from%20pas%20[qa].pdf) (retrieved March 2011).
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2008b). Pre-primary education voucher scheme: Increase investment, enhance quality. Available at www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?langno=1&nodeid=5792 (retrieved January 2009).
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2010a). Continuing education fund. Available at www.sfaa.gov.hk/cef/intro.htm (retrieved January 2011).
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2010b). *Towards a Learning Profession: The Teacher Competencies Framework and the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong SAR Government.

- Available at www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=1308&langno=1 (retrieved February 2010).
- EDB (Hong Kong Education Bureau) (2011). Kindergarten education. Press release and publication. Hong Kong Government. Available at www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=1037&langno=1 (retrieved February 2010).
- Elkind, D. (2001). *The Hurried Child: Growing Up Too Fast Too Soon*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus.
- Elliot, D.J. (2010). Curriculum as professional action. In Elliot, D.J. (ed.). *Music Education for Changing Times*. Landscape: The Arts, Aesthetic and Education. Vol. 7: 163–174. London: Springer.
- Eraut, M. (1994). *Developing Professional Knowledge and Competence*. London: Routledge.
- Feng, Y. (1994). From the imperial examination to the national college entrance examination: the dynamics of political centralism in China's educational enterprise. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Tucson, AZ.
- Fischer, G. (2000). Lifelong learning – more than training. *Journal of Interactive Learning Research*, 11 (3–4): 265–294.
- Fowler, F.J. (1995). *Improving Survey Questions: Design and Evaluation*. London: Sage.
- Fowler, F.J. (2008). *Survey Research Methods* (4th edn). London: Sage.
- Freeman, T. (2006). 'Best practice' in focus group research: making sense of different views. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 56 (5): 491–497.
- Friedman, M. (1955). *The Role of Government in Education*. Available at www.schoolchoices.org/roo/fried1.htm (retrieved December 2010).
- Fung, C.K.H and Lam, C.F. (2008). The pre-primary education voucher scheme of Hong Kong: a promise of quality education provision? *Education Journal*, 36 (1–2): 153–170.
- Fung, C.K.H. and Lam, C.F. (2011). Empowering parents' choice of schools: the rhetoric and reality of how Hong Kong kindergarten parents choose schools under the voucher scheme. *Current Issues in Education*, 14 (1): 1–47.
- Garbett, D. (2003). Science education in early childhood teacher education: putting forward a case to enhance student teachers' confidence and competence. *Research in Science Education*, 33 (4): 467–481.
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of Mind*. New York: Basic Books. Available at www.newhorizons.org/strategies/mi/front_mi.htm (retrieved April 2008).

- Gardner, H. (1993). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (10th edn). New York: Basic Books.
- Garner, A.M. (2009). Singing and moving: teaching strategies for audiation in children. *Music Educators Journal*, 95 (4): 46–50.
- Gerring, J. (2007). *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gilliam, W.S. (2005). Pre-kindergarteners left behind: expulsion rate in state pre-kindergarten system. *FCD Policy Brief Series. No.3*, May. Available at www.fcd-us.org/usr_doc/ExpulsionPolicyBriefy.pdf (retrieved August 2009).
- Goldhaber, D. (2002). The mystery of good teaching. *Education Next*, spring. Available at www.nuatc.org/articles/pdf/mystery_goodteaching.pdf (retrieved May 2009).
- Gordon, E.E. (2003). *A Music Learning Theory for New Born and Young Children*. Chicago: GIA Publication.
- Gould, L.N. (2009). The inner symphony: applying holistic thinking to higher music education. University Honors Program. Paper 128. Available at <http://ecommons.txstate.edu/honorprog/128> (retrieved November 2008).
- Granott, N. (2005). Scaffolding dynamically toward change: previous and new perspectives. *New Ideas in Psychology*, 23 (3): 140–151.
- Grieshaber, S. and Lau, W.C.M. (2010). Scaffolding children’s musical creativity: a case of a kindergarten teacher in Hong Kong. *British Journal of Music Education*, 27 (2): 127–140.
- Gruenhagen, L. M. (2008). Investigating professional development: early childhood music teacher learning in a community of practice. PhD thesis. University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music.
- Hallam, S. (2010). The power of music: its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people. *International Journal of Music Education*, 28 (3): 269–289.
- Hamre, B.K. and Pianta, R.C. (2005). Can instructional and emotional support in the first-grade classroom make a difference for children at risk of school failure? *Child Development*, 76 (5): 949–967.
- Hanushek, E.A., Dean T., Jamison, E.A. and Ludger W. (2008). Education and economic growth: it’s not just going to school but learning that matters. *Education Next*, 8 (2) (Spring): 62–70.
- Hargreaves, A. (2002). *Learning to Change: Teaching Beyond Subjects and Standards*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Harris, I.B. (2011). Conceptions and theories of learning for workplace education. *Extraordinary Learning in the Workplace*, 6 (2): 39–62.
- Haston, W. (2007). Teacher as modeling as an effective teaching strategy. *Music Educators Journal*, 93 (4): 26–30.
- Hedges, H. and Cullen, J. (2005). Subject knowledge in early childhood, curriculum and pedagogy: beliefs and practices. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 6 (1): 66–79.
- Helterbran, V.R. and Fennimore, B.S. (2004). Collaborative early childhood professional development: building from a base of teacher investigation. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 31 (4): 267–271.
- Herrington, T. and Herrington, J. (2005). *Authentic Learning Environments in Higher Education*. USA: Idea Group Inc.
- Hickey, M. (2001). Creativity in the music classroom. *Music Educators Journal*, 88 (1): 17–18.
- Hickman, G.R. (2009). *Leading Organizations: Perspectives of a New Era*. London: Sage.
- Hiebert, A. (1993). Music education/learning opportunities in Hong Kong. *CUHK Education Journal*, 21 (1): 77–85.
- Hirsh, S. and Killon, J. (2009). When educators learn, students learn. Eight principles of professional learning. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 90 (7): 464–469.
- HKADC (Hong Kong Art Development Council) (2006a). *Research Report on the Development of Multi-disciplinary Arts in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government Printer.
- HKADC (Hong Kong Art Development Council) (2006b). *A Decade of Arts Development in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government Printer.
- Ho, C.W.D. (2007). Policy of quality assurance in Hong Kong preschools. *Early Child Development and Care*, 177 (5): 493–505.
- Ho, C.W.D. (2008). Exploring the definitions of quality early childhood programmes in a market-driven context: case studies of two Hong Kong preschools. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 16 (3): 223–236.
- Ho, C.W.D., Campbell-Barr, V. and Leeson, C. (2010). Quality improvement in early years settings in Hong Kong and England. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 18 (3): 243–258.
- Ho, K.K and Yip, K.H. (2003). Lifelong professional development of teachers: a suggestion for the overhaul of INSET. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 22 (5): 533–541.
- Ho, L.S., Morris, P. and Chung, Y. P. (2005). Driving for excellence: an

- introduction to the volume. In Ho, L.S., Morris, P. and Chung, Y.P. (eds), *Education Reform and the Quest for Excellence. The Hong Kong Story*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 1–6.
- Hodkinson, P., Colley, H. and Malcolm, J. (2003). The interrelationships between informal and formal learning. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 15 (7/8): 313–318.
- Holstein, J.A. and Gurbrium, J.F. (2002). Active interviewing. In D. Weinberg (ed.), *Qualitative Research Methods*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 112–126.
- Holton, E.F., Swanson, R.A. and Naquin, S.S. (2001). Andragogy in practice clarifying the andragogical model of adult learning. *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, 14 (1): 118–143.
- Hong Kong SAR Government (2006). *The Policy Address*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government Printer.
- Horsley, M.W. and Bauer, K.A. (2010). Preparing early childhood educators for global education: the implications of prior learning. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 33 (4): 421–436.
- Howes, C., James, J. and Ritchie, S. (2003). Pathways to effective teaching. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 18 (1): 104–120.
- Hsu, C.Y. (2008). Taiwanese early childhood educators' professional development. *Early Child Development and Care*, 178 (3): 259–272.
- Huang, H.M. (2002). Toward constructivism for adult learners in online learning environments. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 33 (1): 27–37.
- Hue, M.T. (2008). The influence of Confucianism: a narrative study of Hong Kong teachers' understanding and practices of school guidance and counseling. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 6 (3): 303–316.
- Hui, E.K.P. (2000). Guidance as a whole school approach in Hong Kong: from remediation to student development. *International Journal of Advancement of Counselling*, 22 (1): 69–82.
- Hui, E.K.P., Sun, R.C.F., Chow, S.S.Y. and Chu, M.H.T. (2011). Explaining Chinese students' academic motivation: filial piety and self - determination. *Educational Psychology*, 31 (3): 377–392.
- Hutchinson, S.R. (2004). Survey research. In deMarrais, K. and Lapan, S.D. (eds), *Foundations for Research: Method of Inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Johnson, R.B. and Onwuegbuzie, A.J. (2004). Mixed methods research: a research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33 (7): 14–26.
- Johnson, R.B., Onwuegbuzie, A.J. and Turner, L.A. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Method Research*, 1 (2):

112–133.

