

**Marching Band Directors' Attitudes Towards
Participation in Marching Band Competitions: A Descriptive Survey**
by

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Abstract

The purpose of this quantitative study was to learn about the reasons high school band directors choose to participate in marching band competitions. This was a descriptive study which involved an anonymous online survey. Participants ($N = 265$) included secondary school band directors in the United States who were also members of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). A survey was distributed to participants using the Research Survey Assistance Program through NAfME. The survey instrument contained three sections. The first section consisted of 15 closed-ended, multiple-choice questions and two open-ended questions intended to gather demographic information about the director and their marching band. The survey continued with 35 Likert-type items that sought marching band directors' attitudes and opinions concerning their participation in marching band competitions. Frequencies and means were used to tally responses in attitudes of directors. Likert items were grouped into scales based on themes found in the literature. A Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted on each Likert scale to determine if any significant ($p < .05$) differences existed between each demographic item and other survey responses. Twenty-five statistically significant results were found when comparing the 5 Likert item scales and four individual Likert items with the 17 demographic variables. These results revealed three key findings. First, over half of the directors ($n = 144, 54.4\%$) ranked the educational value associated with competitions as important or the most important variable when choosing to participate in marching band competitions. Next, the items for pressures associated with competitions received the lowest ranking for importance ($n = 86, 36.4\%$). Finally, the region where a band director lives and works, the years of teaching experience, and the style of marching band seems to have some effect on attitudes of marching band directors and participation in competitions. Results from this study are not conclusive due

to the limited sample. Further research and data analysis are needed to address key areas of this study. Younger directors (0 – 4 years of experience) indicated they pressure themselves to compete at a higher level than any other age group. The first five years for a new director are a critical time for their development and continued success in the field of teaching. A more in-depth study of how pressures directly affect band directors should be conducted. Another area of this study with implications for future music education research was the importance directors placed on the educational value of competitions. While the educational value of marching band competitions remains rather controversial, results of this study indicate this was the most important variable in their decision to participate in marching band competitions. Music educators need to continue to develop competitions that are equitable for all marching bands that choose to participate and provide ways for students and directors to receive positive and constructive feedback that improves student performance. A study focusing on the development and implementation of standards-based competitions would be beneficial to the field of music education.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	2
Acknowledgments	4
List of Tables	9
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	10
Need for the Study.....	12
Statement of Purpose	12
Positionality	13
Assumptions	13
Delimitations	13
Limitations.....	13
Research Questions	14
Definition of Terms	15
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	17
Music Education Standards	17
Purpose of Marching Band.....	19
Festivals and Contests	22
Marching Band and Competitions Provide Motivation.....	23
Negatives of Competitions	24
Warnings About Competition Ratings	26
Extra-Musical Reasons for Competitions and Marching Band.....	28
Effects on Band Directors	29
Conclusion.....	31

CHAPTER 3 METHODS AND PROCEDURES	32
Procedures	32
Participants	33
Data Collection Instrument.....	34
Data Analysis.....	35
Summary.....	35
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS.....	37
Participant Demographics	37
Research Question 1: Attitudes of Band Directors Towards Participation	
In Marching Competitions.....	44
Research Question 2: Differences in Band Directors’ Attitudes	
Towards Participation in Marching Band Competitions	56
Costs of Competitions	56
Size and Instrumentation of Marching Band.....	56
Educational Value of Competitions.....	58
Pressures on Band Directors.....	59
Beliefs of Band Directors	60
Results for Costs of Competitions and Size and Instrumentation of Marching	
Band.....	64
Results for Educational Value of Marching Competitions.....	65
Results for Pressures on Band Directors	66
Results for Beliefs of Band Directors.....	68
Results for Individual Likert Items.....	69

Summary.....	73
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION	74
Educational Value Was the Most Important Factor	75
Pressures Associated with Competitions.....	76
Regional Attitudes	77
Adjustment and Errors.....	79
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	80
Future Research Implications	81
Closing.....	82
REFERENCES	84
Appendix A: IRB Approval Email	94
Appendix B: Survey	95
Appendix C: Participant Recruitment Email.....	112

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 <i>Quantitative Data Analysis</i>	36
Table 2 <i>Participants by Gender, Age, Years of Experience, and Region</i>	37
Table 3 <i>Participants by Level of Education and Majors</i>	38
Table 4 <i>Total Enrollment of Director’s High School</i>	39
Table 5 <i>Average Competitions Attended Each Year</i>	40
Table 6 <i>Means and Standard Deviations for First Section of Likert Scale Items</i>	42
Table 7 <i>Means and Standard Deviations for Second Section of Likert Scale Items</i>	43
Table 8 <i>Participant Rankings for Cost of Competitions</i>	45
Table 9 <i>Participant Rankings for Size and Instrumentation of Marching Bands</i>	46
Table 10 <i>Participant Rankings for Educational Value of Competitions</i>	48
Table 11 <i>Participant Rankings for Pressures on Band Directors</i>	50
Table 12 <i>Participant Rankings for Educational Value of Competitions</i>	52
Table 13 <i>Participant Rankings for Band Directors’ Beliefs</i>	54
Table 14 <i>Cronbach’s Alpha for Scale Costs of Competitions</i>	57
Table 15 <i>Cronbach’s Alpha for Scale Size and Instrumentation of Marching Band</i>	58
Table 16 <i>Cronbach’s Alpha for Scale Educational Value of Competitions</i>	59
Table 17 <i>Cronbach’s Alpha for Scale Pressures on Band Directors</i>	60
Table 18 <i>Cronbach’s Alpha for Beliefs of Band Directors Scale</i>	61
Table 19 <i>Spearman Correlations for Demographics and Likert Scales</i>	62
Table 20 <i>Likert Scale Frequency Totals</i>	64
Table 21 <i>States Included in Each Region</i>	65

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Marching bands have been a part of secondary and post-secondary education since the late 1880s (Cumberledge, 2017; Garty, 2003; Rickels, 2012) although they did not begin to flourish until after the First World War (Oakley, 1985). Prior to World War I, marching bands served as military parade bands. A new era began when marching band combined with football. Although music educators continually debate the purpose of marching bands (Mairs, 2000; Mason, 1985; Wickes, 1978), entertaining the audience has always been the primary function of performing ensembles (Wickes, 1978). Often, assessing the quality of a school's music program is based upon public opinions of halftime show performances or competition results (Garrison, 1986).

Throughout the years, band directors have developed unique shows and reimagined what it meant to be a marching band. Bands today include the traditional instrumentation of woodwinds, brass, and percussion, as well as some type of visual ensemble to complement the playing members. This ensemble could include majorettes, color guard, or a dance team. Typically, high school marching bands perform during the halftime at football games, parades, and many participate in competitions. Marching band competitions comprise big business (Rockefeller, 1982). Entry fees for competitions can range from \$100 for locally sponsored marching competitions to \$975 for national competitions (Music for All, 2020). The move from traditional military-style shows to drum corps-style shows has affected the price of competitions and marching bands in general. Greater emphasis is placed on musical arrangements and elaborate drill in corps-style. Many directors must hire outside help to create these elaborate types of competition shows.

Music educators have debated the value of marching bands since members first stepped on a football field. Educators have argued that marching bands be guided by a general philosophy of education (Isch, 1965). Detractors feel that marching band competitions do not support educational objectives and place too much emphasis on competition. This concern was noted in the minutes of a 1925 Ohio School Band Association meeting. Across several decades the focus of marching bands has included greater emphasis upon general effects such as pageantry, choreography, and special effects rather than musical aspects (Righter 1966/1993).

Viewed as a “safeguard against complacency,” some authors asserted that competition raised the standard of performing ensembles in America (Bachman, 1958/1993, p. 133). Proponents of marching band competitions point to the extra-musical benefits to students. These directors feel that participation in marching band and competitions can teach students much needed motivation (Meadows, 1966), leadership skills (Cumberledge, 2017; Mason, 1985), teamwork (Heselton, 2011; Rogers, 1985b), pride (Paynter, 1959/1993; Pennington, 1982; Rogers, 1985b), discipline (Banister, 1992; Thurmond, 1978), self-assurance (Isch, 1965), among many other social aspects (Abramo, 2016; Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Cumberledge, 2017; Heselton, 2011; Isch, 1965; Morrison, 2001; Pennington, 1982; Rogers, 1985b). However, opponents of marching band competitions cite reasons such as unnecessary stress on students (Sicks, 1983), excessive pressure from administration and parents (Burnsed & Sochinski, 1983), inconsistency in judging from competition adjudicators (Regelski, 1966), disillusionment of band directors driven to win (Austin, 1990), and restrictive budget costs for participation in competitions (Marzulli, 1985; Rawlings, 2019).

Need for the Study

Several research studies have focused on directors' attitudes about the value of band competition, motivating students to join band, students' attitudes towards competition, and adjudicator bias and reliability. However, a lack of research exists concerning why band directors choose to participate in marching band competitions. Researchers have warned directors about using results from competitions as a means of evaluation because marching band competitions fall outside the scope of the music education curriculum (Baker, 1966; Burnsed & Sochinski, 1983; O'Leary, 2019); in addition, the cost remains high to participate (Marzulli, 1985; Music for All, 2020; Rieth, 2018; Rockefeller, 1982). In this study, I surveyed marching band directors in the United States regarding reasons affecting their decision to participate or not in marching band competitions.

Many articles and studies cover the concerns about marching band and marching band competitions (Acquaro, 1979; Austin, 1990; Battisti, 1989; Burnsed & Sochinski, 1983; Dawes, 1989; Ponick, 2001). While many scholars have questioned the relationship between band directors' effectiveness and their participation in marching band competitions (Austin, 1990; Mercer, 1990/1993; O'Leary, 2019; Regelski, 1966), there is a lack of research examining the directors' attitudes about why they choose to participate in competitions. Austin (1990) warned that music educators were becoming less effective because of competitions, and that they were more concerned about their egos and winning contests rather than focusing on educational goals.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative study was to learn about the reasons high school band directors choose to participate in marching band competitions.

