CREATIVITY IN EDUCATION FROM THE TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE AND ITS POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR MUSIC CREATIVE WORK WITH CHILDREN AGED 5–6 IN FORMAL EDUCATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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Abstract

This study is a qualitative research project focused on teachers' views of their influences on children's (aged 5–6) musical creativity within the context of formal education in the United Kingdom. The study offers insight into teachers' efforts to develop creativity directly and indirectly and explores other factors which connect to creativity, such as institutional context, teacher training, and musical and pedagogical skills. Participants (seven music teachers working in state and private schools in York, UK, with children aged 5–6) were recruited through snowball sampling and participated in one-to-one semi-structured interviews. The findings suggest that teachers implemented age-appropriate short improvisational and compositional tasks. However, free access to musical instruments was supported in nurseries rather than in Year 1 of formal school education. Interviewees considered themselves creative, musical, and musically creative teachers, although only some of them confirmed that their teacher training helped them develop children's musical creativity.

Keywords

5- and 6-year-old children – children's musical creativity – formal education – teachers' views

Introduction

Not only does content knowledge remain essential, but also certain dispositions to manage to live in an increasingly fluid globalized world (Bauman, 2014). At the same time, a disposition such as creativity may become politically commodified away from aesthetic and educational directions to fulfill economic interests (Craft, 2001; Craft, 2005). In connection to the technological, economic, and social changes in the last thirty years (Shaheen, 2010), creativity "might have been a luxury for the few, but by now it is a necessity for all" (Jackson et al., 2006). With this in mind, it is appropriate to consider the relationship between creativity and education from the "democratic" point of view, which means that it is not limited by talent. On the contrary, it is available to every individual as a basic capacity for future life because everyone has the potential to be creative (NACCCE, 1999; Neelands et al., 2015). According to the National Advisory Committee for Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE, 1999), children's creativity as a human character should be developed through formal education. Formal education following

the British National Curriculum was also influenced by Paynter's (1992) ideas of composing as a core creative musical activity in developing the curriculum in the 1990s.

In terms of creativity context, psychologists and researchers have described a distinction between "big C" creativity, having a broader influence on society, and "little c" creativity, defining creativity in terms of everyday problem-solving and benefiting the personality (Craft, 2001; Banaji et al., 2010). Following this, the "four c model of creativity" was structured (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009), and two other constructs were added: "mini-c creativity" and "professional creativity." First, the "mini-c" construct includes creativity inherent in the learning process, which is novel and meaningful for the creator. Second, the "little-c" level of creativity reflects growth and advancement, and the creative product may also be valued by others. Third, the "pro-c" level of creativity means to be creative at a professional level and with a professional value. Finally, the "big-C" level includes one's entire career and work, which makes a valuable contribution to the social-historical context. Within the present research, the first two constructs are appropriate.

Another difference in terminology has been delineated as product-oriented and process-oriented creativity (Smith, 2005). While product-oriented creativity focuses on novelty and appropriateness of the outcome (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999), process-oriented creativity concentrates on mental processes, including problem-solving, generating novel, unusual ideas, or their variety and combination (Esquivel, 1995; Tafuri, 2006). To apply it within the present research, children's musical "mini-c" or "little c" creative efforts flow to creative musical products which are new for the creator, not for the society (Webster, 2002) and have the form of improvisation or composition; the other forms of involvement with music are generally considered to be listening, performance, and composition (Peterson, 2006).

Kratus (1994) distinguished between improvisation, as the process of trying new musical ideas via exploration, and composition, as a process of variations and restructuration leading to a replicable product or as a primary medium of constructing musical understanding (Paynter, 1992). Specifically, a child's musical creative activity in a classroom may look like improvisation with voice, singing, lyrics, movement, musical instruments, and musical apps or writing music down in any way (Koutsoupidou, 2005). As mentioned before, creative musical products do not have to be absolutely new, but they may have a form of transformation, modification, combination, or variation (Tafuri, 2006). Compared with the "big C" creativity, which is the extraordinary work of a few geniuses, children's musical creative process is fundamental, playful, imaginative, spontaneous, and inventive (Craft, 2001; Tafuri, 2006; Cremin, 2009). The most significant benefit for the child is not creating products but the creative mental process itself (Esquivel, 1995). The quality of both "mini-c" and "everyday" creativity may be revealed in any aspect of life, any school subject, or any domain (Craft, 2001). However, creativity is determined by prior domain-specific knowledge and skills (Feldman & Benjamin, 2006; Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009). Along with all these aspects connected to creativity, it is not possible to judge creativity on any level independently of a specialized domain across time, social and cultural environment (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

The place where creativity and pedagogical practices rarely meet is called the "conventional teaching and learning process" (Lin, 2009), "traditional practices," or "fixed pedagogies" (Sawyer, 2004), where learning and teaching are two parallel processes. Therefore, a new meeting point was found in "fluid pedagogies" (Sawyer, 2004), allowing for discussion, exploring the unexpected, and fostering learners' creative potential. Another perspective highlights the importance of the interrelationship between "creative teaching" or "teaching

creatively" and the term "teaching for creativity," where the first former is inherent and the second leads directly to the latter (NAACE, 1999; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004).