- Jordan-Decarbo, J. and Nelson, J.A. (2002). Music and early childhood education. In Colwell, R. and Richardson, C. (eds), *The New Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 210–242.
- Kan, S.C.F. (2002). Music education in Hong Kong. One of the six life arts. In Cribbin, J. and Kennedy, P. (eds), *Lifelong Learning in Action. Hong Kong Practitioners' Perspectives*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Kelly, S.N. (1998). Preschool classroom teachers' perceptions of useful music skills and understandings. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 46 (3): 374–383.
- Kennedy, K.J. (2005). *Changing Schools for Changing Times: New Directions for the School*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- Kennedy, P. (2002). Learning cultures and learning styles: myth-understandings about adult (Hong Kong) Chinese learners. *International Journal of Life-long Education*, 21 (5): 430–445.
- Kilgallon, P. and Maloney, C. (2003). Early childhood teachers' knowledge of teaching children with disabilities. *Australian Journal of Early Childhood*, 28 (4): 9–13.
- Kim, H.K. and Kemple, K.M. (2011). Is music an active developmental tool or simply a supplement? Early childhood preservice teachers' beliefs about music. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 32 (2): 135–147.
- Kinns, N.B. (2004). Daisyphone: the design and impact of a novel environment for remote group music improvisation. *Proceedings of the 5th Conference on Designing Interactive Systems: Processes, Practices, Methods, and Techniques*. 1–4 August. Cambridge, MA, pp. 135–144.
- Kleiber, P.B. (2004). Focus groups: more than a method of qualitative inquiry. In deMarrais, K. and Lapan, S.D. (eds), *Foundations for Research: Method of Inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 87–102.
- Knowles, M. (1980). *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy* (2nd edn). New York: Cambridge Books.
- Knowles, M. (1990). *The Adult Learners: A Neglected Species* (4th edn). Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing.
- Knowles, M., Holton, E. III and Swanson, R. (2005). *The Adult Learner: The Definitive Classic in Adult Education and Human* (6th edn). Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing.
- Krimerman, L. (2001). Participatory action research. Should social inquiry be

- conducted democratically? *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 31 (1): 60–82.
- Kroll, L.R. (2004). Constructing constructivism: how student teachers construct ideas of development, knowledge, learning, and teaching. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 10 (2): 199–221.
- Kumar, D. (2010). *Research Methodology: A Step-by-step Guide for the for Beginners* (3rd edn). London: Sage.
- Kwok, K.Y. (2009). Information and guidance for adults returning to higher education in Hong Kong: a case study. Doctorate thesis of University of Nottingham. September.
- Lai, P.Y. and Chan, K.Y. (2005). A structural model of conceptions of learning, achievement, motivation and learning strategies of Hong Kong teacher education students. Paper presented at the Australian Association of Research in Education Parramatta Conference, University of Western Sydney, Sydney, Australia, 28 November–2 December 2005. Available at <http://aare.edu.au/05pap/lai05464.pdf> (retrieved December 2009).
- Lam, W.M. and Wright, S. (2004). The creative music curriculum for pre-primary schools. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood Education*, 5 (2): 207–220. Available at www.worldwords.co.uk/rss/abstract.asp?j=ciec&aid=1646 (retrieved February 2008).
- Lee, J.C.K., Lam, W.P. and Li, Y.Y. (2003). Teacher evaluation and effectiveness in Hong Kong: issues and challenges. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 17 (1): 41–65.
- Lee, Y. (2008). Current music practices and teachers' needs for teaching music in public preschools of South Korea. PhD thesis, Faculty of the Graduate School, University of Missouri.
- Legge, J. (1960). *The Chinese Classics: With a Translation, Critical and Exegetical Notes, Prolegomena, and Copious Indexes*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Leighton, G. and Lamont, A. (2006). Exploring children's singing development: do experiences in early schooling help or hinder? *Music Education Research*, 8 (3): 311–330.
- Lemke, J.L. (2001). Articulating communities: socio-cultural perspectives on science education. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 38 (3): 296–316.
- Leung, G.S.M., Yeung, K.C. and Wong, D.F.K. (2010). Academic stressors and anxiety in children: the role of paternal support, *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 19 (1): 90–100.

- Li, J. (2009). Learning to Self-Perfect: Chinese Beliefs about Learning. In C. K. K. Chan, N. Rao & Comparative Education Research Centre. (Eds.), *Revisiting the Chinese learner : changing contexts, changing education*. pp. 35-69. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong.
- Li, M. and Bray, M. (2007). Cross border flow of students for higher education: push and pull factors and motivations of mainland Chinese student in Hong Kong and Macau. *Higher Education*, 53 (6): 791–818.
- Liamputtong, P. and Ezzy, D. (2005). *Qualitative Research Methods* (2nd edn). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Loeb, S., Fuller, B., Kagan, S.L. and Carrol, B. (2004). Child care in poor communities: early learning effects of type, quality, and stability. *Child Development*, 75 (1): 47–65.
- Loyens, S.M.M., Rikers, R.M.J.P. and Schmidt, H.G. (2009). Students' conceptions of constructivist learning in different programme years and different learning environments. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 79 (3): 501–514.
- Luce, D. (2001). Collaborative learning in music education: a review of the literature. *Update*, 19 (2): 20–25.
- Maslow, A.H. (1970). *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Maxwell, K.L., Field, C.C. and Clifford, R.M. (2006). Defining and measuring professional development in early childhood research. In Zaslow, M. and Martinez-Beck, I. (eds), *Critical Issue in Early Childhood Professional Development*. London: Paul. H. Brookes Publishing Co., pp. 21–48.
- Maykut, P. and Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning Qualitative Research*. London: Falmer Press.
- McCombs, B. and Vakili, D. (2005). A learner-centered framework for e-learning. *Teachers College Record*, 107 (8): 1582–1600.
- McCormack, A. Gore, J. and Thomas, K. (2006). Early career teacher professional learning. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 34 (1): 95–113.
- McMurray, A.J., Pace, R.W. and Scott, D. (2004). *Research: A Commonsense Approach*. Sydney: Thomas Social Science Press.
- Medel-Añonuevo, C., Ohsako, T. and Mauch, W. (2001). *Revisiting Lifelong Learning For 21st Century*. Hamburg: The UNESCO Institute of Education.
- MENC (The National Association for Music Education) (1991). *MENC Position*

- Statement on Early Childhood Education*. Available at www.menc.org/information/prek12/echild.html (retrieved February 2010).
- MENC (The National Association for Music Education) (1992). *The Children's Bill of Right in Music Education*. Available at www.menc.org/information/prek12/childsbill/BillofRights.html (retrieved February 2010).
- MENC (The National Association for Music Education) (1994a). *National Standards for Music Education*. Available at www.menc.org/publication/books/stanards.htm (retrieved February 2010).
- MENC (The National Association for Music Education) (1994b). *National Standards for Arts Education*. Available at www.menc.org/publication/books/natlstndartsedintro.html (retrieved February 2010).
- MENC (The National Association for Music Education) (2000). *Start the Music. A Report from the Early Childhood Music Summit*. Available at www.menc.org/guides/startmusic/stmreport.htm (retrieved February 2010)
- Merriam, S.B. (2004). The changing landscape of adult learning theory. *Review of Adult Learning and Literacy*, 4 (6): 28–36.
- Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1999). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (2nd edn). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mishra, P. and Koehler, M.J. (2006). Technological pedagogical content knowledge: a framework for teacher knowledge. *Teacher College Record*, 108 (6): 1017–1054.
- Mok, K.H. (2003). Globalisation and higher education restructuring in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 22 (2):117–129.
- Mok, K.H. (2005). Fostering entrepreneurship: changing role of Government and higher education governance in Hong Kong. *Research Policy*, 34 (4): 537–554.
- Mok, K.H. (2007). Withering the state: globalisation challenges and changing higher education governance in East Asia. In Pink, W. and Noblett, G. (eds), *International Handbook of Urban Education*. Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 305–320.
- Morford, J.B. (2007). Constructivism: implications for postsecondary music education and beyond. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 16: 75–83.
- Morris, P. (2004). Teaching in Hong Kong: professionalization, accountability and the state. *Research Papers in Education*, 19 (1): 105–121.

- Morris, P. and Adamson, B. (2010). *Curriculum, Schooling and Society in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Morrissey, M.S. (2000). Professional learning communities: an ongoing exploration. Unpublished paper, *Southwest Educational Development Laboratory*, Austin, TX.
- Morse J. (2008). Styles of collaboration in qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Health Research*, 18 (1): 3–4.
- Morse, J.M., Barrett, M., Mayan, M., Olson, K. and Spier, J. (2002). Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International of Qualitative Methods*, 1 (2): 13–22.
- Murphy, K.L., Mahoney, S.E., Chen, C.Y., Mendoza-Diaz, N.V. and Yang, X. (2005). A constructivist model of mentoring, coaching, and facilitating online discussions. *Distance Education*, 26 (3): 341–366.
- Myers, D.E. (2005). Freeing music education from schooling: toward a lifespan perspective on music learning and teaching. Keynote Address: International Conference on Music and Lifelong Learning. University of Wisconsin-Madison, April.
- NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) (1991). *Early childhood teacher education guidelines: basic and advanced*. Washington, DC.
- NAEYC (The National Association for the Education of Young Children) (2001). *Standards at the Initial Licensure Level*. Available at www.naeyc.org/faculty/pdf/2001.pdf (retrieved February 2010).
- NAEYC (The National Association for the Education of Young Children) (2002). *NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation. Advanced Programs*. Washington, DC, pp. 1–22.
- Nardo, R.L., Custodero, L.A., Persellin, D.C. and Fox, D.B. (2006). Looking back, looking forward: a report on early childhood music education in accredited American preschools. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 54 (4): 278–292.
- Nieto, S. (2003). *What Keeps Teachers Going?* New York: Teachers College Press.
- NPDCI (National Professional Development Center on Inclusion) (2008). *What Do We Mean by Professional Development in the Early Childhood Field?* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Institute. Available at www.fpg.unc.edu/~npdci (retrieved October 2008).
- OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) (1996). *Lifelong Learning for All*. Paris. OECD.

- OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) (1999). Education and skills. *Education Policy Analysis: 1999 Edition*. 7: 1–98.
- OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) (2007). Lifelong learning and human capital. *Policy Brief*, July: 1–7.
- Onwuegbuzie, A.J. and Johnson, R.B. (2006). The validity issue in mixed research. *Mid-South Educational Research Association*, 13 (1): 48–63.
- Onwuegbuzie, A.J. and Leech, N.L. (2007). Validity and qualitative research: an oxymoron? *Quality and Quantity*, 41 (2): 233–249.
- Oomen-Early, J. and Murphy, L. (2009). Self-actualization and E-learning: a qualitative investigation of university faculty's perceived needs for effective online instruction. *International Journal on E-Learning*, 8 (2): 223–240.
- Ozanne, J.L. and Saatcioglu, B. (2008). Participatory action research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35 (October): 429–439.
- Palinscar, A. (2005). Social constructivist perspectives on teaching and learning. In Daniels, H. (ed.), *An Introduction to Vygotsky* (2nd edn). Hove: Routledge, pp. 285–314.
- Palmer, D. (2005). A motivational view of constructivist-informed teaching. *International Journal of Science Education*, 27 (15): 1853–1881.
- Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (3rd edn). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Payne, C.R. (2009). Are we ready for active learning? (unpublished journal). Available at <http://ahea.org/files/pro2009payne.pdf> (retrieved December 2010).
- Pearson, E. and Rao, N. (2006). Early childhood education policy reform in Hong Kong: challenges in effecting change in practices. *Childhood Education*, 82 (6): 363–369.
- Piaget, J. (1952). *The Origins of Intelligence in Children*. New York: International Universities Press.
- Piaget, J. (1962). *Play, Dreams, and Imitation in Childhood*. New York: Norton Library.
- Powell, K.C. and Kalina, C.J. (2009). Cognitive and social constructivism: developing tools for an effective classroom. *Education*, 130 (2): 241–250.
- Pritchard, A. (2008). *Ways of Learning: Learning Theories and Learning Styles in the Classroom*. New York: Routledge.
- Punch, K.F. (2005). *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative*

Approaches (2nd edn). London: Sage.