Positionality

I am a 20-year veteran teacher, currently teaching marching band at the secondary level. My band attends two marching band competitions each year. Over my tenure, I have witnessed some directors thrive in the competitive environment of marching band while others have succumbed to the many pitfalls and pressures surrounding competitive marching band. I hope that data from this study will help future directors understand the various motivations behind participation in competitions and prepare them to make positive choices for their students, programs, and their own careers as music educators when considering marching band competitions.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made for this study:

- All survey responses were anonymous.
- Participants read carefully and responded truthfully to the survey.
- Participants were current marching band directors at the secondary level and members of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME).

Delimitations

There are two delimitations for this study. First, participants for this study were secondary marching band directors and members of NAfME. Second, attitudes of marching band directors towards participation in marching band competitions in the United States were determined through a web-based survey instrument.

Limitations

There are limitations to using a web-based survey. One such limitation is participants might not understand all the questions or follow directions when answering because there is no

interviewer present (Rea & Parker, 2014). According to Fowler (2014), self-administered surveys can be problematic, because participants might not complete the survey due to a lack of interest in the topic. Some secondary band directors might not be interested in research concerning marching bands and competitions. Generalizability of results may be limited due to the small sample size. The timing of this survey could have caused a problem as well. The survey was conducted during the fall semester of 2020. The United States, along with other countries, was facing the COVID-19 virus pandemic and many directors were transitioning their classes to virtual learning. Directors' willingness to complete an online survey might have been affected by this shift away from face-to-face instruction.

Research Questions

The goal of this quantitative study was to learn about the reasons band directors choose to participate in marching band competitions through the use of a web-based Qualtrics survey. I wanted to determine how band directors' attitudes of marching band competitions differ by director attributes (age, gender, years of experience, required marching band participation in college, and highest degree earned), school demographics (school enrollment, region, and marching style) and expectations for competitions (administrators, students, and parents). Based on my research goals and literature reviewed, I developed the following research questions:

1. What are band directors' attitudes towards participation in marching band competitions?
2. Are there any differences in band directors' attitudes based on the following demographics: gender, director's age, years of teaching, location, highest degree earned, collegiate marching band experience, grades in marching band, style of marching band, school enrollment, size of marching band, and competition participation?

Definition of Terms

- **NafME:** National Association for Music Education is “among the world’s largest arts education organizations, and is the only association that addresses all aspects of music education” (<https://nafme.org/about/>).
- **Marching Band:** A group of instrumental musicians who perform at football games, parades, or other outdoor events, and who incorporate marching or other types of movement with their musical performance. Instrumentation includes woodwinds, brass, and percussion instruments
- **Marching Band Competition:** Throughout this study, the term competition refers to a contest or festival (Payne, 1997). Competitions are events in which marching bands perform a field show for a panel of judges. The judges rate the performance of the marching bands based on a grading rubric. Bands receive a rating (I, II, III, or IV) or are ranked in relation to the other bands in a specific classification (usually based on size of the bands) (Bachman, 1958/1993; Ponick, 2001; Regelski, 1966; Rohner, 1950/1993; Whitney, 1966).
- **Corps Style Marching Band:** A marching band that incorporates elaborate drill designs during performances like curves and patterns that complement the music being performed. Music performed can range from Broadway selections to pop music. Generally, participates in local and state sponsored competitions.
- **Bands of America Performance Style Marching Band (BOA):** A marching band that incorporates elaborate drill designs during performances, like curves and patterns, theatrical aspects, and staging. Music performed can range from Broadway selections, classical music, and original compositions. May participate in local and state sponsored

marching competitions, but generally participates in highly competitive events sponsored by BOA.

- **Show Style Marching Band:** A marching band that incorporates aspects of Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCU) bands. Uses traditional high-step marching with sharp movements and turns. Incorporates mirror style drill and dance breaks. Music performed is generally current pop tunes.
- **Military Style Marching Band:** A marching band that marches in precise, straight line formations. Music performed maintains a consistent tempo to accommodate the steady marching.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Competition in any form seems to be a way of life in America (Austin, 1990), but while many positive aspects have been noted (Bauer, 1983; Burnsed & Sochinski, 1983; O’Leary, 2019), critics have pointed out detriments to music education (Austin, 1990; Goolsby, 1983; Hutchinson, 1983; Moody, 1983). Arguments both for and against competition have centered on whether it is beneficial for students involved in performing ensembles to participate in contests or festivals. The purpose of this quantitative study was to learn about the reasons high school band directors choose to participate in marching band competitions. The literature review was divided in eight sections and centered on previous research and arguments made both for and against marching band competitions.

The first section of the literature review provides an overview of the debate behind marching band competition’s validity in standards-based music education. The second section outlines a brief history of marching band and its purpose. The third section explores the differences between festivals and contests. Section four explains how marching band and competitions provide motivation for directors and students. The fifth section provides an overview of arguments that have been made against competitions. Section six describes possible inadequacies of adjudicators. The seventh section provides an overview of the arguments made both for and against the extra-musical reasons for participation in competitions and marching band. The final section describes the effects competitions might have on band directors.

Music Education Standards

Scholars argue that music education must be the goal of marching band for it to have meaning in the school music curriculum (Garrison, 1986; Rockefeller, 1982). In 1965, Isch

suggested that marching bands be guided by a general educational philosophy due to their associations with high schools. Garrison (1986) argued the focus of the marching band should be on the music. Unfortunately, throughout the years, educational goals may have been disregarded in pursuit of competitive goals (Austin, 1990; Moody, 1983; Rockefeller, 1982). The goals of marching band rehearsals seem to focus on formations and movements rather than music.

Acquaro (1979) warned directors:

The paradox, then, is that for all the numbers of students, the expensive instruments, the elaborate costuming, professionally choreographed staging, the competitions, trophies, bus trips, hours of practice, national champions, and newspaper coverage, the marching band's ascent has all but eclipsed music education (in any aesthetic sense) in many of our schools. Never before have so many people spent so much time, energy, and money to produce such truly meaningless results. (p. 8)

Standards-based music education should be the primary focus of band programs.

Goodstein (1985) warned directors that music education cannot be the goal when music is overlooked for visual aspects of marching band. Holder (2008) questioned the practice of over-emphasis in visuals when he pondered "why directors feel pressure to sacrifice musical considerations in order to meet visual goals and earn high contest ratings" (p. 32). Floyd (1986) stated that music education in America had become a frill or simply an activity that brought recognition to students and schools through competitions. He felt this had little to do with standards-based music education. Floyd (1986) blamed himself and other music educators for emphasizing competitions as a justification for including music in schools.

A good instrumental music program should focus on developing musical skills and aesthetic growth with a broad selection of musical activities (Battisti, 1989). Moody (1983)

stated that the best marching bands he judged came from schools with superior concert bands where music education was the primary focus rather than winning. Unfortunately, due to the popularity of marching competitions, some schools allow their marching band to dominate the entire music program and do not offer choir or general music (Rogers, 1985). Burton (1985) cautioned directors that it was their responsibility to ensure that marching band was “educationally valid” (p. 28). Critics warned that as more emphasis is placed on the marching band, the focus and attention on the concert band and overall musicianship decreases (Battisti, 1989; Thurmond, 1978). Kelly (2019) warned directors against separating their class time into marching band and concert band “seasons” (p. 68). He felt this would decrease the opportunity to develop the whole student.

Directors must find a balance between marching band and concert band. Both ensembles have a place in music education when approached correctly. Isch (1965) stated, “show me a school with a well-trained marching band and I will usually be able to show you that this very same school has an excellent concert band” (p. 98). Wettlaufer (1950/1993) echoed the same point stating, “schools with the best Marching Bands usually have the finest Concert Bands” (p. 114). Directors should remember a marching band must be “balanced in proportion to the total music program” which ensures that it remains “in step with music education” (Johnson, 1985, p. 28). Recently, Kelly (2019) encouraged directors to offer marching and concert band at the same time to maximize student development.

Purpose of Marching Band

High school and college marching bands were born out of the military bands of World War I and functioned basically as parade bands (Righter, 1966/1993). When football games and marching bands combined, a whole new dimension of marching band began.

It was the football game, with its half-time interval of sports inactivity and the need of entertaining the spectators during this break, that provided an opportunity for bands to “put on a show.” From that time on, the gates of competition were not only thrown open, they were torn from their hinges and discarded, and we had the spectacle of two contests – one by the football teams and one by the bands. (Righter, 1966/1993, p. 97)

These “spectacles” (Righter, 1966/1993, p. 97) quickly became opportunities for band directors to try and outdo one another. These early bands performed a different show each week for football games (Opsahl, 1952/1993). The problem of placing more emphasis on movements than music eventually evolved. As Righter (1966/1993) asserted, directors “seem almost to have exhausted the possibilities of the marching band” (p. 98). While Righter and others in the 1960s seemed to agree that something had to change, it did not necessarily mean the change bettered marching band or music education. This change was the marching band contest. The goal of marching band eventually transitioned to perfecting one show during marching season and competing against other bands (Marzulli, 1985; Moody, 1983).

The purpose of marching band in schools has been a topic of debate (Mairs, 2000; Mason, 1985; Wickes, 1978). According to some, the primary function of the marching band is to entertain the audience (Opsahl, 1955/1993; Wickes, 1978; Williamson, 1978). Bloomquist (1974) stated that the purpose of marching band “is to entertain through music – with the added advantage of visual excitement” (p. 36). Regardless of the genre of music being played, whether classical or popular music, the quality of sound matters when the band plays (Bachman, 1959/1993; Hastens, 1981; Moulton, 1985). In more recent years band directors introduced more classical music into their repertoire of their marching bands. Along this vein, Mairs (2000) stated “when band directors are willing to program good classical music alongside good popular music,

they are opening a new world to their students and, eventually, to the parents and the community at large” (p. 36).

Marching band performances are typically viewed by large audiences (Vaught, 1957/1993; Wickes, 1978). Proponents of marching band argued that marching bands are viewed by more spectators, taxpayers, and donors than a school’s band concert (Dalby, 1951/1993; Vaught, 1957/1993). Public relations and administrative evaluation of many high school music programs are driven by the reputation of the marching band (Garrison, 1986).

Appearances by high school, college, and university marching bands often provide the only contact laymen and educational administrators have with music curricula.