Lin (2011) advances a "creative pedagogy" framework comprising three interconnected elements: creative teaching, teaching for creativity, and creative learning. Creative teaching inspires children via memorable, dynamic, engaging, innovative, exciting, and dynamic approaches (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; Craft, 2005; Craft, 2011). Teaching for creativity is focused on the learner, enabling him or her to explore, to arouse their motivation and their curiosity for learning (Craft, 2005; Lin, 2011), and provides the optimum balance between structure and freedom of expression (Runco, 1990; Craft, 2000). Creative learning is neglected compared to teaching creativity and teaching for creativity (Lin, 2011), and therefore also its components such as imagination, possible thinking, spontaneity, experimenting, playfulness, autonomy, collaboration, and risk-taking (Brinkman, 2010). In this research project, all the elements of creative pedagogy mentioned above are the conceptual framework for research within the musical context.

Several researchers have focused on the musical creativity of young children and their music teachers. For instance, Bilton (2012) and Siraj-Blatchford (2010) highlighted the role of teacher-child interactional quality in promoting children's thinking and developing, extending, and deepening children's musicality, knowledge, and creativity. However, only a few studies (Koutsoupidou, 2008; Rozman, 2009) focused on children's musical creativity from the teachers' perspective, using an interview as a research method. The first, Koutsoupidou (2008), ascertained that teachers believed that a child-centered, creative approach has a positive impact on developing children's musical creativity. The second, Rozman (2009) concluded that teachers were satisfied with creative musical activities in Slovenian classrooms. However, they were not fully acquainted with aspects of musical creative thinking and strategies for teaching composition and improvisation.

In accordance with Lin's (2011) model of creativity mentioned previously, Uszyńka's (1998) quantitative research of 643 6-year-old pre-schoolers showed that the most significant factor determining a child's creative potential is the pedagogic one. This study follows Uszyńska's (1998) conclusion and expands it into formal music education. The main aim is to investigate how the perspective of music teachers in formal educational institutions influences the musically creative potential of 5-year-olds and 6-year-olds. The study addresses more specific research questions; two of them are drawn from the areas in Uszyńska's (1998) conclusion: Which approaches, resources, motivation, and what type of behavior and educational style are used by teachers to develop children's musical creativity directly? How do teachers prepare the classroom atmosphere and musical instruments to develop children's musical creativity indirectly? The third question was added to explore which other factors might influence teachers and their fostering of children's musical creativity: How do factors such as institutional context, teacher training, and musical and pedagogical skills influence the development of children's musical creativity?

Method

For this study, the semi-structured interview as a qualitative method was used. The qualitative-oriented paradigm was deployed in order to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' experience in developing children's musical creativity in their own words and from their

perspectives. Following the extensive preliminary reading, related topics and relevant interview themes were combined into an interview schedule. The semi-structured interviews used open-ended questions to gather data about topics related to teachers' encouragement of children's musical creativity (Job in a school, Music lessons, Children's musical creativity, Teacher's musical and pedagogical skills, Teacher training). The study took place in York, UK, and participants were recruited through snowball sampling. The initial point of contact was emailing all primary schools in York and then observing a few of their music lessons. Following this, invitations to participate in the research were sent to all teachers who agreed to participate in the observation. They were encouraged to inform other teachers about the research and forward them an information letter about the project. Through this process, seven teachers were recruited. The first stage involved going into classrooms and observing the teachers working with pupils, which helped to understand the classroom context. Subsequently, each face-to-face interview with the teachers took around 45–60 minutes. The digital recordings of the interviews were transcribed and sent back to participants to enable them to make any amendments or additions regarding creative musical materials, books, websites, and other resources.

Participants and Ethical Considerations

Seven teachers took part, all teaching children aged 5–6 in formal educational institutions in York. This age group of five- and six-year-olds was chosen for two reasons. First, the children are developing physically, psychologically, and socially. They desire to learn, explore, and experiment, which is a good basis for learning to tolerate essential musical rules and for the development of musical creativity. Second, the pedagogical approach to music education at this educational level is characterized as playful, disparate, practical, sensorial, movement-based, child-led, and crucial for future child's creativity development (Craft, 2000; Craft, 2005; Brinkman, 2010). In addition, children of this age may be taught by both non-specialists and music specialists; these may differ in approaches and confidence in musical and pedagogical skills and may encounter contrasting challenges. Five of the seven teachers included in this research project were music specialists (music teaching for all age groups); one was a freelance music teacher and a music specialist simultaneously, and the last was an Early Years teacher (teaching 4–5-year-old children). All of them were female, with a mean age of 46.1, between ages 28–55, and their teaching experience averaged 21.9 years, with a range of 7–31 years (see Table 1).