- Rao, N. and Li, H. (2009). Quality matters: early childhood education policy in Hong Kong. *Early Childhood Development and Care*, 179 (3): 233–245.
- Rao, N., Ng, S.S.N. and Pearson, E. (2010). Preschool pedagogy: a fusion of traditional Chinese beliefs and contemporary notions of appropriate practice. *CERC Studies in Comparative Education*, 25 (3): 255–279.
- Rao, N. and Pearson, E. (2006). Early childhood education policy reform in Hong Kong. *Childhood Education*, 82 (6): 363–368.
- Rasinski, K.A. (2008). Designing reliable and valid questionnaires. In Donsback, W. and Traugott, M.W. (eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Public Opinion Research*. London: Sage.
- Rasmussen, C., Hopkins, S. and Fitzpatrick, M. (2004). Our work done well is like the perfect pitch. *Journal of Staff Development*, 25 (1): 16–25.
- Ray, A., Bowman, B. and Robbins, J. (2006). Preparing early childhood teachers to successfully educate all children: The contribution of four-year undergraduate teacher preparation programs. *Report to the Foundation for Child Development*. Chicago: Erikson Institute.
- Ray, J. (2002). Constructivism and classroom teachers: what can early childhood teacher educators do to support the constructivist journey? *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 23: 319–325.
- Richards, H. and Durrant, C. (2003). To sing or not to sing: a study on the development of “non-singers” in choral activity. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 20: 78–89.
- Richards, J.C. and Shea, K.T. (2006). Moving from separate subject to interdisciplinary teaching: the complexity of change in a preservice teacher K-1 early field experience. *The Qualitative Report*, 11 (1): 1–19. Available at www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR11-1/richardsshea.pdf (retrieved March 2009).
- Richardson, V. (1997). *Constructivist Teacher Education: Building New Understandings*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Richardson, V. (2003). Preservice teacher’s beliefs. In Raths, J. and McAninch, A.R. (eds), *Teacher Beliefs and Classroom Performance: The Impact of Teacher Education*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing, pp. 1–22.
- Richardson, V. (2005). The diverse learning needs of students. In Billings, D.M. and Halstead, J.A. (eds), *Teaching in Nursing* (2nd edn). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier, pp. 21–39.

- Richter, D., Kunter, M., Klusmann, U., Lüdtke, O. and Baumert, J. (2010). Professional development across the teaching career: Teachers' uptake of formal and informal learning opportunities. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27 (1): 116–126.
- Riveire, J. (2006). Improvisation as a teaching strategy. *Music Educators Journal*, 92 (3): 40–45.
- Roberts, P., Priest, H. and Traynor, M. (2006). Reliability and validity in research. *Nursing Standard*, 20 (44): 41–45.
- Rogers, A. (2002). *Teaching Adults* (3rd edn). London: Open University Press.
- Rose, J. and Reynolds, D. (2008). Teachers' continuing professional development: rooting practice in the classroom. *International Journal of Management in Education*, 2 (1): 14–29.
- Rush, F.R., Hughes, C., Agran, M., Martin, J.E. and Johnson, J.R. (2009). Toward self-directed learning, post-high school placement, and coordinated support constructing new transition bridges to adult life. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 32 (May): 53–59.
- Russell, S.S. (2006). An overview of adult-learning processes. *Urologic Nursing*, 26 (5): 349–370.
- Russell-Bowie, D. (2010). Cross-national comparisons of background and confidence in visual arts and music education of pre-service primary teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 35 (4): 65–78.
- Ryan, C. (National Association for Music Education, MENC). (2009). *Building Strong Music Programs: A Handbook for Preservice and Novice Music*. US: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Salili, F. (2007). A model of culture and achievement behaviour. In Kaplan, A., Karabenick, S.A. and De Groot, E. (eds), *Culture, Self, and, Motivation: Essays in Honor of Martin L. Maehr*. North Carolina: Information Age Publishing, pp. 183–188.
- Saracho, O. and Spodek, B. (2006). Preschool teachers' professional development. In Spodek, B. and Saracho, O. (eds), *Handbook of Research on the Education of Young Children*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 423–442.
- Saracho, O. and Spodek, B. (2007). Early childhood teachers' preparation and the quality of program outcomes. *Early Child Development and Care*, 177 (1): 71–91.
- Saunders, T.C. and Baker, D.S. (1991). In-service classroom teachers' perceptions of useful music skills and understandings. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 39 (1): 248–261.

- Savin-Baden, M. and Wimpenny, K. (2007). Exploring and implementing participatory action research. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 31 (2): 331–343.
- Schellenberg, E.G (2005). Music and cognitive abilities. *Current Direction in Psychological Science*, 14 (6): 316–321.
- Schellenberg, E.G. (2006). Exposure to music: the truth about the consequences. In McPherson, G.E. (ed.), *The Child as Musician: A Handbook of Musical Development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 111–134.
- Scott, S. (2006). A constructivist view of music education: perspectives for deep learning. *General Music Today*, 19 (2): 17–21.
- Scott-Kassner, C. (1997). Learning the language of music. Paper presented at the national conference of the Music Teachers National Association. Dallas, Texas, March.
- Shulman, L.S. (1986). Those who understand: knowledge growth in teaching. *Education Researcher*, 15 (2): 4–14.
- Shulman, L.S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57: 1–22.
- Siebenaler, D. (2006). Training teachers with little or no music background: too little, too late. *Update*, 24 (2): 14–22.
- Sims, W.L. and Nolker, D.B. (2002). Individual differences in music listening responses of kindergarten children. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 50 (4): 292–300.
- Singh, K. (2007). *Quantitative Social Research Methods*. London: Sage.
- Smith, K.M. (2008). An exploration of musical play and scaffolding in early childhood. PhD thesis, University of Alberta (Canada).
- Smith, M.V. and Haack, P. (2000). The long view of lifelong learning. *Music Educators Journal*, 87: 28–33.
- Smithson, J. (2000). Using and analyzing focus groups: limitation and possibilities. *Social Research Methodology*, 3 (2): 103–119.
- Sullivan, G. (2009). Coaching education: staff development strategies for the adult learner. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 5 (3): 267–276.
- Sweeting, A. (2004). *Education in Hong Kong, 1941 to 2001: Visions and Revisions*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Tam, V. C. and Chan, R. M. (2010). Hong Kong parents' perceptions and experiences of involvement in homework: a family capital and resource management perspective. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 31 (3): 361–371.

- Tashakkori, A. and Creswell, J.W. (2008). Mixed methodology across disciplines. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 2 (3): 3–6. Available at <http://mmr.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/2/1/3> (retrieved December 2009).
- Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (2003). *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage.
- Taylor, B. and Kroth, M. (2009). Andragogy's transition into the future: meta-analysis of andragogy and its search for a measurable instrument. *Journal of Adult Education*, 38 (1): 1–11.
- Teddlie, C. and Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundation of Mixed Method Research: Integrated Qualitative and Quantitative in the Social and Behavioral Science*. Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.
- Thompson, L.K. (2007). Considering beliefs in learning to teach music. *Music Educators Journal*, 93 (3): 30–35.
- Trilling, B. and Fadel, C. (2009). *21st Century Skills: Learning for Life in our Times*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Tuijnman, A. (2002). Lifelong learning: evolution of a conceptual map and some implications. In Cribbin, J. and Kennedy, P. (eds), *Lifelong Learning in Action. Hong Kong Practitioners' Perspectives*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp. 3–14.
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in the Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 79–91. Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Wang, V.C.X. and King, K.P. (2008). Transformative learning and ancient Asian educational perspectives. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 6 (2): 136–150.
- Weikart, D.P., Olmsted, P.P. and Monite, J. (2003). *The IEA Project – Phase 2. A World of Preschool Experience. Observations in 15 Countries*. Michigan: High Scope Press.
- Welch, G.F. (2006). The musical development and education of young children. In Spodek, B. and Saracho, O.N. (eds), *Handbook of Research on the Education of Young Children* (2nd edn). London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 251–268.
- Wetzel, J. (2006). Music for life. *Illinois Music Educator*, 67 (1): 65.
- Whitcomb, R. (2003). Step by step: using Kodaly to build vocal improvisation. *Teaching Music*, 10 (5): 34–38.
- Wilkins, G. (2008). An investigation of the relationship between andragogy and Hong Kong students' approaches to learning in performing arts education: a case study. Doctor of Education theses, University of Leicester.

- Willberg, H. (2002). 'Music for fun, music for learning: finding the music curriculum in early childhood'. Occasional Paper No. 13. Available at <http://hdl.handle.net/10063/906> (retrieved May 2007).
- Wlodkowski, R.J. (2008). *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn: A Comprehensive Guide for Teaching all Adult* (3rd edn). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Woodward, S.C. (2005). Critical matters in early childhood music education. In Elliott, D.J. (ed.), *Praxial Music Education: Reflections and Dialogues*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 249–266.
- Yeh, C.S. (2001). China. In Hargreaves, D.J. and North, A.C. (eds), *Musical Development and Learning – The International Perspective*. London: Continuum, pp. 27–39.
- Yeung, Y.M., Lee, J. and Kee, G. (2008). Hong Kong and Macao under Chinese sovereignty. *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 49 (3): 304–325.
- Yin, R.K. (2003). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (3rd edn). London: Sage.
- Yue, J. (2008). Confucius on music education. Available at www.iiav.nl/eazines/IAV_607294/IAV_607294_2009_4/Nebula4/Yue.pdf (retrieved October 2011).
- Yuen, G.W.K. (2007). Vouchers in Hong Kong: a new milestone of early childhood education? *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 8 (4): 355–357.
- Yuen, G.W.K. (2008). Education reform policy and early childhood teacher education in Hong Kong before and after the transfer of sovereignty to China in 1997. *Early Years: An International Journal of Research and Development*, 28 (1): 23–45.
- Yuen, G. and Grieshaber, S. (2009). Parents' choice of early childhood education service in Hong Kong: a pilot study about vouchers. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 10 (3): 263–279.
- Zaslow, M. and Martinez-Beck, I. (eds) (2005). *Critical Issues in Early Childhood Professional Development*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Pilot questionnaire (English version)
- Appendix B: Pilot questionnaire (Chinese version)
- Appendix C: Covering letter for focus group interviews
- Appendix D: Guided questions of focus group interviews (for early childhood principals and teachers)
- Appendix E: Guided questions of focus group interviews (for lecturer)
- Appendix F: Full-scale questionnaire (English version)
- Appendix G: Full-scale questionnaire (Chinese version)
- Appendix H: Covering letter for pilot questionnaire
- Appendix I: Covering letter for full-scale questionnaire

**A Survey of Early Childhood Music education and Teachers’
Music
Professional Learning in Hong Kong**

SECTION 1: THE TEACHER & SCHOOL

(Please choose with a “√”)

1. (a) Gender: male female

(b) Age: 21-30 31-40 41-50 50+

2. (a) I have taught pre-schools for _____ year(s).