Consequently, many people accept the marching band as the primary, if not the only, factor in assessing the quality and value of entire music departments and programs.

(Garrison, 1986, p. 49)

Some directors feel they would not have a band at all without the marching band program (“How Willing We March,” 1990/1993).

Garrison (1986) stated that marching bands pay the bills for the rest of the music program. When marching bands win contests, it is difficult for high school administrators to pull funding from them and give that money to other underachieving programs (Goolsby, 1983). The support for marching bands does not stop at the secondary level, as the high-visibility marching band often supports many universities’ music budgets (Cumberledge, 2017). This need for continued funding to support music budgets has led many directors to use marching competitions as program evaluation and tangible evidence of program success for administrators and the community.

Festivals and Contests

There are two basic formats for marching band competitions: festivals and contests. Festivals feature adjudicators grading bands based on predetermined standards, whereas contests pit bands against each other to see who scored the highest and won the competition (Bachman, 1958/1993; Ponick, 2001; Regelski, 1966; Rohner, 1950/1993; Whitney, 1966). According to Holz (1973/1993), town bands have been competing with each other since the 1870s, and school bands have been participating in “tournaments or battles of bands” since the late nineteenth century (p. 588). The Schools Band Contest of America was first held in Chicago on June 5, 6, and 7, 1923, and was the beginning of many national contests held in the twentieth century (Holz, 1973/1993). Businesses often used these early contests as advertising schemes where winners received cash prizes and instruments donated by the manufacturers (Holz, 1973/1993). Anderson (1950) stated, “most contests came into the school for the benefit of special interests – sale of instruments, uniforms, music and instruction, the children were incidental” (p. 137). However, not everyone agreed with Anderson. Bachman (1958/1993) claimed that the national and regional contests and festivals contributed to raising the standards of bands throughout the country. When competitions are controlled by music education associations, they can maintain standards of musical performance (Swor, 1972).

Some directors argued that festivals fulfill the goals of music education and serve as a great motivator for young students (Anderson, 1950/1993; Markworth, 2008; Rohner, 1950/1993). Scheduling one or two festivals a year helps directors monitor the progress of their ensemble (Spradling, 1990). Ultimately, the goal of a competition should be to allow students and directors an opportunity to receive feedback from other competent music educators (Bruno, 1989).

Marching Band and Competitions Provide Motivation

Competition has been viewed as a “safeguard against complacency” and has raised the standard of performing ensembles in America (Bachman, 1958/1993, p. 133). Whitney (1966) stated:

The competition-festival tends to elevate performance standards by (a) providing a strong motivation to the students to study and practice in preparation for the event, (b) providing outside, expert evaluation of the students’ (and conductor’s) musical achievement, (c) offering constructive suggestions for improvement, and (d) providing the inspiration of other fine student performances and an opportunity to evaluate the efforts of other students. (p. 62)

Bands receive large amounts of support from the public exposure they gain from competitions (Burnsed & Sochinski, 1983). Receiving high ratings from competitions is the reward for most marching band directors, not individual musicianship. Rogers (1985b) stated, “traveling and winning marching contests make the local newspaper; understanding minor chords or improving intonation does not” (p. 28). “Competitions are seen by the public as valuable, if not essential, experiences for music students” (Austin, 1990, p. 22). Many marching band directors argue that if given the opportunity, students will want to compete (Bauer, 1983; Goolsby, 1983).

Some researchers believe that competing in marching band is the best way to encourage students to excel and strive for improvement (Hunt, 1973; Markworth, 2008). Isch (1975) claimed that marching band powerfully appeals to teens because it provides them with a place to belong. Many directors and administrators believe that the purpose of competitions is to motivate students to practice and achieve a higher level of performance (Anderson, 1950/1993; Gomes, 1983; Hutchinson, 1983; Ponick, 2001). Hunt (1973) expressed disappointment when he was

asked to adjudicate an event that was no longer competitive. He had judged the same event four years earlier when it was competitive and stated that he was amazed at the decrease in standards since the festival had become non-competitive. When kept in check, competition can be a “healthy way for students to enjoy participating in music ensembles” (Ponick, 2001, p. 22).

Negatives of Competitions

What began as an opportunity to entertain audiences at sporting events has turned into a sporting event itself (Rickels, 2012; Righter, 1966/1993). Marching bands and marching band competitions comprise big business (Rockefeller, 1982). The cost of competition has risen drastically in the last 40 years. In 1982, Rockefeller estimated that it cost a marching band a total of \$7,000 to compete during an entire season. Today, entry fees for competitions range from \$100 for locally sponsored marching competitions to \$975 for national competitions (Music for All, 2020). In addition, high school marching band programs that participate in national events, such as Bands of America, can spend upwards of \$500,000 on props, costumes, transportation, staff, music, and drill during a single school year (Rieth, 2018). Heidingsfelder (2014) questioned whether music educators were honoring the National Association for Music Education’s motto of “music for every child; every child for music” (p.51). When marching band directors are tasked to “provide musical opportunities to every child,” how can they fulfill that goal when they focus on winning contests at any cost and require large fees to participate in marching band (Heidingsfelder, 2014, p. 51)? Rawlings (2019) found that funding was “the primary challenge to attending large-group adjudicated events” (p. 51). Some directors feel that hosting competitions becomes the way to fund the cost of travel to more competitions. Marzulli (1985) commented, “every week-end during football season some school is hosting a contest, usually to raise money so that they might travel to a band contest in a more distant place” (p. 30).

Critics of marching band competitions argue that competitions cannot improve performance because the standards they set are unrealistic (Regelski, 1966). Sometimes these standards mirror those found in drum corps. “The corps philosophy has little to do with music education in the schools; but remember, it is not the corps directors who are pretending to be school music teachers, it is their band director imitators” (Moody, 1983, p. 84). Critics have also argued that competitions are unnecessarily negative for students. Warrick (1988) cautioned directors that students who do not win at competitions feel like losers and that any child who gives up their free time to learn to play an instrument and develop musical skills should never feel like a loser. Sicks (1983) stated that after twenty-six years as a private teacher, she would “ban contests, or at least strongly discourage students from entering them” (p. 29). She felt that competitions were unnecessary and that they caused too much stress for students (Sicks, 1983). Burnsed and Sochinski (1983) echoed this concern about competitiveness, reporting their survey results that one director “thought the parents were going to come to blows...It’s almost like Little League” (p. 26). Burnsed and Sochinski (1983) also found that 60% of the directors they surveyed felt pressured by parents, students, and administrators to participate in marching competitions.

Participation in competitions can increase tension for band directors. Reports of constant tension on directors is consistent with Dawes’ (1989) findings “that younger and less experienced band directors are involved in marching band competition activity to a greater degree than older and more experienced directors” (p. 62). Mark (1996) summed up the negative aspects of competitions by describing how entertainment has dominated the educational aspect of music education:

This practice has been fueled by choice of music, musical competitions so intense that they rival athletic contests, and the flash and glitter of bright uniforms, colorful costumes, clever choreography, instruments in a variety of colors, all in a milieu that proclaims to the community, “We’re here to entertain you and to show how well we can imitate professional entertainers.” This view of student performance is so ingrained in some communities that willingness to fund their music programs often depends on the quality of entertainment and success in competitions. (p. 11-12)

O’Leary’s (2019) study of competition in high school band revealed that “tension permeated the participants’ experiences” (p. 51).

Warnings About Competition Ratings

Scholars have warned band directors about placing too much emphasis on the results of competitions. Regelski (1966) cautioned directors: “The grounds upon which judgments are made can be and often are confused, and another set of adjudicators in another time and place could arrive at a far different rating” (p. 61). Are ensembles being judged upon an objective concept or on the personal likes and dislikes of the adjudicator (Regelski, 1966)? “Do we really believe that contest results are valuable sources of instructional feedback?” (Austin, 1989, p. 45). Judges at competitions rarely have enough time to provide adequate feedback for performances, and what feedback they do provide is generally a superficial critique (Austin, 1989; Ponick, 2001; Rawlings, 2019). Austin (1989) commented, “they rarely move beyond error diagnosis to pointing out useful techniques or to working with students on strategies for correcting performance problems” (p. 45).

Music educators have voiced other concerns about the level of adjudication provided at competitions. If a competition is to have meaning to students, the judges must be knowledgeable

in the field concerned and the ability level of the group performing (Hunt, 1973; Hutchinson, 1983). Hunt (1973) also stated that vocal judges without experience in instrumental music should not judge band and orchestra competitions. Some judges do not follow the competition guidelines of offering positive, constructive comments to students and directors, but rather only point out mistakes (Goheen, 1983).

Some researchers pointed out possible biases from judges while others revealed a high level of reliability from judges. According to Batey (2002), judges sometimes give more emphasis to items they feel are more important. Researchers have suggested judges tend to be more reluctant to give lower ratings at competitions because of concerns over students' self-esteem (Boeckman, 2002) and because of judges' prior knowledge of the band program (Springer & Bradley, 2018). However, King and Burnsed (2009) found a high reliability among judges' score sheets in the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association State Marching Band Festivals. These results show that judges scored the bands consistently throughout the festival.

Results from competitions can have a negative effect on students and directors. Students who experience repeated failures in competitions have a lower view of their ability levels (Austin, 1990). Austin (1990) also suggested, "competition may corrupt teachers to a greater degree than their students" (p. 24). However, it is not just the directors who have been influenced by competitions. In an earlier study, Burnsed and Sochinski (1983), found that principals want to see their students as winners as well. Directors, administrators, and parents must understand "different contests are known for different standards and rating expectations" (Burnsed & Sochinski, 1983, p. 26).

Extra-Musical Reasons for Competitions and Marching Band

Directors have used extra-musical reasons to validate participation in marching competitions. This has caused concern among some scholars. Regelski (1966) stated that it is unfortunate “many young musicians are being inculcated with the notion that musical success lies outside the realm of music and the esthetic experience” (p. 61). He believed that performing fine music at varying levels of difficulty should be a musician’s goal, not winning an award. Despite the warnings of using extra-musical concepts to justify marching band and marching competitions, many directors persist in basing their entire curricula around the element of marching competition. Swor (1972) asked if the rating from one contest was more important than an entire music program.