Regarding private and state schools, the two different types of schools were considered. However, the fact that only a few participants responded resulted in a mix of schools. With a low sample, the implications of choosing a mix of schools might be that there are differences in resources that have a bearing on the provision of instruments. It was impossible to state whether these also had implications for attitudes towards music from the head teacher, other staff, or parents.

Permission for the interview study was obtained from the Arts and Humanities Ethics Committee at the University of York.

Table 1. *Characteristics of study participants.*

Participants	Age	Teaching experience	Teacher type	Type of school	Educational attainment
P1	55	30	Freelance, music specialist	State	Master Musical Theatre
P2	45	23	Early Years teacher	State	Bachelor of Science
P3	53	25	Music specialist	State	Master Educational Studies
P4	55	31	Music specialist	State	Bachelor of Education
P5	28	7	Music specialist	State	Master in Community Music
P6	39	17	Music specialist	Private	Bachelor of Music
P7	48	20	Music specialist	State	Bachelor of Arts

Data Analysis

The guidelines of Cohen et al. (2011) and Robson & McCartan (2016) were used for analysis. The first step in analyzing data was to transfer audible data into written form. For this interpretative process, transcribing the verbal content alone was chosen. During this step, the researcher became more familiar with the data and the content of the interviews. After that, the inductive process of thematic content analysis started by assigning initial codes to data (Robson & McCartan, 2016). The next step was to collate all the sections with the same code in categories and then search for the broader themes and subthemes (Cohen et al., 2011). The themes, subthemes, and codes were reconsidered during the next step before organizing, defining, and naming the theme. Finally, the structured data as a whole was interpreted, and verbatim quotes were extracted to support arguments. To help with data organization, the computer program NVivo was used.

Results and Discussion

The results are divided into three main themes within the context of teachers' influence on children's musical creativity in formal education: (1) direct influence, (2) indirect influence, and (3) other influencing factors. Each of these themes contains several related subthemes. The first one, teachers' direct influence, consists of the following subthemes: creative musical approaches, teacher's behavior and educational style, supporting motivation, and used resources. The second theme, teachers' indirect influence, involves subthemes such as classroom atmosphere and communication and free access to musical instruments. The last theme, other influencing factors, incorporates institutional context, musical and pedagogical skills, and teacher training.

It might seem that musical and pedagogical skills should exert a "direct" rather than "other" influence on children's creative work. Direct influence is considered to comprise all teacher actions observable in the classroom from the point of view of an impartial observer (e.g., used motivation tools, approaches to foster musical creativity, resources, and

educational style). Musical skills and pedagogical skills might have been observable, too, but on a long-term basis. Analysis of creative, musical, and musical creative skills was conducted based on teachers' own pedagogical experience to date, self-assessment of skill levels, and self-reflection of current needs. That is why pedagogical and musical skills are located in the "other influence factor" section, along with teacher training and school context. The findings are discussed thematically within these groupings.

1) Teachers' Direct Influence on Children's Musical Creativity

Musically Creative Approaches

These music educators use various approaches; the most popular methods are Orff Schulwerk, the Kodály Method (Whitcomb, 2007), and Dalcroze Eurhythmics. Two teachers (P1, P6) followed a Kodály approach to music. One of them (P1) had received additional Dalcroze training. Other teachers did not follow existing creative approaches, though they did use some elements derived from them. Instead, they preferred to implement short improvisational and compositional tasks such as making up sound effects, tunes, rhythmic patterns, rhythmic ostinatos, movement responses to music, changing words in songs, creating words to fit a rhythm, singing responses (call-and-response games, such as improvising question/ response musically) and little compositions. For example, P2 mentioned a task where children imitated natural sounds: "Can you find the instrument that could represent the sound of the thunder or can you find which makes the sound of the rain?".

P5 specified more complex musical creative tasks, which she has done recently: "We composed a storybook soundtrack. It was linked with their literacy in their English. They had pictures that they then had to compose and perform and notate their own music to go alongside." These teachers tried to find some possibilities to develop children's musical creativity, even if they did not schematically follow any of the previously-mentioned musical creative approaches. The reasons were that the teachers were not trained to use them. They also thought that they did not necessarily need them because their current teaching included appropriate musically creative tasks. According to several studies focused on creative activities in general music (Koutsoupidou, 2005; Whitcomb, 2007), the most common improvisation activity is the call-and-response game. It contains a rhythmic or melodic motive and instrumental improvising with unpitched and pitched percussion instruments (e.g., Orff mallet instruments). Additionally, movement and dance improvisation activities were also used quite often (Koutsoupidou, 2005.)