(b) I teach the following level/s this year:

N1 N2(K1) N3(K2) N4(K3)

3. My school can be described as:

Kindergarten Child Care Centre

full day only

half day only

both full day and half day

full day and after school extension service

other, please specify: _____

4. The size of the student population in my school is:

under 100 100-150 151-200

201-300 301-400 401-500 501+

5. (a) My highest qualification is:

Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood Education)

Diploma / Higher in Education

Certificate in Education

(b) My highest early childhood qualification was from:

Hong Kong Institute of Education

Hong Kong Baptist University (School of Continuing Education)

Hong Kong Polytechnic University

- Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Lee Wai Lee campus)
 other, please specify: _____

(c) I have other academic qualifications (e.g. Bachelor Degree in BA, Advanced Teacher Certificate, etc.):

- yes no

If yes, please state qualification : _____

(d) I am undertaking further educational training:

- yes no

If yes, please state qualification: _____

6. (a) I have received the following music teacher training:

- advanced teacher's certificate (with music as the major teaching subject)
 bachelor's degree in education (with music as the major teaching subject)
 post-graduate diploma/certificate in Education (with music as the major teaching subject)
 master's degree in music education / education (major in music)
 none of the above
 other, please specify: _____

(b) I possess the following qualification/s:

- music theory (grade _____)
 piano (grade _____)
 other instrument: _____ (grade _____)
 not applicable

(c) I am undertaking further music training:

- yes no

If yes, please state qualification: _____

7. I would like to further my music training

- yes no

If yes, please state which qualification: _____

8. I would describe my satisfaction level as an early childhood teacher to be:

1 2 3 4 5
Extremely satisfied Highly satisfied Satisfied Somewhat dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

9. As an early teacher, the things that give me the greatest and least job satisfaction are: (You can “√” more than one)

	<u>Greatest satisfaction</u>	<u>Least satisfaction</u>
personal interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
career prospect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
salary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
working environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other, please specify: _____		

10. Please rank the subject area you would prefer to teach (use 1 for the most preferred)

- language
- mathematic
- science
- social science
- information technology
- art
- physical education
- music
- others, please specify: _____

11. Please rank the subject area you feel confident to teach (use 1 for the most confident)

- Language
- Mathematic
- Science
- social science
- information technology
- art
- physical education
- music
- other, please specify: _____

SECTION 2: MUSIC IN THE SCHOOL

(Please choose with a “√”)

1. Music is taught at the following levels.

- N1 N2(K1) N3(K2) N4(K3)
 aLL of the above none of the above

2. (a) Is music taught by a trained music teacher? If yes, how many are trained teachers?

- no yes _____(number of music teacher)

(b) Is there a special room for music class? If yes, how big is the room?

- no yes _____(size of the room)

(c) Does your school uses the music textbooks? If yes, please name the book(s).

- no yes Name of textbook: _____

(d) My school provides/ you would like the following equipment for music class: (You can “√” more than one)

	<u>school provided</u>	<u>would like to</u>
	<u>have</u>	
piano	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
keyboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CD or Cassette Player	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
unpitched percussion instrument (e.g. tambourine, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
pitched instrument (e.g. xylophone, recorder, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CDs, VCDs & DVDs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
others, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. (a) The frequency that the children in my school are engaged in music lesson is:

- 5 times/days a week
 4 times/days a week
 3 times/days a week
 2 times/days a week
 1 times/day a week

none

(b) The usual length of a music class/segment is:

- more than 45 mins each time/day
- 45 mins each time/day
- 30 mins each time/day
- 20 mins each time/day
- 15 mins each time/day
- less than 15 mins

(c) The usual size of a music class is:

- more than 30
- 25-29
- 20-24
- 15-19
- 10-14
- Under 10

5. Please state the amount of time allocated to the most common music activities in your teaching: (You can “√” more than one)

- singing(e.g. 10mins) _____
- movement _____
- instrument Playing _____
- listening and music appreciation _____
- music Notation _____
- music Games _____
- others, please specify: _____

6. Please rank the music activities preferred by your students (use 1 for the most preferred area): (You can “√” more than one)

- singing
- movement
- instrument Playing
- listening and music appreciation
- music Notation
- music Games
- others, please specify: _____

7. (a) The music curriculum adopted in my school is:

- a school-designed curriculum
- based on a music textbook published by commercial
- Other, please specify: _____

(b) The person who is responsible for developing the music curriculum / day-to-day music lesson in my school:

	<u>music curriculum</u>	<u>day-to-day music lesson</u>
school principal/supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
head teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
class teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
music trained teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
others, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. (a) I usually integrate the following subject areas in a music lesson:

(You can “√” more than one)

- language
- mathematic
- science
- social science
- information technology
- art
- physical education
- music
- others, please specify: _____

(b) I usually integrate musical activities when teaching the following subject areas:

- language
- mathematic
- science
- social science
- information technology
- art
- physical education
- music
- others, please specify: _____

**SECTION 3: MUSIC TRAINING IN ECE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING
PROGRAMME IN HONG KONG AND COMPETENCE**

1. My satisfaction level of the music education training I received during my teacher training may be described as:

1 2 3 4 5
Extremely satisfied Highly satisfied Satisfied Somewhat dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

2. The areas I have taught most during my early childhood teacher training which is / are: (You can “√” more than one)

- music theory and reading notation
- music literature, history and style
- singing technique and with high degree of accuracy
- characteristics of children’s voices
- selecting appropriate songs
- leading and teaching songs
- play piano accompaniments in standard music texts
- improvise and play piano accompaniments with provided melody
- improvise and play accompaniment on other instruments, e.g.guitar, etc
- using rhythm instruments
- developing and leading movement activities
- composition technique to create music or songs
- developing and leading listening lesson
- selecting recordings for children
- developing and leading music reading activities
- developing music curriculum
- using music to supplement other curricular areas
- others, please specify: _____

**3. The areas which I now perceive to be essential in music teaching are:
(You can “√” more than one)**

- music theory and reading notation
- music literature, history and style
- singing technique and with high degree of accuracy
- characteristics of children’s voices
- selecting appropriate songs
- leading and teaching songs

- play piano accompaniments in standard music texts
- improvise and play piano accompaniments with provided melody
- improvise and play accompaniment on other instruments, e.g. guitar, etc
- using rhythm instruments
- developing and leading movement activities
- composition technique to create music or songs
- developing and leading listening lesson
- selecting recordings for children
- developing and leading music reading activities
- developing music curriculum
- using music to supplement other curricular areas
- others, please specify: _____

SECTION 4: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING / LIFELONG LEARNING NEEDS FOR IN-SERVICE TEACHERS

1. If I have the choice in selecting a module for my professional development, I would give top priority to the following subject areas (you can “√” not more than three):

- language
- mathematic
- science
- social Science
- information Technology
- art
- physical Education
- music
- others, please specify: _____

2. If I am required to undertake professional development related to music teaching, I would prefer to take modules in: (You can “√” more than one)

- music theory and reading notation
- music literature, history and style
- singing technique and with high degree of accuracy
- characteristics of children’s voices
- selecting appropriate songs
- leading and teaching songs
- play piano accompaniments in standard music texts

- improvise and play piano accompaniments with provided melody
- improvise and play accompaniment on other instruments, e.g. guitar, etc.
- using rhythm instruments
- developing and leading movement activities
- composition technique to create music or songs
- developing and leading listening lesson
- selecting recordings for children
- developing and leading music reading activities
- developing music curriculum
- using music to supplement other curricular areas
- others, please specify: _____

3. My school supports my professional development in teaching music through: (You can “√” more than one)

- work load reduction
- leave compensation
- fee subsidy
- provide on job training
- provide in-service training
- none of the above
- other, please specify: _____

4. The Hong Kong Government promotes the professional development of early childhood music teacher education through: (You can “√” more than one)

- funding subsidy
- provide training opportunities
- tax deduction
- none of the above
- unsure/never thought about this
- others, please specify: _____

5. I actively seek professional development opportunities in the area of music teaching for the following reason(s): (You can “√” more than one)

- not applicable
- personal interest
- career prospect
- recognition

- job satisfaction and achievement
- school's requirement
- unsure/never thought about this
- other, please specify: _____

6. I do not seek professional development / lifelong learning opportunities in the area of music teaching for the following reason(s): (You can “√” more than one)

- financial constraint
- existing work load
- insufficient time
- low priority
- never thought about this
- others, please specify: _____

7. If I am supported attend the professional development, I would prefer the following:

- part-time evening program
- summer/Winter break program
- weekend program
- full time program (taking leave from Job)
- others, please specify _____

(End of questionnaire. Thank you for your time and support!)