Directors and scholars who support the use of competitions believe what students gain from competitions outweighs any negative aspects of competitions. These researchers and practitioners have argued that participation in marching band and competitions can teach students much needed motivation (Meadows, 1966), leadership skills (Cumberledge, 2017; Mason, 1985), teamwork (Heselton, 2011; Rogers, 1985b), pride (Paynter, 1959/1993; Pennington, 1982; Rogers, 1985b), discipline (Banister, 1992; Thurmond, 1978), self-assurance (Isch, 1965), and many other social aspects (Abramo, 2016; Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Cumberledge, 2017; Heselton, 2011; Isch, 1965; Kelly, 2019; Morrison, 2001; Pennington, 1982; Rogers, 1985b). Isch (1965) believed:

The marching band has a powerful appeal to teen-agers. It provides an organization to which they can *belong*. The personal satisfaction of “belonging to” or being “identified with” a group in which there is a common interest is a vital need of this age group. (p. 97)

Bendell (1983) stated:

Whether leading to a “winning” or “losing” performance, preparing for competition adds a stimulus that cannot be found elsewhere in the activities of a group and its individuals. Thus, the interaction of a group toward a common goal yields rewards that have nothing to do with the actual reward. (p. 31)

However, as band directors prepare to beat other bands at competitions, they may lose sight of the reasons for teaching music. Whether bands compete out of necessity or tradition, plaques and trophies begin to symbolize the efforts of band directors and members both past and present (O’Leary, 2019).

Effects on Band Directors

Competitions can cause overarching problems for both the director and their band program. A teacher’s ego causes a lot of the problems associated with competitions (Hutchinson, 1983). Some directors put all their effort into validating their own ego and not their educational goals (Austin, 1990). Bruno (1989) warned of directors who were concerned about the morale of their group after being “ripped off” at a competition (p. 44). Ultimately, it was the blow to their own ego they were truly concerned about (Bruno, 1989). According to Morrison (2001), many music educators identify themselves primarily as a band, orchestra, or choir director rather than a music educator. This concern for identity is not new to music education. Whitney (1966) stated:

The participating director must realize that student attitudes toward this activity will inevitably reflect his own. It is, therefore, extremely important that the music teacher regard the competition as a motivating force leading to improved performance – not as a stepping-stone to a better job, or as a means of gaining personal prestige. (p. 62)

A lack of appropriate training for future music educators may be the underlying cause for this problem (Berry,1985).

Some directors take the results from competitions personally. Students seem to be able to overcome bad results from a competition, whereas the director may take it as a personal attack (Hunt, 1973). Regelski (1966) posed the question: “Who is being judged in a group performance – the group, or the director and his abilities?” (p. 61). Competitions provide a competence check on directors (Hunt, 1973). Competitions are supposed to evaluate student performances and motivate students to better themselves. However, many in the profession believe they are nothing more than an evaluation of the director (Payne, 1997). Some directors feel that their success as a band director comes from how many wins they accomplish during their tenure and that if they are not winning, their job security might be in jeopardy (Pennington, 1982). O’Leary (2019) found directors viewed competition ratings personally like a coach views wins and losses in an athletic contest.

Results from a competition can stay with a director throughout their career, can possibly shape their career through job loss or retention (Batey, 2002; Hash, 2012), or even recognition with parents and administration (Rohner, 2002). Loss of a job and/or prestige has been an area of concern for directors almost from the beginning of band competitions. Baker (1966) cautioned advocates of competitions that there are “too many variables wherever the human element, particularly that of young students, is involved” (p. 143). More recently, O’Leary (2019) stated that one participant in his research “equated the score to a scarlet letter that he would wear for the foreseeable future” (p. 54). That an adult would wear a rating from a band competition as a badge of shame reinforces the idea that competitions become personal for directors to the point of measuring their own worth as an educator. If directors do not receive a superior rating, they may begin to feel as though they are an inferior teacher (Goheen, 1983).

The feeling of needing to win is not a new cause for concern to directors. Unfortunately, it has driven some fine directors out of the profession (Goolsby, 1983). Griffith (1983) felt “the careers of most band directors are too short to gain the expertise needed to make the contest a worthy venture” (p. 30). Mercer (1990/1993) reported that some directors move to junior high positions to escape the stress of competitions, while others leave the field altogether. He continued by stating “the average age of high school band directors is 42. About the time a person refines his skills and is ready for 25 to 30 years of service, band directors disappear” (Mercer, 1990/1993, p. 976). Perhaps what most band directors need to remember when it comes to marching band and competitions is that “most of the stress that is experienced by competition preparation is self-induced” (Ponick, 2001, p. 23).

Conclusion

Marching bands and competitions have been a part of secondary and post-secondary education since the late 1880s (Cumberledge, 2017; Garty, 2003). There is a considerable amount of literature about competitions (e.g. Banister, 1992; Dawes, 1989; O’Leary, 2019). However, examining the factors that shape the decisions of band directors to participate in marching band competitions makes up only a small amount of the literature (Rogers, 1985). Opinions about the validity and benefits of participating in competitions have been a cause of concern since their inception (Anderson, 1950/1993; Mark, 1996, Markworth, 2008; Rohner, 1950/1993). Ultimately, the decision to participate or not participate in marching competitions remain in the hands of each director. Despite what seems like a majority of literature against marching band competitions, band directors still participate in them. This research will explore the underlying reasons why marching band directors continue to participate in marching band competitions.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this quantitative study was to learn about the reasons high school band directors choose to participate in marching band competitions. This chapter includes the procedures, data collection instrument, participants, data collection procedures and analyses. The following research questions were developed to gain further understanding of marching band directors' attitudes towards participation in marching band competitions:

1. What are band directors' attitudes towards participation in marching band competitions?
2. Are there any differences in band directors' attitudes based on the following demographics: gender, director's age, years of teaching, location, highest degree earned, collegiate marching band experience, grades in marching band, style of marching band, school enrollment, size of marching band, and competition participation?

Procedures

I employed quantitative research methods to collect data through an anonymous online survey designed using *Qualtrics XM Survey Software*, and analyzed the data using the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 26* (SPSS). I chose to use a web-based study because it allows for "a snapshot of the population" to be taken, where other research designs might take longer, and opinions might change over the course of the study (Rea & Parker, 2014, p. 7).

Once I received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix A), I administered a pilot test to ensure validity of the survey instrument. I invited 10 retired band directors I personally knew, and 10 senior music education majors from local universities, who were recommended by faculty members, to complete the survey (Rea & Parker, 2014). After their completion, I interviewed four of the participants and asked them to critique the survey

instrument for clarity and understanding of questions (Fowler, 2014). Following the interviews, I updated a few of the questions (i.e., changed open-ended questions to drop down selections) to allow for ease of responding (Fowler, 2014) as both previous surveys were originally administered through a mailed survey. The current survey included 52 questions (see Appendix B). I chose to use a survey because my target population was large. According to Rea and Parker (2014), “there is no better method of research than the sample survey process for determining, with a known level of accuracy, detailed and personal information about large populations” (p. 5).

Upon completing my comprehensive examinations, and presenting my proposal to the dissertation committee, I employed the NAFME *Research Survey Assistance Program* to email the survey to participants. Participants were given 10 days to complete the survey. After approximately five days, a reminder email was sent to participants, via the *Research Survey Assistance Program*, to encourage those who had not completed the survey to respond (Rea & Parker, 2014). Both emails included an information letter and a link to the survey (see Appendix C). The participant’s decision to proceed with answering the survey questions served as an indication of their consent to participate.

Participants

Secondary band directors affiliated with the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) were recruited for this study. The *Research Survey Assistant Program*, a program offered by NAfME, was used to distribute the anonymous online survey through email to the participants. Those band directors who are members of NAfME and who selected secondary education and marching band in their member profile were sent an email inviting them to participate in the study. NAfME asserts that nearly half of the music educators in the United

States are members. A total of 5,277 NAFME members were invited to participate. By opening the link attached to the email, directors consented to participate in the survey. The first question of the survey asked if participants were currently teaching marching band in a secondary school. If they answered no, their survey ended. The *Research Survey Assistant Program* emailed the link to the online survey to a total of 5,277 band directors along with invitation to participate (see Appendix C). According to Rea and Parker (2014), a minimum sample size needed for this study was 254 (or 4.8% of the total *N* of 5,277) for a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 6. The overall valid response was 265, or 5.0%. This low response rate could be the result of 3,583 (67.8%) of the emails distributed by the *Research Survey Assistant Program* going unopened. Initially, 321 (6.1%) of potential respondents consented to participate, but several of those responses were invalid or incomplete. I retained responses that had 95% to 100% completion rate for analysis.

Data Collection Instrument

I gathered responses for this study through an anonymous online survey I adapted and developed from previous studies by Dawes (1989) and Rogers (1985). I included a portion of the questions from both survey instruments and changed others to align with the current research topic. Much of the survey consisted of 35 Likert Scale items that sought marching band directors' attitudes and opinions concerning their participation in marching band competitions. Through this survey I sought to gather three types of information from participants: descriptive, behavioral, and attitudinal (Rea & Parker, 2014).

The survey contained three sections. The first section consisted of 15 closed-ended, multiple-choice questions and two open-ended questions that were intended to gather demographic information about the director and their marching band. Closed-ended questions

were chosen for the uniformity of responses and the direct transfer of data (Rea & Parker, 2014). Both of the following two sections utilized a five-point Likert scale. In the first set of items, 1 (*not important*) to 5 (*very important*), participants were asked to rate how important certain statements were in their decision to participate in marching band competitions. The second set of items, 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 5 (*strongly agree*), asked participants to rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements concerning marching band competitions.

Data Analysis

The data were collected from the survey instrument created in *Qualtrics XM* through the Auburn University server. Once the survey closed, results were downloaded to the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS). Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, and standard deviations) were collected to summarize the characteristics of participants (Russell, 2018). A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted to determine the normality of the descriptive statistics. The significance level for each test was smaller than .05; therefore, the data were not normally distributed. Based on these results, I used nonparametric tests to analyze the data from the survey (Russell, 2018).