Teacher's Behavior and Educational Style

Esquivel (1995) found that teachers who approached music education with a humanistic orientation, who had developed their own creativity and implemented creative methods in their classroom, were more effective in fostering creative abilities than teachers who behave traditionally and often use instructions. Kautsopidou (2008) explored the effect of different teaching styles on the development of musical creativity and found that teachers believed that child-centered approaches positively impact children's musical creative development.

All interviewed teachers followed this humanistic philosophic orientation (Rogers, 1959), focusing on developing children's self-esteem, willingness to learn, and developing autonomy. However, one of them (P1) described a bad experience in previous employment related to a lack of teaching and learning autonomy. According to this teacher (P1), following the humanistic approach also meant "establishing boundaries" and being "firm; otherwise, you just have chaos." On the other hand, the teachers' instructions and classroom rules could not be too strict; otherwise, children would "replace their creativity for social acceptance" (Annarella, 1999, 7); therefore, focusing too strongly on behavior could limit the extent of creative practice.

Teachers described their behavior and educational style as creative (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7), flexible (P1, P2, P3, P7), supporting (P2, P6, P7), practical (P3, P4, P7) and collaborative (P2, P6) in their musically creative parts of lessons. Teachers (P1, P3, P4, P5, P7) tended to make it fun "because in our educational system [...] young children [have] quite a lot of pressure to succeed in English and maths" (P7). Moreover, teachers aimed to encourage children to explore and take risks: (P6) "because it's not that many subjects where they can be completely creative." In terms of flexibility and pedagogical creativity, teachers adapted their lesson plan to children's knowledge: (P1) "because you don't sometimes know how much the children know" or their actual desires: (P7) "they've [children] really got excited about an activity that they're doing." These teachers' approaches in their music lessons correlate with Dacey (1989), who claimed that creative teachers' most important personality traits are their attitude to creativity and their ability to be accepting, open, and flexible.

Supporting Motivation

Interviewees mentioned two opinions regarding the best way to encourage children to do something musically creative. One of the motivational attitudes was that it is sufficient to be passionate and enthusiastic as a music teacher: (P5) "I think if you're passionate about what you're delivering, and you enjoy what you're doing, they're going to get a sense of enjoyment out of it as well. If you have fun doing what you're doing, and you encourage and praise whatever feedback you get from them, they're going to want to do more of it." According to one of the teachers, children will become motivated by themselves (P2): "There's no issue with motivation at all. [...] They're just naturally self-motivated." In literature, this approach to motivation is proposed as Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1989), where the primary influence is a social one (Ryan & Deci, 2000). For children (Bandura, 1989), social influence is represented by the interrelationship between teacher and children. In this case, the teacher may be viewed as an external factor influencing intrinsic motivation. Teachers occupy a special and meaningful place in children's musical creative development, and children seem more motivated when teachers are dynamic, enthusiastic, and vital (Kunter et al., 2011).

Both intrinsic (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1990) and extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000) have unique features to motivate children, are needed in a learning process and have positive consequences for creativity. While intrinsic motivation leads to self-motivation in learning, external motivation gives the purpose to pursue learning. Two other teachers (P1 and P6) agreed with the importance of the teacher's enthusiasm but also emphasized the importance of extrinsic motivation, especially for this age group. Three teachers (P3, P4, P7) mainly relied on extrinsic motivation, in agreement with Ryan & Deci's

(2000) study, where they stated that some forms of extrinsic motivation tools might promote action which can be internalized later on and contribute beneficially to autonomy. Motivation tools mentioned by these teachers included engaging stories (P2, P3, P7), pictures (P3, P4, P7), video clips (P1, P7), topics related to other subjects (P3, P6), puppets (P1) or superheroes (P7). Cameron (2001) added that appropriate external stimuli support children's learning willingness and may stimulate intrinsic motivation.

On the other hand, not all extrinsic stimuli are appropriate in music education because when these extrinsic stimuli disappear, interest may disappear, too. For example, P6 used stickers and expanded her approach: "If they do well, I get the stickers, one might say 'who can tell me what tempo means' and these little things like that." This statement is inconsistent with Deci et al. (2001), who recommended avoiding focusing on awards, marks, points, deadlines, or compliments because they may diminish children's intrinsic motivation to learn; these authors suggested that teachers should be cautious about using them.