香港幼兒教師的音樂教學與專業學習

問卷調查

第一部份：教師與學校

(請以“√”表示所選擇)

1. (a). 性別 男 女
- (b). 年齡 21-30 31-40 41-50 50+
- 2 (a). 我已任教了幼兒園／幼稚園_____年
- (b). 我今年任教以下班別
- N1 N2/K1 N3/K2 N4/K3
3. 我學校是
- 幼稚園 幼兒園
- 只有全日班
- 只有半日班
- 有全日及半日班
- 全日班並有延展服務
- 其他，請說明_____
4. 我學校的人數
- 100 以下 100-150 151-200 201-300
- 301-400 401-500 501 以上
5. (a). 我最高的幼兒教育學歷是
- 教育學士 (幼兒教育)
- 高級文憑／證書
- 合格幼稚園教師證書香港教育學院
- 其他，請說明_____
- (b). 我最高幼兒教育學歷來自
- 香港教育學院
- 香港浸會大學

- 香港理工大學
- 香港專業教育學院 (李惠利)
- 其他，請說明 _____

(c). 我其他的學術履歷是

- 有 無
- 如“有”，請說明學歷資格: _____

(d). 我正修讀的教育課程是:

- 有 無
- 如“有”，請說明學歷資格: _____

6. (a). 我已接受以下之音樂教育訓練

- 教師證書 (以音樂為主修科)
- 教育學士 (以音樂為主修科)
- 教師文憑 (以音樂為主修科)
- 教育碩士(以音樂為主修科)
- 以上皆不適用
- 其他，請說明: _____

(b). 我的其他音樂資格是

- 音樂樂理 _____ 級
- 鋼琴 _____ 級
- 其他樂器 _____ , _____ 級
- 以上皆不適用
- 其他，請說明 _____

(c). 我正接受以下之音樂技能訓練

- 是 不是 如“是”，請說明資格: _____

7. 我希望再修讀/接受以下之音樂課程

- 是 不是
- 如“是”，請說明學歷資格: _____

8. 我會形容我對於本身之幼兒教師身份為

- | | | | | |
|------|-----|----|------|-------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 非常滿意 | 很滿意 | 滿意 | 頗不滿意 | 非常不滿意 |

9. 作為幼兒教師，最大和最少的工作的滿足感是：（可選擇多於一項）

	最大滿足感	最小滿足感
個人興趣	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
職業前途	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
薪金	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
工作環境	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
兒童	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

其他，請說明：_____

10. 請排列你願意任教的學科：（以“1”代表最願意的）

- 語文
- 數學
- 科學
- 社會科學
- 資訊科技
- 美術
- 體育
- 音樂
- 其他，請說明：_____

10. 請排列你最有信心教的學科：（以“1”代表最有信心的）

- 語文
- 數學
- 科學
- 社會科學
- 資訊科技
- 美術
- 體育
- 音樂
- 其他，請說明：_____

第二部份：學校裡的音樂

（請以“√”表示所選擇）

1. 以下的年級有音樂課

- N1 N2/K1 N3/K2 N4/K3
- 以上所有 以上皆沒有

- 2 (a). 音樂課是否由受過音樂訓練老師教授? 如“是”，有多少個老師?
不是 是 _____(老師數目)
- (b). 音樂課是否在特別室進行? 如“是”，有多少個課室?
不是 是 _____(特別室數目)
- (c). 學校是否採用音樂教科書? 如“是”，是那本音樂教科書?
不是 是 _____(音樂教科書名稱)

(d). 學校為音樂課提供／你期望學校將來有以下器材：(可選擇多於一項)

	<u>學校提供</u>	<u>期望學校將來有</u>
鋼琴	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
電子琴	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
鐳射唱片機或錄音機	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
無調性敲擊樂 (例如，搖鼓，鼓等)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
有調性敲擊樂 (例如，木片琴，牧童笛等)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
鐳射唱片，鐳射影片，數碼影片	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
其他，請說明: _____		

3 (a). 學生在學校參予的音樂課次數是：

- 一星期五次
 一星期四次
 一星期三次
 一星期二次
 一星期一次
 沒有

(b). 每日音樂課的時間是：

- 每日多於 45 分鐘
 每日 45 分鐘
 每日 30 鐘
 每日 20 分鐘
 每日 15 分鐘
 每日少於 15 分鐘

(c). 每次參予音樂課的人數是：

- 多於 30 人
 25-29

- 20-24
- 15-19
- 10-14
- 少於 10 人

4 我的音樂課通常有以下之活動並表示時間分配：(可選擇多於一項)

- 歌唱 _____ (例如 10 分鐘)
- 律動 _____
- 樂器演奏 _____
- 聆聽及音樂欣賞 _____
- 音樂符號 _____
- 音樂遊戲 _____
- 其他，請說明 _____

5 請排列你的學生最喜歡之音樂活動：(以“1”代表最喜歡的)，
(可選擇多於一項)

- 歌唱
- 律動
- 樂器演奏
- 聆聽及音樂欣賞
- 音樂符號
- 音樂遊戲
- 其他，請說明: _____

6 (a). 我學校所採用的音樂課程是：

- 校本設計課程
- 坊間採用之音樂教科書課程
- 其他，請說明: _____

(b). 我校負責設計整體音樂課程 /設計音樂課堂活動的是：

	<u>音樂課程</u>	<u>音樂課堂活動</u>
校長／園長	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
主任	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
班老師	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
音樂專科老師	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
其他，請說明: _____		

7 (a). 我經常在音樂課中綜合以下之學科：(可選擇多於一項)

- 語文
- 數學
- 科學
- 社會科學
- 資訊科技
- 美術
- 體育
- 其他，請說明：_____

(b). 我經常在其他學科課中綜合音樂元素：(可選擇多於一項)

- 語文
- 數學
- 科學
- 社會科學
- 資訊科技
- 美術
- 體育
- 其他，請說明：_____

第三部份：香港專業幼兒教育課程之音樂訓練及音樂教學指標

(請以“√”表示所選擇)

1. 我對專業幼兒教育課程之音樂訓練的滿意程度是：

- | | | | | |
|------|-----|----|------|-------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 非常滿意 | 很滿意 | 滿意 | 頗不滿意 | 非常不滿意 |

2. 在專業幼兒教育課程中，我最能學習到有關於音樂教學的是什麼？(可選擇多於一項)

- 音樂理論及讀譜能力
- 音樂文學、歷史及風格的知識
- 準確的歌唱技巧
- 兒童聲音的特性
- 選擇合適歌曲
- 帶領及教授歌曲
- 能以鋼琴伴奏一般性的樂譜
- 即興地為歌曲以鋼琴伴奏
- 即興地為歌曲以其他樂器作伴奏
- 運用節奏性樂器

- 設計及帶領律動活動
- 創作音樂或歌曲
- 設計及帶領音樂聆聽
- 選擇音樂聆聽及欣賞的基本曲目
- 設計及帶領讀譜活動
- 設計音樂課程
- 以音樂輔助其他學科教學技巧
- 其他，請說明： _____

3. 我認為以下之訓練對音樂教學很重要：(可選擇多於一項)

- 音樂理論及讀譜能力
- 音樂文學、歷史及風格的知識
- 準確的歌唱技巧
- 兒童聲音的特性
- 選擇合適歌曲
- 帶領及教授歌曲
- 能以鋼琴伴奏一般性的樂譜
- 即興地為歌曲以鋼琴伴奏
- 即興地為歌曲以其他樂器作伴奏
- 運用節奏性樂器
- 設計及帶領律動活動
- 創作音樂或歌曲
- 設計及帶領音樂聆聽
- 選擇音樂聆聽及欣賞的基本曲目
- 設計及帶領讀譜活動
- 設計音樂課程
- 以音樂輔助其他學科教學技巧
- 其他，請說明： _____

第四部份：在職幼兒教師之專業發展／終身學習需要

(請以“√”表示所選擇)

1. 如果能選擇專業發展，我會選擇以下之學科範疇 (請選擇不多於三項)：

- 語文
- 數學
- 科學
- 社會科學
- 資訊科技

- 美術
- 體育
- 音樂
- 其他，請說明: _____

2. 如果學校要求我在音樂教學上之專業發展，我會選擇以下音樂訓練：(可選擇多於一項)

- 音樂理論及讀譜能力
- 音樂文學、歷史及風格的知識
- 準確的歌唱技巧
- 兒童聲音的持性
- 選擇合適歌曲
- 帶領及教授歌曲
- 能以鋼琴伴奏一般性的樂譜
- 即興地為歌曲以鋼琴伴奏
- 即興地為歌曲以其他樂器作伴奏
- 運用節奏性樂器
- 設計及帶領律動活動
- 創作音樂或歌曲
- 設計及帶領音樂聆聽
- 選擇音樂聆聽及欣賞的基本曲目
- 設計及帶領讀譜活動
- 設計音樂課程
- 以音樂輔助其他學科教學技巧
- 其他，請說明: _____

3. 我學校透過以下，支持我在音樂教學上的專業發展：(可選擇多於一項)

- 減少工作量
- 給予假期
- 經費支助
- 在職培訓
- 工餘培訓
- 以上均沒有
- 其他，請說明: _____

4. 香港政府透過以下，支持我在音樂教學上的專業發展：(可選擇多於一項)

- 學費資助
- 提供培訓機會
- 減低稅收

- 社會人士的認同
- 以上均沒有
- 不能確定／沒有想過
- 其他，請說明: _____

5. 我積極尋求音樂教學上的專業發展是因為：(可選擇多於一項)

- 個人興趣
- 職業前途
- 工作滿足及成就感
- 學校要求
- 不能確定／沒有想過
- 其他，請說明: _____

6. 我現在並沒有尋求音樂教學上的專業發展是因為：(可選擇多於一項)

- 經濟問題
- 現時的工作負擔
- 沒有時間
- 並非優先次序
- 從來沒有考慮過
- 其他，請說明: _____

7. 如給予薪酬支持，我希望參予的音樂教學專業發展課程形式是：(可選擇多於一項)

- 部份時間制
- 寒暑假假期進行
- 週末進行
- 全日制 (無薪假期)
- 其他，請說明: _____

(全卷完，多謝閣下的時間和支持)

**THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA****School of Music**

M413, 35 Stirling Highway, Crawley, WA 6009

Telephone: +61 8 6488 2058

Facsimile: +61 8 6488 1076

Email: sleong@arts.uwa.edu.au

Dear Pre-school principal/teacher,

Winsor, Chan Chi Wah is a lecturer of the School of Early Childhood Education, the Hong Kong Institute of Education, currently undertaking a research project for her doctor of philosophy degree in music education at the University of Western Australia under my supervision. One important part of her study involves examining the current provision of music education for young children and musical training in early childhood teacher education in Hong Kong, the essential elements/competencies that early childhood teachers (ECE) and the professional/ lifelong learning needs of in-service ECE teachers of music. This information will be applied to develop a professional development framework for in-service ECE teachers in the teaching of music. A questionnaire survey will be conducted to gather responses from a widely field of ECE principals and in-service teachers.

Your contribution to this study will be greatly appreciated and will involve the completion of a questionnaire that will take about 10 minutes. Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential and anonymous.

If you are happy to complete the questionnaire, please complete the attached questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope.

Thanking you in anticipation for your help.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Sam Leong M.A.C.E.

Director of Music Education

The University of Western Australia

Tel: 6488 2058 Email: sleong@arts.uwa.edu.au

Appendix D: Guided questions of focus group interviews (for early childhood principals and teachers)	Phase 1
---	---------

I. Current provisions of ECE music education programmes in Hong Kong

1. How often do children engage in music activities in the school each week and at which levels?
2. How often and at which level/s do you teach music at school?
3. How long is each music class?
4. Is (and should) music taught by a trained music teacher?
5. Is there usually a special room for music class?
6. What kinds of equipment are provided for music?
7. How would you describe the music teaching approach in your school?
8. What sort of music curriculum is adopted in the school?
9. Which music textbooks are used in the school?
10. What educational outcomes do ECE teachers expect from teaching music in the classroom?
11. Which aspects of music teaching are emphasized in your school?
12. How often do you integrate other subjects in your music teaching?
13. How often do you integrate music in the teaching of other subject?
14. How much do pre-school teachers enjoying in music teaching? Why?