Summary

This was a quantitative study focusing on the attitudes of marching band directors towards participation in competitions. Responses were gathered through an anonymous online survey that was distributed by the NAFME *Research Survey Assistant Program*. A total of 5, 277 NAFME members were recruited for this study with 265 valid responses. The survey instrument consisted of 52 questions. See Table 1 for tests used in data analyses.

Table 1*Quantitative Analysis of Data*

Research questions	Survey item	Hypothesis	Statistical procedure for data analysis
1. What are band directors' attitudes towards participation in marching band competitions?	Likert scale items 1-35		Frequencies and Means
2. Are there any differences in band directors' attitudes based on the following demographics: gender, age, years of teaching, location, highest degree, degree major, collegiate marching band experience, grades in marching band, style of marching band, school enrollment, size of marching band, and past marching band competition participation?	Likert scale items 1-35	There will be no differences in means for each of the various categories.	Kruskal-Wallis H Test

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this quantitative study was to learn about the reasons high school band directors choose to participate in marching band competitions. This chapter includes data analysis results for both research questions.

Participant Demographics

The survey instrument contained three sections. The first section consisted of 15 closed-ended, multiple-choice questions and two open-ended questions that were intended to gather demographic information about the director and their marching band. Closed-ended questions were chosen for the uniformity of responses and the direct transfer of data (Rea & Parker, 2014). Among the participants, 77.0% ($n = 204$) were male, 60.8% were under the age of 45 ($n = 161$), 61% had less than 20 years of teaching experience ($n = 162$) and 34.7% were from the Midwestern region ($n = 92$) of the United States. See Table 2 for total number of participants by gender, age, years of teaching experience, and region of the United States.

Table 2

Participants by Gender, Age, Years of Experience, and Region

Demographic	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	204	77.0
Female	59	22.3
Prefer not to answer	2	0.8
Age		
20 - 24	2	0.8
25 - 29	34	12.8
30 - 34	36	13.6
35 - 39	41	15.5
40 - 44	48	18.1
45 - 49	27	10.2

Demographic	<i>n</i>	%
Age		
50 - 54	25	9.4
55 - 59	28	10.6
60 - 64	15	5.7
65 - 69	8	3.0
70+	1	0.4
Years of teaching experience		
0 - 4	20	7.5
5 - 9	56	21.1
10 - 14	38	14.3
15 - 19	48	18.1
20 - 24	35	13.2
25 - 29	27	10.2
30 +	41	15.5
Region		
Northeast	51	19.2
Southeast	61	23.0
Midwest	92	34.7
Southwest	18	6.8
West	43	16.2

The majority of participants ($n = 172$, 64.9%) had a master's degree and 59.6% ($n = 158$) of participants' highest degree was in music education. See Table 3 for total number of participants by degrees and majors.

Table 3

Participants by Level of Education and Majors

Demographic	<i>n</i>	%
Highest level of education		
Bachelor's degree	75	28.3
Master's degree	172	64.9
Educational Specialist degree	9	3.4
Doctorate degree	9	3.4
Major of highest degree		
Music education	158	59.6

Demographic	<i>n</i>	%
Major of highest degree		
Music	11	4.2
Performance/Instrumental/Vocal	13	4.9
Theory	1	0.4
Composition/Arranging	2	0.8
Music Industry	1	0.4
Musicology	2	0.8
Educational leadership/Administration	26	9.8
Other	15	5.7

Directors were asked about their participation in marching band while they were pursuing their undergraduate degree. Approximately 74% ($n = 197$) stated they had participated in marching band while in college, with 4 years ($n = 76, 28.7\%$) being the most selected amount of time spent in marching band. Forty-two percent ($n = 112$) indicated marching band participation was a requirement for their undergraduate degree.

Next, the directors were asked about the youngest grade included in their marching band. Approximately 65% ($n = 171$) indicated ninth grade was the youngest grade included in their marching band. The majority ($n = 145, 54.7\%$) classified the style of their marching band as corps style. Most of the directors ($n = 189, 71.3\%$) teach at schools with a total enrollment of less than 1500 students. (See Table 4 for school enrollment.) The smallest marching band represented in the survey had 13 students while the largest had 220 students.

Table 4

Total Enrollment of Director's High School

School enrollment	<i>n</i>	%
500 or below	53	20
501 - 1000	67	25.3
1001 - 1500	69	26
1501 - 2000	42	15.8
2001+	34	12.8

Eighty-two percent ($n = 218$) of the respondents stated they attended a marching band competition in the past two academic years. If a participant indicated they had not participated in the past two years, they were redirected to a question that asked if they had ever taken a band to a competition. Approximately 64% ($n = 30$) of those who had not participated in a competition in the past two years ($n = 47$) said they had taken a band to a competition at some point in their career. The next question asked participants how many competitions they attend in an average year, and 29.1% ($n = 77$) indicated they attend 5 or more competitions a year. See Table 5 for the average number of competitions attended each year.

Table 5

Average Competitions Attended Each Year

Number of competitions	<i>n</i>	<i>Valid %</i>
1	10	3.7
2	32	12.1
3	49	18.5
4	50	18.9
5+	77	29.1
Missing	47	17.7

The final question from the demographic portion of the survey asked participants to choose one of the following statements:

1. Now I attend more marching band competitions than I did when I started teaching marching band.
2. Now I attend the same number of marching band competitions as I did when I started teaching marching band.
3. Now I attend fewer marching band competitions than I did when I started teaching marching band.

Nearly half of the band directors ($n = 123$, 46.9%) indicated they attended the same amount of marching band competitions as they did when they began their teaching career.

The following two sections of the survey contained five-point Likert-type scales. In the first set of items, 1 (*not important*) to 5 (*very important*), directors were asked to rate how important certain statements were in their decision to participate in marching band competitions. In the second set of items, 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 5 (*strongly agree*), the directors were asked to rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements concerning marching band competitions. (See Appendix B for the complete survey instrument.)

Respondents rated the “educational value of competing” ($M = 4.11$) the most important in their decision to participate in marching competitions. The least important item in the directors’ decision to participate in competitions was “the age of students in my marching band” ($M = 2.09$). When asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements, respondents rated the statement, “After competitions, I take time to listen to the recordings of judges’ comments” ($M = 4.20$), as the statement they agreed with the most. The statement, “I feel pressure from my administration to compete” ($M = 2.10$), was the item with which directors expressed the most disagreement. See Tables 6 and 7 for Likert scale items.

Table 6*Means and Standard Deviations for First Section of Likert Scale Items*

Likert Scale Questions	Mean	SD	<i>n</i>
1. The registration fee to enter a competition.	2.33	1.18	265
2. The cost of transportation.	2.78	1.38	265
3. Distance of travel to a competition.	3.53	1.13	265
4. The costs associated with a competitive show design. (Props, costumes, Music, Drill)	3.66	1.27	265
5. The number of students in my marching band.	2.83	1.40	263
6. The instrumentation of my marching band.	3.04	1.42	264
7. The age of students in my marching band.	2.09	1.17	265
8. Interest level of my band students.	3.67	1.27	263
9. Educational value of competing.	4.11	1.05	264
10. Amount of time away from other academic/core classes due to travel.	2.63	1.37	265
11. Preparing for competitions gives my students a goal to work towards.	3.94	1.16	264
12. Preparing for competitions will make my students better musicians.	3.54	1.28	263
13. Feedback from competitions will make me a better director.	3.42	1.31	265
14. Competitions allow me to see where my students compare to other students.	2.82	1.36	265
15. Competitions serve as motivation for my students.	3.68	1.20	265
16. Superior ratings from competitions reflect positively on me as a band director.	2.33	1.25	265
17. Preparing for a marching band competition might limit the number of music selections my band can rehearse during class time.	2.61	1.43	265

Note: 1 = not important, 2 = slightly important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = important, 5 = very important

Table 7*Means and Standard Deviation for Second Section of Likert Scale Items*

Likert Scale Questions	Mean	SD	<i>n</i>
18. I feel pressure from my administration to compete.	2.10	1.13	265
19. I feel pressure from my students to compete.	3.19	1.32	264
20. I feel pressure from band parents to compete.	3.04	1.36	265
21. I feel pressure from members of the community to compete.	2.42	1.24	265
22. I pressure myself to compete.	3.11	1.37	265
23. After competitions, I take time to listen to the recordings of the judges' comments.	4.20	1.08	263
24. After competitions, I take time to allow my students to listen to the recordings of the judges' comments.	4.00	1.07	265
25. My decision on attending a specific competition is based on who the judges are for the competition.	2.38	1.25	264
26. My decision on attending a specific competition is based on the bands that would be competing in my band's classification.	2.31	1.17	264
27. I take the results from competition personally.	2.61	1.24	264
28. I believe that participating in competitions will lead to a successful career as a band director.	2.44	1.22	264
29. I enjoy the creative process of writing the drill for my marching band's halftime show.	2.90	1.41	263
30. I enjoy the creative process of arranging the music for my marching band's halftime show.	2.95	1.38	263
31. I feel that judges are biased against small bands.	3.37	1.28	263
32. I feel that judges are biased towards large bands.	3.45	1.28	264
33. I feel that judges are slow to accept changes in marching band developments (i.e., including electronics in show).	2.81	1.16	264
34. I feel that bad results from competitions might reflect negatively on me as a band director.	3.08	1.28	265
35. I enjoy marching band.	4.13	1.00	264

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree or agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Research Question 1: Attitudes of Band Directors Towards Participation in Marching Band Competitions

Research question one asked: What are the attitudes of band directors towards participation in marching band competitions? In the first set of 17 Likert items, participants ranked the importance of variables contributing to their decision to participate in marching band competitions. Statements were ranked using a five-point Likert scale from 1 (*not important*) to 5 (*very important*).