Used Resources

The teachers tended to use digital resources rather than printed materials. To foster children's musical creativity, they preferred to use YouTube (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7) to listen to various pieces of music in a different music context such as historical, interpreter, or genre context. Participants used other digital resources such as curriculum materials, including Charanga Musical School (Charanga, 1997) (P2, P3, P4, P7), the vocal program Sing Up (Sing Up, 2007) (P1, P6), supporting classical music listening and creativity material such as 10 Pieces – BBC (BBC, 2014) (P4, P7) and ABRSM: Classical 100 (ABRSM, 2015) (P1). To foster instrumental creativity, they used Charanga or a website called Ukulele Rocks (Ukulele Rocks, 2015) (P4).

All teachers were familiar with digital material such as Charanga Musical School, a complete scheme to teach the UK's National Curriculum for music. However, they had mixed views, although some felt quite passionate about it. Some teachers (P2, P3, P4, P7) used it regularly, but not for the whole music lesson because they were aware of Charanga's limitations. Participants often used Charanga's creative musical apps on whiteboards such as rhythm grids (rhythmic game with 2, 3, and 4-beat time signatures), percussion writer (playing along with famous pieces on percussion instruments), and music explorer (including pulse, improvising, or listening skills games) collectively within the class, or they let pupils gain inspiration from these creative apps and apply the ideas using objects in the classroom (e.g., using a rope grid on the floor and note length symbols).

However, several teachers (P1, P5) criticized Charanga, feeling that the week-by-week lessons that it provided for each year group in the school were potentially "quite prescriptive and not inventive" (P5) and also "very restricted in terms of creativity" (P1). P2 detected the probable cause of that when she realized that "there's also the problem that I am not as creative in the way I deliver music as maybe I used to be because that's [Charanga] already done it for me." P3 added that "the Charanga has its own plan, so the teachers could just print the plan off, that's done, and just follow the plan." Teachers agreed it could be a helpful tool for non-specialist music teachers but felt it should be used only as an additional resource.

Regarding printed materials, several teachers used religious songbooks (P3, P4, P5) related to school faith. Other publications, such as Voices Foundation (Voices Foundation,

1993) books (P1, P6) and NYCoS (National Youth Choir of Scotland, 1996) publications (P1), were also mentioned. Religious songbooks were intended for church service use in particular but were not used for musically creative tasks. Two teachers (P1, P6) focused on developing children's musical voices using books from the Voices Foundation based on the Kodály creative approach (P1). All teachers tended to use digital resources more often than printed materials because all of the resources are in one place, and it is easier to use them.

Several teachers created musical games and other musical didactical aids independently (P1, P4, P5, P6). For instance, they created rhythm cards (P1, P4, P6), a carousel/musical maze (P5), a notation pyramid (P5), and a grid method (P4). However, two of them (P5, P6) said this was not motivated by their own initiative but by school finance: (P5) "There's no money for it. So, every resource I do have, I make myself." That could also be motivated by a lack of appropriate resources for this age group: (P6) "I've tended to create the resources just because there's not that much other really for that age group." Only one teacher (P1) created cards and games on her own initiative to deepen interest and fun.

2) Teachers' Indirect Influence on Children's Musical Creativity

Classroom Atmosphere and Communication

Teachers should prepare an accepting environment and psychologically safe classroom atmosphere (Elliot, 1995) where they help children to feel comfortable in unpredictable and complex situations and encourage risk-taking. As reported by researchers including Rogers, 1959; Hickey, 2001; O'Connor, 2012, one of the most important conditions for the development of children's musical creativity is to foster environments where the emphasis is on the process of creating, where pupils are allowed to explore and where all attempts are accepted. Otherwise, the development of musical creativity could be slowed down and suffer. One of the interviewees (P4) noticed the benefits of a good atmosphere for children and herself as well: "They are always happy about the atmosphere, you know, when you're singing or when you play. I do feel that even in my own self." All interviewed teachers were aware of the importance of creating safe and non-judging classroom environments, and they considered it an essential starting point for fostering children's musical creativity.

Teachers aim to create an atmosphere where they build up a pupil's self-confidence and self-esteem and where there are no right and wrong questions or responses. Hence, children could not be afraid of a teacher judging their responses. Several researchers (e.g., Wegerif, 2013) stressed the importance of teaching "for dialogue" as well as teaching "through dialogue," where children can determine not only knowledge but also learn from themselves and become courageous to ask and get involved. McGreevy (1990) proposed supporting children's creative thinking by giving attention to their interests, offering choices, using open-ended questions, encouraging questions, and exploring their opinions. Participating teachers' responses suggested that they mostly communicated verbally with children and often asked questions to keep children's attention and allow them to explore. They reported frequently inviting pupil-reflection on a piece of music using open questions where all answers were welcomed. P7 explained the value of these types of questions: "It's trying to teach them that they can explore, and it's not how to do it right." One of the teachers (P1) added that she used questions to consider the quality of what they are doing, to make them

"think about what they are doing" and "challenge them with their thinking as well." This view correlates with Williams and Sternberg (1993), who recommended asking questions and letting children formulate answers and questions to enhance their intellectual development.