II. ECE teacher training in music teaching in Hong Kong

15. How well do you think ECE teachers in Hong Kong are trained to teach music in the classroom?
16. How different are the existing ECE teaching training programs in preparing teachers to teach music? What are their particular strengths and weaknesses?
17. In what ways can ECE teacher training better prepare teachers to teach a music class?

III. Essential competencies expected of ECE music teachers in Hong Kong

18. What kinds of educational knowledge, skills and experiences would you consider to be essential for ECE teachers teaching music?
19. What kinds of music knowledge, skills and experiences would you consider to be essential for ECE teachers teaching music?

IV. Professional development & lifelong learning needs of ECE teachers in Hong Kong

20. What are the professional development/lifelong learning needs of ECE in-service teachers in the area of music teaching?
21. How important do you think ECE teachers should be engaged in professional development/lifelong learning in music teaching? Why?

22. What motivates ECE in-service teachers to seek professional development/lifelong learning opportunities in the area of music teaching?
23. What kinds of difficulties might prevent ECE in-service teachers to seek professional development/lifelong opportunities in the area of music teaching?
24. How much support do preschools provide ECE in-service teachers in their professional development in music teaching? In what ways?
25. In what ways is the HK Government promoting lifelong learning in early childhood music teacher education?
26. Which sector should be responsible to offer professional development programs for ECE teachers? (e.g. ECE professional teacher training institutes, NGO, private, etc.).
27. What would you expect of professional development program in terms of qualification, structure, duration and learning style?

Appendix E: Guided questions of focus group interviews (for lecturer) Phase 1
--

I. ECE teacher training in music teaching in Hong Kong

1. How would you describe the performance of ECE teachers in teaching music?
2. How well do you think ECE teachers in Hong Kong are trained to teach music in the classroom?
3. How different are the existing ECE teaching training programs in preparing teachers to teach music?
4. In what ways can ECE teacher training better prepare teachers to teach a music class?

II. Essential competencies expected of ECE music teachers in Hong Kong

5. What kinds of educational knowledge, skills and experiences would you consider to be essential for ECE teachers teaching music?
6. What kinds of music knowledge, skills and experiences would you consider to be essential for ECE teachers teaching music?

III. Professional development & lifelong learning needs of ECE teachers in Hong Kong

7. What are the professional development/lifelong learning needs of ECE in-service teachers in the area of music teaching?
8. How important do you think ECE teachers should be engaged in professional development/lifelong learning in music teaching? Why?
9. What motivates ECE in-service teachers to seek professional development/lifelong learning opportunities in the area of music teaching?
10. What kinds of difficulties might prevent ECE in-service teachers to seek professional development/lifelong opportunities in the area of music teaching?
11. How much support do preschools provide ECE in-service teachers in their professional development in music teaching? In what ways?
12. In what ways is the HK Government promoting lifelong learning in early childhood music teacher education?
13. Which sector should be responsible to offer professional development programs for ECE teachers? (e.g. ECE professional teacher training institutes, NGO, private, etc.).
14. What would you expect of professional development program in terms of qualification, structure, duration and learning style?

**A Survey of Early Childhood Music education and Teachers’
Music
Professional Learning in Hong Kong**

This questionnaire remains enormous. Data collected here will be kept confidential and will be used for this research only.

SECTION 1: THE TEACHER & SCHOOL (Please “√” your choice)

1. (a) Gender: male female
- (b) Age: 21-30 31-40 41-50 50+
2. You have taught in a kindergarten for _____ year(s).
in a child-care centre for _____ year(s).
3. Your school can be described as:
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten | <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> full day only | <input type="checkbox"/> full day only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> half day only | <input type="checkbox"/> half day only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> both full day and half day | <input type="checkbox"/> both full day and half day |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> full day and after school extension service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other, please specify: _____ | |
2. The size of the student population in you school is:
- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> under 100 | <input type="checkbox"/> 100-150 | <input type="checkbox"/> 151-200 | <input type="checkbox"/> 201-300 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 301-400 | <input type="checkbox"/> 401-500 | <input type="checkbox"/> 501+ | |
3. The number of the teaching staff in you school is (including supervisor or principal) _____
6. (a) Your highest early childhood education qualification is:
- | |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BEEd) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate /Diploma in Early Childhood Education (CE/ Diploma) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Qualified Kindergarten Teacher Certificate (QKT) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others, please specify: _____ |

(b) Your highest early childhood qualification is from:

- Hong Kong Baptist University (School of Continuing Education)
- Hong Kong Institute of Education
- Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Lee Wai Lee campus)
- Hong Kong Polytechnic University
- other, please specify: _____

(c) Do you have any other academic qualifications? (e.g. Bachelor's Degree, Advanced Teacher Certificate, Master's Degree, etc.):

- yes no

If yes, please state the qualification: _____

(d) Are you undertaking any further education training?

- yes no

If yes, please state the qualification: _____

(e) How many of your colleagues in your kindergarten/child care centre have gained the following early childhood qualification in your school:

- Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BEEd) _____
- Certificate /Diploma in Early Childhood Education (CE/ Diploma) _____
- Qualified Kindergarten Teacher Certificate (QKT) _____
- Others, please specify: _____

7. (a) You have received the following music teacher training: (music as the major subject)

- advanced teacher's certificate
- post-graduate diploma/certificate in Education
- bachelor's degree in education
- master's degree in music education / education
- none of the above
- other, please specify: _____

(b) You have acquired the following training/ qualification(s):

- music theory (grade _____)
- piano (grade _____)
- other instrument: _____ (grade _____)
- others, please specify: _____

8. How would you describe your satisfaction level as an early childhood teacher:

1 2 3 4 5

Extremely satisfied Highly satisfied Satisfied dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

Reason: _____

9. Please rank from "1" to "5" the things that give you the greatest job satisfaction as an early childhood teacher. ("1" for the greatest satisfaction).

personal interest

career prospect

salary

working environment

children

other, please specify: _____

10. How would you prefer to teach music? Why? ("1" for extremely preferred)

1 2 3 4 5

Extremely preferred Highly preferred preferred not preferred extremely not preferred

Reason: _____

11. How confident are you to teach music? Why? ("1" for extremely confident)

1 2 3 4 5

Extremely confident Highly Confident Confident Unconfident Very Unconfident

Reason: _____

SECTION 2: MUSIC IN THE SCHOOL

(Please "√" your choice)

1. Music is taught at the following levels.

N1 N2/K1 N3/K2 N4/K3 none of the above

2. (a) Is music taught by a trained music teacher? If yes, how many trained teachers are there?

no yes _____(number of music teacher)

Other, please specify: _____

(b) Is there a special room for music classes? If yes, how many rooms?

no yes _____(number of the room)

Others, please specify: _____

(c) Does your school use music textbooks? If yes, please name the book(s).

no yes Name of textbook:

Other, please specify: _____

(d) Your school has provided/ you would like the following equipment for music class: (You can “√” more than one)

	<u>school provided</u>	<u>would like to have</u>
piano	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
keyboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CD or Cassette Player	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
unpitched percussion instrument (e.g. tambourine, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
pitched instrument (e.g. xylophone, recorder, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CDs, VCDs & DVDs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
others, please specify: _____		

8. (a) The frequency that the children in your school are engaged in music lesson is:

- 5 times/days a week
- 4 times/days a week
- 3 times/days a week
- 2 times/days a week
- 1 times/day a week
- other, please specify: _____

(b) The usual length of a music class/segment is:

- more than 45 mins each time/day
- 45 mins each time/day
- 30 mins each time/day
- 20 mins each time/day
- 15 mins each time/day
- less than 15 mins
- Other, please specify: _____

(c) Can teacher follow the above schedule of music class?

- Yes No (Around _____times/days per week,
_____mins each time/day)

(d) The usual size of a music class is:

- more than 30 25-29
 20-24 15-19
 10-14 less than 10
 Not applicable

(e) The usual number of teacher(s) in the music class is:

- more than 3 3
 2 1
 Not applicable

9. Please state the amount of time allocated to the most common music activities in your teaching: (You can “√” more than one)

- singing(e.g. 10mins) _____
 movement _____
 instrument Playing _____
 listening and music appreciation _____
 music Notation _____
 music Games _____
 others, please specify: _____

10. Please rank from “1” to “5”, the music activities preferred by your students (“1” for the most preferred area):

- singing
 music Games/movement
 instrument Playing
 listening and music appreciation
 music Notation
 others, please specify: _____

11. (a) The music curriculum adopted in your school is:

- a school-designed curriculum
 based on a music textbook published by the commercial (choose this answer, please skip and direct answer question 6c)

Others, please specify: _____

(b) The person who is responsible for developing the music curriculum / day-to-day music lesson in my school:

	<u>music curriculum</u>	<u>day-to-day music lesson</u>
school principal/supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
head teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
class teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
music trained teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
others, please specify :	_____	

(c) How satisfied are you with the music curriculum and day-to-day music lesson in your school (“1” being extremely satisfied? Why?

1 2 3 4 5
Extremely satisfied Highly satisfied Satisfied dissatisfied Very dissatisfied
Reason: _____

12. (a) Do you use music to intergrate other subjects?

- Yes
 No (choose this answer, please skip and direct answer question 8)

(b) Can you share examples and experiences of adopting an intergrated curriculum in which music forms an integral part.

(c) What is the effect and outcome for using music as the intergrated curriculum?

13. How would you describe your school in emphasizing the music teaching? Why? (please circle your choice)

1 2 3 4 5
Extremely emphases Highly emphases emphases Not emphases Not emphases at all
Reason: _____

SECTION 3: MUSIC TRAINING IN ECE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

PROGRAMME IN HONG KONG AND COMPETENCY

(Please “√” your choice)

- 1. Your satisfaction level of the music education training that you received during your professional teacher training can be described as below.**

Why?