The majority of the participants ($n = 161$, 60.8%) indicated the registration fee for a competition was not important to slightly important, while only 39.2% ($n = 104$) indicated the registration fee was moderately important to very important. Next, the participants were asked the importance of the cost of transportation to a competition. Approximately 34% ($n = 91$) indicated the cost of transportation was important to very important, but 45.3% ($n = 120$) indicated the cost of transportation was not important to slightly important. I asked participants if the distance of travel was important. Almost 18 % ($n = 47$) indicated it was not important to slightly important, while 56.2% ($n = 149$) ranked distance of travel as important to very important. Participants were asked if the costs associated with a competitive show was important. Most respondents 58.5% ($n = 155$) ranked costs associated with a competitive show as important to very important, while 20.4% ($n = 54$) stated that the cost of a competitive show was not important to slightly important. Table 8 provides an overview of the rankings and frequencies for the Likert items about costs of competitions.

Table 8*Participant Rankings for Costs of Competitions*

Costs of Competitions	Ranking Scale	<i>n</i>	%
Registration fee for competition	5	17	6.4
	4	27	10.2
	3	60	22.6
	2	84	31.7
	1	77	29.1
Cost of transportation	5	37	14.0
	4	54	20.4
	3	54	20.4
	2	55	20.8
	1	65	24.5
Distance of travel	5	56	21.1
	4	93	35.1
	3	69	26.0
	2	30	11.3
	1	17	6.4
Costs of competitive show	5	92	34.7
	4	63	23.8
	3	56	21.1
	2	35	13.2
	1	19	7.2

Note: 1 = not important, 2 = slightly important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = important, 5 = very important.

Directors were asked if the number of students in their marching band was important to their decision in participating in competitions. Approximately 41.5% ($n = 110$) indicated this was not important to slightly important, while 36.6%, ($n = 97$) stated that the number of students in their marching band was important to very important. Next, participants were asked if the instrumentation of their marching band was important in their decision to participate in competitions. One hundred eighteen participants (44.5%) indicated instrumentation of their marching band was important to very important, while 38.2% ($n = 101$) stated that

instrumentation was not important to slightly important. When asked if the age of students in their marching band was important to their decision to participate in competitions, 66.8% ($n = 177$) ranked it as not important to slightly important, and only 14.4% ($n = 38$) ranked it as important to very important. When asked if the interest level of their students in marching band was important to their decision to participate in competitions, 63% ($n = 167$) stated it was important to very important, while 21.1% ($n = 56$) indicated students' interest level was not important to slightly important. Table 9 provides an overview of the rankings and frequencies for the Likert items for marching band size and instrumentation.

Table 9

Participant Rankings for Size and Instrumentation of Marching Bands

Size and Instrumentation of Band	Ranking Scale	n	%
Number of students in marching band	5	36	13.6
	4	61	23.0
	3	56	21.1
	2	41	15.5
	1	69	26.0
	Missing	2	0.8
Instrumentation of marching band	5	49	18.5
	4	69	26.0
	3	45	17.0
	2	46	17.4
	1	55	20.8
	Missing	1	0.3
Age of students in marching band	5	10	3.8
	4	28	10.6
	3	50	18.9
	2	64	24.2
	1	113	42.6
Interest level of students	5	86	32.4
	4	81	30.6
	3	40	15.1
	2	35	13.2

Size and Instrumentation of Band	Ranking Scale	<i>n</i>	%
	1	21	7.9
	Missing	2	0.8

Note. 1 = not important, 2 = slightly important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = important, 5 = very important.

Directors were asked how important educational value was in their decision to participate in competitions: 77% ($n = 204$) felt that it was important to very important, while 9.4% ($n = 25$) stated they felt the educational value of competing was not important to slightly important. Next, I asked directors how important time away from other academic classes was in their decisions. Forty-nine percent ($n = 130$) indicated time away from other academic classes was not important to slightly important, while 28.7% ($n = 76$) stated that it was important to very important in their decision to participate in competitions. When asked if preparing for competitions gave their students a goal to work towards, 70.2% ($n = 186$) ranked this as important to very important in their decision to participate in competitions, while 10.5% ($n = 28$) ranked it as not important to slightly important. The majority of directors ($n = 148$, 55.8%) ranked competitions making their students better musicians as important to very important in their decision to participate in competitions, while 23.4% ($n = 62$) believed it was not important to slightly important.

Among the participants in this study 53.3% ($n = 141$) reported that feedback from competitions would make them a better band director and was an important to very important reason to participate in competitions, while only 24.9% ($n = 66$) believed it was not an important or slightly important reason to participate. I asked directors how important participating in competitions was in their ability to see how their students compared to other students, and 44.9% ($n = 119$) indicated this was not important to slightly important, while 35.8% ($n = 95$) indicated it was important or very important. One hundred sixty-eight directors (63.4%) felt that using competitions as motivation for their students was important or very important in their decision to

participate in competitions, but 14.8% ($n = 39$) indicated it was only slightly important or not important. Participants were asked to rate the importance of the belief that superior ratings from a competition would reflect positively on them as a band director. The majority ($n = 152$, 57%) indicated a positive reflection from competitions was not important or slightly important, while 20.4% ($n = 54$) stated it was important or very important. When asked if preparing for competitions might limit the number of music selections their band could rehearse during class, 48.7% ($n = 129$) stated it was not important or only slightly important in their decision to participate in competitions, while 29.5% ($n = 78$) stated this was important or very important in their decision. Table 10 provides an overview of the rankings and frequencies for the Likert items for educational value of competitions.

Table 10

Participant Rankings for Educational Value of Competitions

Educational Value of Marching Competitions	Ranking Scale	n	%
Educational value of competing	5	122	46.0
	4	82	31.0
	3	35	13.2
	2	17	6.4
	1	8	3.0
	Missing	1	0.4
Amount of time away from academic classes	5	32	12.1
	4	44	16.6
	3	59	22.3
	2	54	20.4
	1	76	28.7
Gives students a goal to work towards	5	107	40.4
	4	79	29.8
	3	50	18.9
	2	11	4.1
	1	17	6.4
	Missing	1	0.4

Educational Value of Marching Competitions	Ranking Scale	<i>n</i>	%
Competitions will make students better	5	78	29.4
	4	70	26.4
	3	53	20.0
	2	41	15.5
	1	21	7.9
	Missing	2	0.8
Feedback from competitions will make me better	5	68	25.7
	4	73	27.6
	3	58	21.9
	2	35	13.2
	1	31	11.7
Competitions allow me to see how my students compare	5	35	13.2
	4	60	22.6
	3	51	19.3
	2	59	22.3
	1	60	22.6
Competitions motivate students	5	76	28.7
	4	92	34.7
	3	58	21.9
	2	15	5.7
	1	24	9.1
Superior ratings reflect positively on me	5	15	5.7
	4	39	14.7
	3	59	22.3
	2	58	21.9
	1	94	35.5
Competitions might limit the music selections	5	36	13.6
	4	42	15.9
	3	58	21.9
	2	41	15.5
	1	88	33.2

Note: 1 = not important, 2 = slightly important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = important, 5 = very important.

In the second set of Likert items, participants ranked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements concerning marching band competitions. Statements were ranked using a five-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Among the

participants in this study most respondents ($n = 180$, 68%) reported that they disagreed or strongly disagreed that they feel pressure from their administration to participate in marching band competitions, while 14.7% ($n = 39$) stated they agreed or strongly agreed that they feel pressure from administration. Directors were asked if they feel pressure from their students to participate in marching competitions, and 50.8% ($n = 134$) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, but 29.1% ($n = 77$) disagreed or strongly disagreed. I asked directors if they feel pressure from the parents of band members, and 43.8% ($n = 116$) agreed or strongly agreed they feel pressure from parents, while 33.6% ($n = 89$) disagreed or strongly disagreed. When asked if directors felt pressure from members of their community, 54.7% ($n = 145$) disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 22.3% ($n = 59$) agreed or strongly agreed that they felt pressure from their community. Finally, when directors were asked if they felt pressure from themselves to participate in marching band competitions, 50.6% ($n = 134$) agreed or strongly agreed that they felt pressure from themselves to compete while 31% ($n = 82$) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Table 11 provides an overview of the rankings and frequencies for the Likert items for pressures on band director.

Table 11

Participant Rankings for Pressures on Band Directors

Pressures on Band Director	Ranking Scale	n	%
Pressure from administration	5	7	2.6
	4	32	12.1
	3	46	17.4
	2	76	28.7
	1	104	39.3
Pressure from students	5	40	15.2
	4	94	35.6
	3	53	20.1
	2	31	11.7
	1	46	17.4

Pressures on Band Director	Ranking Scale	<i>n</i>	%
Pressure from band parents	5	39	14.7
	4	77	29.1
	3	60	22.6
	2	33	12.5
	1	56	21.1
Pressure from community	5	15	5.7
	4	44	16.6
	3	61	23.0
	2	61	23.0
	1	84	31.7
Pressure from myself	5	37	14.0
	4	97	36.6
	3	49	18.5
	2	23	8.7
	1	59	22.3

Note. 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree or agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Directors were asked whether they take time to listen to the comments made by judges of marching band competitions. Most ($n = 219$, 83.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that they take time after competitions to listen to the recordings made by judges, while 8% ($n = 21$) disagreed or strongly disagreed about listening to the recordings. Most directors also agreed with allowing their students to listen to the judges' recordings ($n = 214$, 80.7%), while 9.1% ($n = 24$) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Table 12 provides an overview of the rankings and frequencies for the Likert items for educational value.

Table 12*Participant Rankings for Educational Value of Competitions*

Educational Value	Ranking Scale	<i>n</i>	%
Take time to listen to judges' comments	5	133	50.6
	4	86	32.7
	3	23	8.8
	2	6	2.3
	1	15	5.7
Take time to let students listen to judges' comments	5	92	34.7
	4	122	46.0
	3	27	10.2
	2	6	2.3
	1	18	6.8

Note. 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree or agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Directors were asked if their decision to participate in a marching band competition was based on who the judges would be for the competition. One hundred fifty-three of the respondents (58%) indicated they disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement; however, 22.8% ($n = 60$) stated they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Similarly, directors were asked if their decision to participate in a marching band competition was based on the other bands in attendance, 57.6% ($n = 152$) disagreed or strongly disagreed while 19.4% ($n = 51$) agreed or strongly agreed. When directors were asked if they took the results from a competition personally, 28.4% ($n = 75$) agreed or strongly agreed, while 47.4% ($n = 125$) disagreed or strongly disagreed with taking the results personally.