Another teacher (P3) used plenary (a session which all pupils attend) "to evaluate how it is gone" and to think about "how we can improve it for next week" to achieve better results collaboratively. That corresponds to Woodward's suggestion to provide children with helpful feedback, which may improve their creative music-making (Woodward, 2005). Two teachers who followed the Kodály creative approach to music (P1, P6) communicated with children also through music. Teachers and pupils used their rhythm or voices to ask and respond to questions. P6 specified this approach in a task: "We always start the lesson with sort of a 'Hello, how are you' and they're going to respond back." Both P1 and P6 added that this vocal communication (P1) "developed [children's] inner confidence" when they had the opportunity to sing on their own and, at the same time, enabled them to improvise, explore and communicate through music.

Free Access to Musical Instruments

Runco (1990) pointed out that the stimulation offered by a child's physical environment is very influential in his or her creativity. In terms of musical creativity, this could include the quality of musical equipment and access to musical instruments. According to all teachers interviewed in this research, in the early years of teaching, the classroom environment was usually prepared to indirectly influence children's musical creativity in the form of a specific music corner or a music basket. Littleton (1991) studied play settings' influence on children's (4- to 5-year-old) music and play behaviors, and it was recommended that more time for free play in music should be encouraged. The Early Years teacher (P2) stated: "There's a basket which is on the floor in the corner. That's got untuned instruments in, and it's got the little xylophone in as well, and there's a book about musical instruments." This teacher (P2) cared about indirect music encouragement, intentionally and regularly changing different instruments or music books in the basket. Another teacher (P1) described her previous experience in a nursery school where was a musical corner with free access, and she "might sort of respond to what they're doing, let them lead and then respond and see what they do have done." Moreover, the Early Years teacher (P2) observed that a prepared environment might indirectly foster social interaction and collaboration and benefit both social and musical creative development.

As reported by some teachers (P1, P3, P4, P6, P7), pupils in Year 1 do not have free access to musical instruments to enhance spontaneous music-making during break time. The reasons for providing restricted access were: (P3) "that it could be damaged" and "vandalized, which is a shame;" musical instruments are "too expensive." P4 was afraid of unsupervised manipulation because "the staff needs their break," and educators cannot "leave the children" while they are playing musical instruments. Another teacher (P7) saw the free access problem as a lack of education system support in spontaneous music making. P3 added that it is because "It gets too noisy" and could be noisy for neighboring classes. Several teachers (P3, P4, P7) suggested a solution for this situation which (P4) "could work towards some outdoor instruments." Only one of the teachers (P5) proved that it is possible to foster musical spontaneity during break time: "I run a music section drop-in, I am in the room, and

they can play the musical instruments." Although all teachers realized that free access to musical instruments could benefit children, only two of them (P2, P5) confirmed that their educational institutions enabled it for their pupils.

3) Other Factors Influencing Children's Musical Creativity

Institutional Context

Most teachers (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P7) were employed in state schools, and one teacher (P6) worked in the private sector. Three of these schools were church schools, specifically the Church of England and Roman Catholic. Other schools were slightly unusual in some specific aspects (e.g., community environment, multicultural diversity). Each school tended to offer musical activities for children, such as music clubs, choirs, instrumental ensembles, concerts for parents, and one-to-one instrument lessons led by external teachers. Additionally, one of the teachers (P4) organized a ukulele club, a belle plates (similar to handbells) club, and, in the past, a recorder club. The whole school concerts usually run at the end of each term and on special occasions (e.g., Christmas, Easter). One of the schools offered the opportunity for children to perform their own creative output: (P5) "We have a big half-termly concert which is a sharing evening. So, that's with poetry and also music that kids have written [...] We encourage parents to come and celebrate things like that a lot." Even though institutions tended to support children's musical development, some experts (Torrance, 1963; Meador, 1992) pointed out that children are more creative before they enter kindergarten. These findings lead to questions about what formal education could do to support continued creativity development.

One of the things that an institution may do is to create a productive atmosphere and good relationships (Stein, 1974) between all people involved in the school: employer, staff, children, and children's families. All of the interviewed teachers confirmed that they were satisfied with the schools where they taught music and liked their job. Their satisfaction was mainly caused by (P3) "very nice family atmosphere," by the staff relationships who are (P2) "very friendly and [...] there's a lot of respect, we all get on" and by working with parents (P1) "together in a partnership to help the children." All of these teachers highlighted the school atmosphere and positive relationships, although one teacher (P5) pointed out a negative aspect as well. Her staff colleagues were "really lovely and friendly on a personal basis," but "when it comes to school-related items, their [...] work will come first, and they don't really like collaborating to support." One of the teachers (P2) also appreciated the trust and freedom given to her by the institution: "I'm allowed to teach the way I think is right for young children; not every school would give me that freedom." According to O'Connor (2012), embracing freedom reflects the teacher's freedom in a classroom as a vehicle for creative learning.