1 2 3 4 5
Extremely satisfied Highly satisfied Satisfied dissatisfied Very dissatisfied

Reason: _____

- 2. Please rank from “1” to “5” the areas of music education and skills that you have been taught most during your EC professional teacher training.**

- music theory and reading notation
- music literature, history and style
- singing technique and with high degree of accuracy
- characteristics of children’s voices
- selecting appropriate songs
- leading and teaching songs
- play the piano accompaniments in standard music texts
- improvise and play the piano accompaniments with provided melody
- improvise and play the accompaniment on other instruments, e.g.guitar, etc
- using rhythm instruments
- developing and leading movement activities
- composition technique to create music or songs
- developing and leading listening lesson
- selecting recordings for children
- developing and leading music reading activities
- developing music curriculum
- using music to supplement other curricular areas
- designing music integrated curriculum
- others, please specify: _____

- 2. If the above items of professional teacher training was not included, please rank from “1” to “5” the areas that you most want to be included.**

(use “1” as the most preferred)

- music theory and reading notation
- music literature, history and style

- singing technique and with high degree of accuracy
- characteristics of children's voices
- selecting appropriate songs
- leading and teaching songs
- play the piano accompaniments in standard music texts
- improvise and play the piano accompaniments with provided melody
- improvise and play the accompaniment on other instruments, e.g.guitar, etc
- using rhythm instruments
- developing and leading movement activities
- composition technique to create music or songs
- developing and leading listening lesson
- selecting recordings for children
- developing and leading music reading activities
- developing music curriculum
- using music to supplement other curricular areas
- designing music integrated curriculum

4. Why do you think your “wish” areas of music learning was/were not included the early childhood professional teacher training:

- Not enough time
- It's not included
- It's not your expectation
- Others, please specify _____

5. Do you think it is workable to have music specialist to teach music in the early childhood education? Why?

- Yes No No comment

Reason: _____

6. Except music education training for an early childhood teacher to teach music, what kind of children development theory and practice do you think an early childhood teacher should also be equipped? Please rank from “1” to “5” (“1” as the most important area)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching and Learning (e.g. classroom management) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Observation, Record and Assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum Design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Health and Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Method |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child, Parent and Society | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above |

- Children Early Experience in academic subjects (e.g. language, math, science, IT, etc.)
- Children Arts Education (e.g. Music, Arts, Dance, etc.)
- Others, please specify: _____

SECTION 4: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / LIFELONG LEARNING NEEDS FOR IN-SERVICE TEACHERS

1. Please indicate your priority in professional development in relation to the following broad areas from “1” to “5”. (“1” as the top priority):

- Child Development
- Teaching and Learning (e.g. classroom management)
- Observation, Record and Assessment
- Curriculum Design
- Children’s Health and Care
- Teaching Method
- Child, Parent and Society
- None of the above
- Children Early Experience in academic subjects (e.g. language, math, science, IT, etc.)
- Children Arts Education (e.g. Music, Arts, Dance, etc.)
- Others, please specify: _____

2. Please indicate your priority of your professional development in relation to the following subject areas, please rank your priority from “1” to “5” to the following areas. (“1” as the top priority):

- language
- mathematic
- science
- social Science
- information Technology
- art
- physical Education
- music
- others, please specify: _____

3. If your school requires you to undertake professional development related to music teaching, you would prefer to take modules in: Please rank your preference from “1” to “5”. (“1” as the most preferred)

- music theory and reading notation
- music literature, history and style
- singing technique and with high degree of accuracy
- characteristics of children’s voices
- selecting appropriate songs
- leading and teaching songs

- play the piano accompaniments in standard music texts
- improvise and play the piano accompaniments with provided melody
- improvise and play the accompaniment on other instruments, e.g. guitar, etc.
- using rhythm instruments
- developing and leading movement activities
- composition technique to create music or songs
- developing and leading listening lesson
- selecting recordings for children
- developing and leading music reading activities
- developing music curriculum
- using music to supplement other curricular areas
- designing music integrated curriculum
- others, please specify: _____

4. Have you undertaken any professional development related to music up till now?

- Yes (If you choose this item, please go direct to question 10 to 14)
- No (If you choose this item, please only answer question 5 to 9)

5. Why have you have not taken any music related professional development? (You can “√” more than one)

- Financial problem
- Too much work load
- No time
- Never consider about it
- Others, please specify: _____

6. What is your preference in the following modes of professional development? (You can “√” more than one)

- part-time evening program
- summer/Winter break program
- weekend program
- full time program (taking leave from Job)
- others, please specify _____

7. What is your preference in relation to organizations that offer music-professional development training ? (You can “√” more than one)

- Government Accrediated Early Childhood Teacher Training Institution (e.g,

The Hong Kong Institute of Education, Baptist University, etc.)

- Government Supported Organization (please suggest: _____)
- Non-government Organization (please suggest: _____)
- Private Organization (Please suggest: _____)
- Others, please specify: _____)

8. What is preferred duration of music professional development training that you would consider to join? (You can “√” more than one)

- More than 3 years 3 years
- 2 years 1 year
- half year 3 months
- Not consider others, please pecify: _____

9. Please indicate the preferred qualification as a result of completing the music professional development programme. Then, indicate the cost that you would consider. (You can “√” more than one)

- Bachelor’s Degree
 - more than \$50,000 \$30,000-\$50,000 \$10,000-\$20,000 less than \$10,000
- Diploma
 - more than \$30,000 \$10,000-\$20,000 \$5,000-\$10,000 less than \$,000
- Certificate
 - more than \$10,000 \$5,000-\$10,000 \$3,000-\$5,000 less than \$3,000
- Attendance Certificate
 - more than \$5,000 \$3,000-\$5,000 \$1,000-\$3,000 less than \$1.000
- None of the above
- others, please specify: _____

(End of questionnaire. Thank you for your time and support!)

If You have joined music professional development within these two years, please answer question 10 to 14:

10. Within these two years, how many music professional development programmes have you joined?

- One Two
- Three More than Three

11. Please provide the details of your most recently joined music professional development programme:

Name of the programme:

Duration: from _____ to _____ Time _____

Organization: _____ Cost: _____

Qualification Obtain: _____

12. Why do you seek for music professional development ?

(You can “√” more than one)

- personal interest career prospect
 recognition school's requirement
 other, please specify: _____

13. How does your school support your music professional development? (You can “√” more than one)

- deduct the workload paid leave
 financial support on job training
 training after work None of the above
 other, please specify: _____

14. How does Government support your music professional development?

(You can “√” more than one)

- financial support (please specify the support and cost _____)
 provide training (Please specify: _____)
 tax deduction (Please specify: _____)
 recognition (please specify: _____)
 None of the above
 other, please specify: _____

(End of questionnaire. Thank you for your time and support!)

- 香港理工大學 香港專業教育學院 (李惠利)
- 其他，請說明 _____

(c) 您有沒有其他的學術履歷？(例如：副學士、其他科目之學士學位、碩士等)

- 有 沒有

如“有”，請說明學歷資格：_____

(d) 您現在有沒有修讀幼兒教育課程？(例如，幼兒教育學士學位，高級文憑／證書或其他科目之任何課程等)

- 有 沒有

如“有”，請說明學歷資格：_____

(e) 就您所知，學校的同事已完成幼兒教育學歷是：

- 教育學士 (幼兒教育) (BEd) _____ 個
- 高級文憑／證書 (CE／Diploma) _____ 個
- 合格幼稚園教師證書 (QKT) _____ 個
- 其他，請說明 _____ 個

7. (a) 您已接受以下之音樂教育訓練是：(即以音樂為主修科目)

- 教師證書 教師文憑
- 教育學士 教育碩士
- 上皆不適用 其他，請說明 _____

(b) 您的音樂技能資格是：(具正式証書／資格)

- 音樂樂理 _____ 級
- 鋼琴 _____ 級
- 其他樂器 _____， _____ 級
- 其他，請說明 _____

8. 您會怎樣形容您對於本身之幼兒教育工作，為什麼？(請圈出所選擇之項目)

- | | | | | |
|------|-----|----|------|-------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 非常滿意 | 很滿意 | 滿意 | 頗不滿意 | 非常不滿意 |
- 原因： _____

9. 請以“1”至“5”排列，作為幼兒教師您最大和最小的工作滿足感：

(以“1”表示最大)

- 個人興趣
- 職業前途

- 薪金
- 工作環境
- 兒童
- 其他，請說明_____

10. 請以“1”至“5”代表您願意任教音樂的意願？為什麼？(請圈出所選擇之項目)

- | | | | | |
|------|-----|----|------|-------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 非常願意 | 很願意 | 願意 | 頗不願意 | 非常不願意 |
- 原因: _____

11. 請以“1”至“5”代表您任教音樂的信心？為什麼？(請圈出所選擇之項目)

- | | | | | |
|-------|------|-----|------|------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 非常有信心 | 很有信心 | 有信心 | 頗欠信心 | 最沒信心 |
- 原因: _____

第二部份：學校裡的音樂教學 (請以“√”表示所選擇項目)

1. 學校以下的年級設有音樂課

- N1 N2/K1 N3/K2 N4/K3
- 以上皆沒有

2. (a) 學校音樂課是否都由受過專業音樂教育培訓 (具音樂教師證書資格) 之教師教授? 如“是”，有多少個教師？

- 不是 是 _____ (老師數目)
- 其他，請說明 _____

(b) 音樂課是否在特別室進行? 如“是”，有多少個課室？

- 不是 是 _____ (特別室數目)
- 其他，請說明 _____

(c) 學校是否採用音樂教科書? 如“是”，是那本音樂教科書？

- 不是 是 _____ (音樂教科書名稱)
- 其他，請說明 _____

(d) 請“√” 學校為音樂課現已提供／您期望學校可增添的器材：(可選擇多於一項)

學校現已提供 期望學校可增添

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 鋼琴 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 電子琴 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 鐳射唱片機或錄音機 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 無調性敲擊樂 (例如：搖鼓、鼓等) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 有調性敲擊樂 (例如：木片琴、鐘音條等) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 鐳射唱片、鐳射影片、數碼影片 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 其他，請說明 _____ | | |

3. (a) 學校規定學生參予的音樂課次數是：

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 一星期五次 | <input type="checkbox"/> 一星期四次 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 一星期三次 | <input type="checkbox"/> 一星期二次 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 一星期一次 | <input type="checkbox"/> 沒有規定 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 其他，請說明 _____ | |

(b) 學校規定每節音樂課的時間是：

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 每節多於 45 分鐘 | <input type="checkbox"/> 每節 45 分鐘 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 每節 30 分鐘 | <input type="checkbox"/> 每節 20 分鐘 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 每節 15 分鐘 | <input type="checkbox"/> 每節少於 15 分鐘 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 沒有規定 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 其他，請說明 _____ | |

(c) 教師實際上可否按規定的次數和時間進行音樂課？

- 可以 不可以
 (一般每星期大約次數是_____每節時間是_____)

(d) 每次參予音樂課的學生人數是：

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 多於 30 人 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-29 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15-19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10-14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 少於 10 人 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 不適用 | |

(e) 每次參予音樂課的教師人數是：

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 多於 3 人 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 人 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 人 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 人 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 不適用 | |

4. 您的音樂課通常有以下之活動，而時間分配是：(可選擇多於一項)