Directors were asked if they believed participating in competitions would lead to a successful career as a band director, 53% ($n = 140$) disagreed or strongly disagreed while 22% ($n = 58$) agreed or strongly agreed. I asked directors if they enjoyed the creative process of writing

drill for their marching band. Approximately 36% ($n = 95$) disagreed or strongly disagreed while 35.3% ($n = 93$) agreed or strongly agreed to enjoying writing the drill. Similarly, directors were asked if they enjoyed arranging music for their marching band, almost 34% ($n = 89$) disagreed or strongly disagreed while 35.7% ($n = 94$) agreed or strongly agreed. Next, directors were asked if they felt judges were biased against small marching bands at competitions, 52.1% ($n = 137$) agreed or strongly agreed, but 26.2% ($n = 69$) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the notion that judges were biased against small bands. Upon closer examination, 59.3% ($n = 83$) of directors from small bands (1 – 75 members), 40.4% ($n = 40$) from medium bands (76 – 150 members), and 58.3% ($n = 14$) from large bands (151 – 220 members) agreed or strongly agreed judges were biased against small bands. I also asked directors if they felt judges were biased towards large bands. The majority ($n = 153$, 57.9%) indicated they felt judges were biased towards large bands, while 23.9% ($n = 63$) disagreed or strongly disagreed. When examined more closely, 60% ($n = 84$) of directors from small bands, 55% ($n = 55$) from medium bands, and 58.3% ($n = 14$) agreed or strongly agreed judges were biased towards large bands. I continued by asking directors if they felt judges were slow to accept changes in marching band developments like including electronics in competition shows, 42.8% ($n = 113$) disagreed or strongly disagreed while 26.1% ($n = 69$) agreed or strongly agreed.

Directors were asked if they felt bad results from competitions would reflect negatively on them as a band director. One hundred twenty-six participants (47.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that bad results might reflect negatively on them as a band director, while 34.3% ($n = 91$) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The final Likert scale item asked participants how strongly they agreed with the following statement, “I enjoy marching band.” Most directors ($n = 210$, 79.5%) reported they agreed or strongly agreed, while only twenty directors (7.6%) disagreed or strongly

disagreed with the statement. Table 13 provides an overview of the rankings and frequencies for these Likert items.

Table 13

Participant Rankings for Band Directors' Beliefs

Beliefs of Band Directors	Ranking Scale	<i>n</i>	%
Attendance at competition is based off judges	5	15	5.7
	4	45	17.1
	3	51	19.3
	2	67	25.4
	1	86	32.6
Attendance at a competition is based off other bands attending	5	7	2.7
	4	44	16.7
	3	61	23.1
	2	65	24.6
	1	87	33.0
Take competition results personally	5	14	5.3
	4	61	23.1
	3	64	24.2
	2	57	21.6
	1	68	25.8
Competitions will lead to successful career	5	13	4.9
	4	45	17.1
	3	66	25.0
	2	61	23.1
	1	79	29.9
I enjoy writing the drill	5	44	16.7
	4	49	18.6
	3	75	28.5
	2	26	9.9
	1	69	26.2
I enjoy arranging the music	5	44	16.7
	4	50	19
	3	80	30.4

Beliefs of Band Directors	Ranking Scale	<i>n</i>	%
	2	26	9.9
	1	63	24
I feel judges are biased against small bands	5	58	22.1
	4	79	30
	3	57	21.7
	2	40	15.2
	1	29	11
I feel judges are biased towards large bands	5	60	22.7
	4	93	35.2
	3	48	18.2
	2	33	12.5
	1	30	11.4
I feel judges are slow to accept change	5	28	10.6
	4	41	15.5
	3	82	31.1
	2	80	30.3
	1	33	12.5
Bad results will reflect negatively on me	5	30	11.3
	4	96	36.2
	3	48	18.1
	2	47	17.7
	1	44	16.6
I enjoy marching band	5	116	43.9
	4	94	35.6
	3	34	12.9
	2	12	4.6
	1	8	3

Note. 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree or agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Research Question 2: Differences in Band Directors' Attitudes Towards Participation in Marching Competitions

Research question two asked: Are there any differences in band directors' attitudes towards participation in marching band competitions? The Likert items were grouped together into scales based on items related to the same construct before running any nonparametric tests comparing responses with demographic variables.

1. Costs of Competitions (Heidingsfelder, 2014; Rieth, 2018)
2. Size and Instrumentation of Marching Band (Battisti, 1989; Thurmond, 1978)
3. Educational Value of Competitions (Austin, 1990; Moody, 1983; Rockefeller, 1982)
4. Pressures on Band Director (Austin, 1990; Batey, 2002; Bruno, 1989; Hash, 2012)
5. Beliefs of Band Directors (O'Leary, 2019; Pennington, 1982)

Cronbach's alpha was used to estimate the reliability of the scale items. An alpha level above .70 is an acceptable reliability level (Russell, 2018). Initial results from the Cronbach's alpha yielded a range of alpha coefficients found within each of the following five scales: costs of competitions ($n = 4$, $\alpha = .683$), size and instrumentation of marching band ($n = 4$, $\alpha = .778$), educational value of competitions ($n = 11$, $\alpha = .790$), pressures on band director ($n = 5$, $\alpha = .850$), and beliefs of band directors ($n = 11$, $\alpha = .670$). However, when reviewing each scale, it was determined that by removing specific Likert items the internal consistency could be raised for individual scales.

Costs of competitions. The following four Likert items comprised the scale for costs of competitions:

- Q1. The registration fee to enter a competition.
- Q2. The cost of transportation to a competition.
- Q3. Distance of travel to a competition.

Q4. The costs associated with a competitive show design. (Props, Costumes, Music, Drill)

The scale for Likert items involving costs yielded a moderate internal consistency ($n = 4$, $\alpha = .683$). I deemed this level of reliability appropriate for subsequent analysis. See Table 14 for results of the Cronbach's alpha.

Table 14

Cronbach's Alpha for Scale Costs of Competitions

Costs of Competitions				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Question 1	9.97	8.670	.386	.666
Question 2	9.52	6.879	.546	.561
Question 3	8.77	7.827	.573	.555
Question 4	8.65	8.342	.379	.674

Size and instrumentation of marching band. The following four Likert items comprised the scale for size and instrumentation of marching band:

- Q5. The number of students in my marching band.
- Q6. The instrumentation of my marching band.
- Q7. The age of students in my marching band.
- Q8. Interest of my band students.

The Likert scale for size and instrumentation of marching band originally resulted in a strong internal consistency ($n = 4$, $\alpha = .778$). However, upon further investigation, I made the decision to remove Likert item Q8 from the scale. This raised the internal consistency to $\alpha = .828$. See Table 15 for results from the Cronbach's alpha.

Table 15*Cronbach's Alpha for Scale Size and Instrumentation of Marching Band*

Size and Instrumentation of Marching Band				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Question 5	8.77	9.153	.665	.679
Question 6	8.56	8.540	.743	.632
Question 7	9.52	10.843	.594	.723
Question 8	7.93	11.899	.362	.828

Educational value of competitions. The following 11 Likert scale items comprised the scale for educational value of competitions:

- Q9. Educational value of competing.
- Q10. Amount of time away from other academic/core classes due to travel.
- Q11. Preparing for competitions gives my students a goal to work towards.
- Q12. Preparing for competitions will make my students better musicians.
- Q13. Feedback from competitions will make me a better director.
- Q14. Competitions allow me to see where my students compare to other students.
- Q15. Competitions serve as motivation for my students.
- Q16. Superior ratings from competitions reflect positively on me as a band director.
- Q17. Preparing for a marching band competition might limit the number of music selections my band can rehearse during class time.
- Q23. After competitions, I take time to listen to the recordings of the judges' comments.

Q24. After competitions, I take time to allow my students to listen to the recordings of the judges' comments.

The educational value of competitions scale originally contained Likert scale items Q9-17 and Q23-24 and had a strong internal consistency ($\alpha = .790$). However, results from the Cronbach's Alpha showed that by removing Q10 and Q17 the level of consistency increased to $\alpha = .876$. See Table 16 for results from the Cronbach's alpha.

Table 16

Cronbach's Alpha for Scale Educational Value of Competitions

Educational Value of Competitions				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Question 9	33.14	54.275	.291	.789
Question 10	34.61	58.889	-.044	.829
Question 11	33.31	47.565	.682	.749
Question 12	33.71	46.168	.690	.745
Question 13	33.82	45.526	.712	.742
Question 14	34.43	47.169	.581	.758
Question 15	33.56	47.635	.654	.752
Question 16	34.93	50.657	.432	.776
Question 17	34.65	58.406	-.027	.829
Question 23	33.05	49.114	.636	.756
Question 24	33.25	49.974	.566	.763

Pressures on Band Director. The following five Likert scale items comprised the scale for pressures on band directors:

Q18. I feel pressure from my administration to compete.

Q19. I feel pressure from my students to compete.

Q20. I feel pressure from band parents to compete.

Q21. I feel pressure from members of the community to compete.

Q22. I feel pressure from myself to compete.

This scale originally had a strong internal consistency ($n = 5$, $\alpha = .850$), but I removed item 22 because it dealt with a more intrinsic pressure on directors rather than extrinsic pressures in the other items. This caused the internal consistency of the pressure scale to be raised to $\alpha = .867$. See Table 17 for results from the Cronbach's alpha.

Table 17

Cronbach's Alpha for Scale Pressures on Band Directors

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Question 18	11.77	19.258	.551	.846
Question 19	10.68	15.708	.817	.775
Question 20	10.83	15.435	.818	.774
Question 21	11.45	17.587	.657	.820
Question 22	10.77	18.370	.486	.867

Beliefs of Band Directors. The following 11 Likert scale items comprised the scale for beliefs of band directors:

Q25. My decision on attending a specific competition is based on who the judges are for the competition.

Q26. My decision on attending a specific competition is based on the bands that would be competing in my band's classification.

Q27. I take the results from competition personally.

Q28. I believe that participating in competitions will lead to a successful career as a band director.