Teachers also mentioned the importance of positive views on the value of musical creativity and music as a subject by their staff colleagues and employers. One of the teachers (P3) received moral and financial support from the head teacher, who "values it [music] so much" and therefore "decided to use extra money to give them [children of parents who don't earn very much money] music lessons. So, there are some children learning the guitar or violin." Two teachers (P3, P7) initiated applying music in other non-musical subjects to show their non-specialist colleagues how they (P7) "could use music or singing for teaching math"

or how "to get music more throughout the lessons." However, according to these teachers, not every colleague had this positive view of musical creativity or music as a subject; mixed feelings were predominant (P2, P4, P5, P7). That is because of music's perceived "lower" educational value compared to mathematics or language lessons (P5). All of these teachers considered music a substantial part of general education and realized that it is beneficial in many ways. Nevertheless, their institutional environment was not supportive, collaborative, or understanding in all cases.

Musical and Pedagogical Skills

Many studies describe the conflict between the identities of being a music teacher and a musician-performer (e.g., Isbell, 2008). In this study, teachers viewed themselves in different proportions of being teachers and musicians. Four teachers (P2, P3, P4, P6) reported that they regarded themselves as more teachers than musicians: (P3) "A lot of my own hobbies are music. But I think, first of all, I'm a teacher." Two other teachers (P1, P5) said they were both: (P5) "I wouldn't say I was one of them. I am both." Another one (P7) answered that she was "more a musician than a teacher." Ballantyne (2004) stated that teachers have to be skillful and competent musicians, first and foremost, and educators.

Nevertheless, all teachers considered themselves as musical and musically creative persons regarding teaching. That manifested in attitude toward teaching and further learning (P6). This participant analytically reflected on her pedagogical practice leading to teaching musical creativity as a process of learning from her own mistakes. However, some differences appeared in considering themselves as musical/musically creative teachers, especially in the context of their strengths and weaknesses.

Teachers described their strengths as music teachers and as musically creative teachers. They aimed to make the music units fun (P1, P3, P4, P5, P7), interesting and engaging (P1, P3, P5) and to be enthusiastic (P1, P5, P6) about what they are delivering. P3 added that her strength is to "convey quite tricky ideas to children and make it interesting and fun." All of the music specialists (P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7) felt confident as musicians, especially in playing their musical instruments or singing. Appropriate music skills were seen to be linked to their teaching confidence. Hence, they tended to develop their music skills in their leisure time, except for one teacher (P1). Most often, they sang in adult choirs (P2, P3, P4, P5) or performed in orchestras (P3, P5, P7). Less often, they took part in a musical theatre group (P5), conducted a choir (P6), performed duets with a friend (P3), or just played a musical instrument for fun at home (P2).

As for weaknesses, they declared various things. For some music specialists (P5, P6, P7), the most significant weakness was to ensure (P5) "that everyone has understood the basic differentiation of tasks [...] because of how many kids agewise [they have] in groups" and to make sure that they can "maintain engagement and challenge." Additionally, P7 added that her weakness is also "managing children's behavior." The second most frequently mentioned weakness was playing the piano with confidence and sufficient competence, particularly for teachers (P1, P3, P4) whose main instruments were not piano. That was because they did not have time for practicing, and the two teachers' first instrument was the flute, and they were (P3) "very much obsessed with the treble clef."

Regarding musical creativity, one teacher (P1) described her greatest weakness as "a lack of [...] I would say the development of the composition." The Early Years teacher's (P2) weakness was connected with little knowledge of music theory. She preferred to sing with children rather than play a musical instrument that she could play by ear. However, she has never played in front of anybody because she felt unconfident. For teaching trickier music theory, she used the Charanga resources. A lack of confidence in music teaching linked to generalist teachers' sense of self-efficacy; perceptions of themselves as "not musical" has been discussed in many studies (Holden & Button, 2006; Henley, 2016). According to participants and previous observations, all those pedagogical and musical strengths and weaknesses mentioned above influenced their self-confidence in music teaching.