- 歌唱 _____ (例如 1 0 分鐘)

- 樂器演奏 _____ 分鐘
- 音樂遊戲／律動 _____ 分鐘
- 聆聽及音樂欣賞 _____ 分鐘
- 音樂符號 _____ 分鐘
- 其他，請說明_____ 分鐘

5. 請以“1”至“5”估計您的學生最喜歡之音樂活動：(以“1”代表最喜歡的)

- 歌唱 音樂遊戲／律動
- 樂器演奏 聆聽及音樂欣賞
- 音樂符號 其他，請說明_____

6. (a) 學校所採用的音樂課程是：

- 校本設計課程
- 坊間之音樂教科書 (選擇此項者，請直接回答問題 6c)
- 其他，請說明_____

(b) 學校主要負責設計整體音樂課程 /設計音樂課堂活動的是：

	<u>音樂課程</u>	<u>音樂課堂活動</u>
校長／園長	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
主任	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
班老師	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
音樂專科老師	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
其他，請說明_____		

(c) 您對於整體音樂課程 /音樂課堂活動的設計滿意嗎？為什麼？

(請圈出所選擇之項目)

1
2
3
4
5

非常滿意 很滿意 滿意 頗不滿意 非常不滿意

原因：_____

7. (a) 您是否有利用音樂進行綜合課程？

- 是 否 (選擇此項者，請直接回答問題 8)

(b) 試分享您利用音樂進行綜合課程的例子和經驗。

(c) 您認為利用音樂進行綜合課程對整體教學有什麼影響？

8. 您會怎樣形容您學校對於音樂教學的重視程度？為什麼？(請圈出所選擇之項目)

1	2	3	4	5
非常重視	很重視	重視	頗不重視	非常不重視

原因: _____

第三部份：香港專業幼兒教育課程之音樂培訓及音樂教學指標
(請以“√”表示所選擇項目)

1. 您已接受之專業幼兒教育課程 (簡稱 QKT 或 CE/Diploma 或 BEd)，您感到滿意嗎？為什麼？(請圈出你所選擇之項目)

1	2	3	4	5
非常滿意	很滿意	滿意	頗不滿意	非常不滿意

原因：_____

2. 在您已接受的專業幼兒教育課程中，請以“1”至“5”排列您最能學習到關於音樂教學及技能的培訓是什麼。(以“1”代表您最能學習到的項目)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 音樂理論及讀譜能力 | <input type="checkbox"/> 音樂文學、歷史及風格的知識 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 正確的歌唱技巧 | <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童聲音的特性 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 選擇合適歌曲 | <input type="checkbox"/> 帶領及教授歌曲 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 能以鋼琴伴奏一般性的樂曲 | <input type="checkbox"/> 即興地為歌曲以鋼琴伴奏 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 即興地為歌曲以其他樂器伴奏 | <input type="checkbox"/> 運用節奏樂器 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 設計及帶領律動活動 | <input type="checkbox"/> 創作音樂或歌曲 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 設計及帶領音樂聆聽 | <input type="checkbox"/> 選擇音樂聆聽及欣賞的基本曲目 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 設計及帶領讀譜活動 | <input type="checkbox"/> 設計音樂課程 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 以音樂輔助其他學科教學技巧 | <input type="checkbox"/> 綜合音樂課程設計 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 其他，請說明：_____ | |

3. 假使以上課程中未有包括，現在您又能選擇，請以“1”至“5”排列您最希望專業幼兒教育課程中能包括的音樂教學及技能的培訓項目。

(以“1”代表您最希望能包括的項目)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 音樂理論及讀譜能力 | <input type="checkbox"/> 音樂文學、歷史及風格的知識 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 正確的歌唱技巧 | <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童聲音的特性 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 選擇合適歌曲 | <input type="checkbox"/> 帶領及教授歌曲 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 能以鋼琴伴奏一般性的樂曲 | <input type="checkbox"/> 即興地為歌曲以鋼琴伴奏 |

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 即興地為歌曲以其他樂器伴奏 | <input type="checkbox"/> 運用節奏樂器 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 設計及帶領律動活動 | <input type="checkbox"/> 創作音樂或歌曲 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 設計及帶領音樂聆聽 | <input type="checkbox"/> 選擇音樂聆聽及欣賞的基本曲目 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 設計及帶領讀譜活動 | <input type="checkbox"/> 設計音樂課程 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 以音樂輔助其他學科教學技巧 | <input type="checkbox"/> 綜合音樂課程設計 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 其他，請說明： _____ | |

4. 就您估計，為何在專業幼兒教育課程中，未能包括以上您所期望選擇的音樂培訓項目？(可選擇多於一項)

- 時間不足
 內容沒有涵蓋
 內容並非所期望
 其他，請說明 _____

5. 您認為音樂科“專科專教”，這概念可以應用在幼兒教育上嗎？為什麼？

- 可以 不可以 無意見

原因: _____

6. 請以“1”至“5”排列出，您認為幼兒音樂老師除了音樂培訓以外，還需要具備的幼兒教育理論及實踐的裝備。(以“1”代表最需要的項目)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童發展 | <input type="checkbox"/> 學習與教學 (例如，課室管理) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 觀察，記錄及評估 | <input type="checkbox"/> 課程設計 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童身心健康發展 | <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童教學法 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童、家長及社會 | <input type="checkbox"/> 以上均不適用 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童之早期學科經驗 (例如，語文、識數、科學，資訊科技等) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童之藝術經驗 (例如，體能、美術、舞蹈等) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 其他，請說明： _____ | |

第四部份：在職幼兒教師之專業發展／終身學習

(請以“√”表示所選擇項目)

1. 如果您能選擇專業發展，請您以“1”至“5”排列出您所選擇在幼兒教育理論或實踐方面的發展項目。(以“1”代表最先選擇的項目)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童發展 | <input type="checkbox"/> 學習與教學 (例如，課室管理) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 觀察，記錄及評估 | <input type="checkbox"/> 課程設計 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童身心健康發展 | <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童教學法 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 兒童、家長及社會 | <input type="checkbox"/> 以上均不適用 |

- 兒童之早期學科經驗 (例如，語文、識數、科學，資訊科技等)
- 兒童之藝術經驗 (例如，體能、美術、舞蹈、音樂等)
- 其他，請說明：_____

2. 如果您能選擇專業發展，請您以“1”至“5”選擇以下的學科範疇。

(以“1”代表最先選擇的項目)

- 語文 數學
- 科學 社會科學
- 資訊科技 美術
- 體育 音樂
- 其他，請說明：_____

3. 如果學校要求您在音樂教學上之專業發展，請您以“1”至“5”排列選擇以下的音樂培訓項目。(以“1”代表最先選擇的項目)

- 音樂理論及讀譜能力 音樂文學、歷史及風格的知識
- 正確的歌唱技巧 兒童聲音的特性
- 選擇合適歌曲 帶領及教授歌曲
- 能以鋼琴伴奏一般性的樂曲 即興地為歌曲以鋼琴伴奏
- 即興地為歌曲以其他樂器伴奏 運用節奏樂器
- 設計及帶領律動活動 創作音樂或歌曲
- 設計及帶領音樂聆聽 選擇音樂聆聽及欣賞的基本曲目
- 設計及帶領讀譜活動 設計音樂課程
- 以音樂輔助其他學科教學技巧 綜合音樂課程設計
- 其他，請說明：_____

4. 到目前為止，您有沒有參予音樂教學上的專業發展？

- 有 **(如選擇此項，請跳過以下問題，直接回答問題 10 - 14)**
- 沒有 **(如選擇此項，請直接回答問題 5 - 9)**

5. 您還沒有尋求音樂教學上的專業發展原因是：(可選擇多於一項)

- 經濟問題 現時的工作負擔過重
- 沒有時間 從來沒有考慮過
- 其他，請說明：_____

6. 您希望參予的音樂教學專業發展課程形式是：(可選擇多於一項)

- 部份時間制 寒暑假假期進行
- 週末進行 全日制 (無薪假期)
- 其他，請說明：_____



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

School of Music

M413, 35 Stirling Highway, Crawley, WA 6009

Telephone: +61 8 6488 2058

Facsimile: +61 8 6488 1076

Email: sleong@arts.uwa.edu.au

Dear Pre-school principal/teacher,

February, 2005

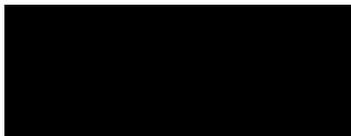
Winsor, Chan Chi Wah is a lecturer of the School of Early Childhood Education, the Hong Kong Institute of Education, currently undertaking a research project for her doctor of philosophy degree in music education at the University of Western Australia under my supervision. One important part of her study involves examining the current provision of music education for young children and musical training in early childhood teacher education in Hong Kong, the essential elements/competencies that early childhood teachers (ECE) and the professional/ lifelong learning needs of in-service ECE teachers of music. This information will be applied to develop a professional development framework for in-service ECE teachers in the teaching of music.

Your contribution to this study will be greatly appreciated and you will involve the completion of a pilot questionnaire that will take about 8 minutes. Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential and anonymous.

If you are happy to complete the questionnaire, please complete the attached questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope.

Thanking you in anticipation for your help.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Sam Leong M.A.C.E.

Director of Music Education

The University of Western Australia

Tel: 6488 2058 Email: sleong@arts.uwa.edu.au



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

School of Music

M413, 35 Stirling Highway, Crawley, WA 6009

Telephone: +61 8 6488 2058

Facsimile: +61 8 6488 1076

Email: sleong@arts.uwa.edu.au

Dear Pre-school principal/teacher,

August, 2005

Winsor, Chan Chi Wah is a lecturer of the School of Early Childhood Education, the Hong Kong Institute of Education, currently undertaking a research project for her doctor of philosophy degree in music education at the University of Western Australia under my supervision. One important part of her study involves examining the current provision of music education for young children and musical training in early childhood teacher education in Hong Kong, the essential elements/competencies that early childhood teachers (ECE) and the professional/ lifelong learning needs of in-service ECE teachers of music. This information will be applied to develop a professional development framework for in-service ECE teachers in the teaching of music. A questionnaire survey will be conducted to gather responses from a widely field of ECE principals and in-service teachers.

Your contribution to this study will be greatly appreciated and you will involve the completion of a questionnaire that will take about 10 minutes. Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential and anonymous.

If you are happy to complete the questionnaire, please complete the attached questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope.

Thanking you in anticipation for your help.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Sam Leong M.A.C.E.

Director of Music Education

The University of Western Australia

Tel: 6488 2058 Email: sleong@arts.uwa.edu.au