Teacher Training

The highest level of teachers' education is mentioned in Table 1. Moreover, teachers had additional training: Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). Most of the teachers (P1, P5, P6, P7) were satisfied with their studies and felt pre-pared to teach music. Several teachers (P1, P4, P5, P6) described that teacher training also helped them develop children's musical creativity. Additionally, some teachers (P5, P6, P7) confirmed that developing children's musical creativity and also their own musical creativity was a part of their teacher training: (P5) "We were graded obviously on how we interpreted a scale of work creatively to engage children in a different way." Teachers also described some shortcomings of teacher training: it was too theoretical (P6, P7) or not focused enough on music (P2, P3). As a result, teachers relied on the experiences coming through their own practice, sharing ideas with other music teachers or on subsequent specific musical courses. The results are consistent with Koutsoupidou (2005), who found that some teachers in the UK did not include improvisation in their teaching; this resulted from a lack of improvising experience and understanding of how to teach it.

Participating teachers appreciated specific subsequent musical courses, which they were free to choose for their own further development. They preferred this type of course rather than further formal study, except for one teacher (P5) who planned to start a Ph.D. study. For example, teachers mentioned courses such as Sing Up (P1, P3, P6), Dalcroze training (P1), or Kodály training (British Kodály Academy, c.2018) (P1). Moreover, a network called York Music Hub (York Music Hub, c.2017) (P3, P4) was also appreciated; one of its aims was (P3) "to share ideas" among all the music coordinators in primary schools. That corresponds to Whitcomb's (2007) study, where a significant positive relationship between implementing improvisation instructions and teachers' past experiences with improvisation training and workshops was noted.

Limitations

Although this study was carefully prepared, and the researcher tried to avoid biases and shortcomings, some limitations were evident after the study was completed. Even though it was a qualitative study, the sample size was obviously tiny in relation to the number of music teachers working with 5- and 6-year-old-children in the UK. Additionally, the size sample

was not balanced because it included quite experienced teachers and, in most cases, music specialists; further research could usefully probe possible differences between novice and experienced teachers or differences between those with extensive musical training and those who do not play musical instruments. Additionally, using another method (e.g., structured observation of music lessons) and triangulation could expand and validate data from other sources and reduce research weaknesses and biases. Nevertheless, the findings give an in-depth insight into teachers' thoughts and practices for developing children's musical creativity and provide useful considerations for educators.

Conclusions and Possible Implications

The research findings suggest that teachers tended to foster 5- and 6-year-old children's musical creativity directly while using digital and printed resources or creating their own educational aids or games. Interviewees reported flexible and creative approaches and encouraged children to explore and take risks. They reported communicating with non-judgmental and open-question strategies, which helped pupils to feel that there is no right or wrong answer and also helped them to enhance their intellectual and social development. Regarding indirect influence, teachers tried to create a psychologically safe atmosphere where pupils were allowed to explore and make mistakes. Subsequently, teachers could implement some short improvisational and compositional tasks with respect to pupils' musical creative development. They stated that in their experience, children in early years education usually have free access to musical instruments to foster spontaneous music-making during break time, but this may no longer continue in Year 1. Concerning other factors influencing children's musical creativity, teachers engaged in developing children's musical creativity with commitment and enjoyment even though not all of them were supported by their head teachers or staff colleagues. Participants considered themselves creative, musical, and musically creative teachers, but only some of them received teacher training in developing their own or children's musical creativity.

The results of this study could have implications for potential changes on a practical level and a research level. Some practical recommendations could be made from participating teachers' comments. Some tensions between the practice of different teachers and the institutional provision and the teachers' training have implications for children's education. Firstly, the context and framework of their school teaching should allow them the flexibility to be creative and could provide less expensive musical instruments for spontaneous music-making outside during break time or could supervise the use of musical instruments. Secondly, teachers could receive more training in musical creativity and also participate more practically, musically, and musical creatively during their teacher training.

Moreover, during this training, teaching for musical creativity should be highlighted more to make teachers understand the benefits to them and the children in their classroom. The same suggestions were also recommended by Katsoupidou (2009). Finally, enhancing pupil motivation through not only teachers' enthusiasm but also through other motivational tools such as puppets, stories, and pictures is recommended and in line with recommendations from literature (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Cameron, 2001; Deci et al., 2001).

This qualitative study implicated several opportunities for future research to refine and elaborate the findings. Some existing studies (e.g., Rozman, 2008; Katsoupidou, 2009)

explored the teachers' perspectives on children's musical creativity. However, there is a research gap concerning studies on children's musical creativity from the point of view of educators working with 5- and 6-year-old children. There is also scope for qualitative and quantitative studies with larger sample sizes to ascertain how teachers develop children's musical creativity. Future studies could be extended longitudinally to see the effect of fostering children's musical creativity. Furthermore, they could also be extended using comparative ways to examine differences in teachers' influences on children's musical creativity in different schools, educational approaches, or countries to inspire teachers in their teaching practice and to extend possibilities of encouraging children's musical creativity.

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