Q29. I enjoy the creative process of writing the drill for my marching band's halftime show.

Q30. I enjoy the creative process of arranging the music for my marching band's halftime show.

Q31. I feel judges are biased against small bands.

Q32. I feel judges are biased towards large bands.

Q33. I feel judges are slow to accept changes in the marching band developments (i.e., including electronics in shows.)

Q34. I feel that bad results from competitions might reflect negatively on me as a band director.

Q35. I enjoy marching band.

The final Likert scale contained questions about directors' beliefs concerning competitions and had a moderate internal consistency ($n = 11, \alpha = .670$). I deemed this level of reliability appropriate for subsequent analysis. See Table 18 for results of the Cronbach's alpha.

Table 18

Cronbach's Alpha for Beliefs of Band Directors Scale

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Question 25	30.01	37.391	.311	.650
Question 26	30.06	37.166	.362	.641
Question 27	29.79	36.698	.368	.640
Question 28	29.93	36.378	.397	.634

Beliefs of Band Directors				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Question 29	29.50	35.745	.358	.641
Question 30	29.43	36.799	.300	.652
Question 31	29.05	37.005	.324	.647
Question 32	28.98	36.553	.358	.641
Question 33	29.59	39.372	.213	.665
Question 34	29.30	37.011	.327	.647
Question 35	28.26	40.653	.166	.671

I conducted a Spearman correlation to identify any relationships between each of the 17 demographic items and the total score for each five Likert item scales, and I also ran separate analyses for each Likert item removed from the scales. The Spearman correlations resulted in 19 statistically significant findings. Sixteen of the statistically significant findings resulted in a negative correlation, while only three had a positive correlation. See Table 19 for the Spearman correlations.

Table 19

Spearman Correlations for Demographics and Likert Scales

Demographic	Likert Scales				
	Costs	Size of Band	Educational Value	Pressure	Beliefs
Gender	$r_s = .125$ $p = .041^*$	$r_s = .057$ $p = .358$	$r_s = .087$ $p = .163$	$r_s = .093$ $p = .134$	$r_s = -.001$ $p = .990$
Years of teaching	$r_s = -.098$ $p = .110$	$r_s = .007$ $p = .914$	$r_s = -.201$ $p = .001^{***}$	$r_s = -.281$ $p < .001^{***}$	$r_s = -.218$ $p < .001^{***}$
State region	$r_s = .093$ $p = .133$	$r_s = .016$ $p = .796$	$r_s = .064$ $p = .304$	$r_s = .070$ $p = .255$	$r_s = .032$ $p = .615$
Age	$r_s = -.025$ $p = .687$	$r_s = .099$ $p = .111$	$r_s = -.186$ $p = .003^{**}$	$r_s = -.289$ $p < .001^{***}$	$r_s = -.191$ $p = .002^{**}$

Demographic	Likert Scales				
	Costs	Size of Band	Educational Value	Pressure	Beliefs
Highest degree	$r_s = -.071$ $p = .253$	$r_s = .106$ $p = .087$	$r_s = -.135$ $p = .030^*$	$r_s = -.139$ $p = .024^*$	$r_s = -.094$ $p = .134$
Degree major	$r_s = -.054$ $p = .381$	$r_s = -.014$ $p = .820$	$r_s = -.114$ $p = .067$	$r_s = -.124$ $p = .044^*$	$r_s = -.059$ $p = .351$
Undergrad participation	$r_s = -.045$ $p = .467$	$r_s = .017$ $p = .789$	$r_s = -.053$ $p = .396$	$r_s = .002$ $p = .974$	$r_s = -.097$ $p = .122$
Years in college	$r_s = .065$ $p = .365$	$r_s = .061$ $p = .399$	$r_s = .092$ $p = .207$	$r_s = .080$ $p = .265$	$r_s = -.058$ $p = .429$
College marching required	$r_s = .044$ $p = .539$	$r_s = -.032$ $p = .659$	$r_s = .061$ $p = .409$	$r_s = -.124$ $p = .087$	$r_s = .126$ $p = .087$
Youngest grade	$r_s = .081$ $p = .187$	$r_s = -.141$ $p = .022^*$	$r_s = -.086$ $p = .166$	$r_s = .054$ $p = .385$	$r_s = -.072$ $p = .253$
Marching band style	$r_s = .022$ $p = .722$	$r_s = -.038$ $p = .538$	$r_s = -.004$ $p = .949$	$r_s = .052$ $p = .402$	$r_s = .081$ $p = .199$
School enrollment	$r_s = .081$ $p = .189$	$r_s = -.025$ $p = .687$	$r_s = -.004$ $p = .946$	$r_s = .149$ $p = .016^*$	$r_s = -.005$ $p = .935$
Band size	$r_s = -.008$ $p = .896$	$r_s = -.027$ $p = .667$	$r_s = -.028$ $p = .658$	$r_s = -.003$ $p = .955$	$r_s = .031$ $p = .625$
Participate last 2 years	$r_s = .031$ $p = .611$	$r_s = -.042$ $p = .497$	$r_s = -.353$ $p < .001^{***}$	$r_s = -.496$ $p < .001^{***}$	$r_s = -.236$ $p < .001^{***}$
Ever competed	$r_s = .023$ $p = .878$	$r_s = -.068$ $p = .655$	$r_s = -.227$ $p = .125$	$r_s = -.002$ $p = .990$	$r_s = -.262$ $p = .082$
How many contests	$r_s = -.008$ $p = .911$	$r_s = -.027$ $p = .692$	$r_s = .108$ $p = .118$	$r_s = .218$ $p = .001^{***}$	$r_s = .003$ $p = .968$
Competition Statement	$r_s = -.016$ $p = .800$	$r_s = .026$ $p = .683$	$r_s = -.290$ $p < .001^*$	$r_s = -.246$ $p < .001^{***}$	$r_s = -.130$ $p = .039^*$

Note. Statistically significant.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

A series of Kruskal-Wallis H tests was used to explore the differences in means for each Likert grouping by (a) gender, (b) years of teaching experience, (c) region of the United States, (d) age, (e) highest degree earned, (f) major of highest degree, (g) participation in college marching band, (h) years spent in college marching band, (i) college marching band requirement,

(j) youngest grade in marching band, (k) style of marching band, (l) school enrollment, (m) size of band, (n) participation in competitions in last two years, (o) ever taken a band to a competition, (p) number of competitions attended, and (q) statement about current competition participation. Post hoc pairwise comparisons were completed for any Kruskal-Wallis H test that was found to be statistically significant. I used a pairwise Bonferroni adjustment before performing the comparisons to control for potential sampling bias and Type I error. This correction involved dividing the priori alpha level (.05) by the total number of comparisons (17). This resulted in a lower p value ($\alpha = .003$). Epsilon squared was calculated to determine the effect size for each statistically significant difference between groups. See Table 20 for Likert scale frequency totals.

Table 20

Likert Scale Frequency Totals

Likert Scale	Likert Ranking									
	1		2		3		4		5	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Educational value	452	15.5	343	11.8	531	18.3	789	27.1	794	27.3
Cost	178	16.8	204	19.2	239	22.5	237	22.4	202	19.1
Beliefs	596	20.5	514	17.7	666	22.9	697	24.0	429	14.8
Size & instrumentation	258	24.4	187	17.7	191	18.1	239	22.6	181	17.1
Pressure	349	26.4	224	16.9	269	20.3	344	26.0	138	10.4

Results for Costs of Competitions and Size and Instrumentation of Marching Band

Kruskal-Wallis H tests were conducted comparing the means for these items and each of the 17 demographic variables gathered in the first section of the survey. There were no statistically significant differences for the Likert scales for costs of competitions and size and instrumentation of marching band.

Results for Educational Value of Competitions

The third scale represented educational value of marching band competitions. Means for these items were compared for each demographic gathered in the first section of the survey. A Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted comparing the educational value of marching band competitions with each of the 17 demographic variables. A statistically significant difference with a moderate effect was found for directors from different regions of the United States and educational value of competitions ($H(4) = 21.101, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 = .082$). See Table 21 for states included in each region. Pairwise comparisons indicated directors from the Southeastern region of the United States ranked the educational value of competitions more important than directors from the Northeast ($p < .001$) and directors from the Midwest ($p = .015$).

Table 21

States Included in Each Region

Northeast	Southeast	Midwest	Southwest	West
Connecticut	Alabama	Illinois	Arizona	Alaska
Delaware	Arkansas	Indiana	New Mexico	California
Maine	Florida	Iowa	Oklahoma	Colorado
Maryland	Georgia	Kansas	Texas	Hawaii
Massachusetts	Kentucky	Michigan		Idaho
New Hampshire	Louisiana	Minnesota		Montana
New Jersey	Mississippi	Missouri		Nevada
New York	North Carolina	Nebraska		Oregon
Pennsylvania	South Carolina	North Dakota		Utah
Rhode Island	Tennessee	Ohio		Washington
Vermont	Virginia	South Dakota		Wyoming
Washington, DC	West Virginia	Wisconsin		

Marching band directors with different styles of marching bands revealed a significant difference with a moderate effect ($H(4) = 21.831, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 = .085$). Marching band directors with show bands ranked the educational value of marching competitions less important than

directors from corps style marching bands ($p = .003$) and directors from BOA style marching bands ($p < .001$). A statistically significant difference with a moderate effect was found between educational value and directors who had participated in competitions within the past two years and those who had not participated ($H(1) = 32.179, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 = .125$). No pairwise comparison was needed since there were only two variables.

The final Kruskal-Wallis H test for educational value of marching band competitions showed a statistically significant difference with a moderate effect in the number of competitions directors attended at this point in their career ($H(2) = 23.638, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 = .093$). Pairwise comparisons indicated marching band directors who now attend fewer competitions than they did when they started their career indicated the educational value of competitions was less important than directors who now attend the same number of competitions ($p < .001$) and directors who now attend more competitions ($p < .001$).

Results for Pressures on Band Director

The fourth scale represented pressures on band directors associated with competitions. Means for these items were compared for each demographic gathered in the first section of the survey.

A Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted comparing pressures associated with competitions on band directors with the 17 demographics. A statistically significant difference with a moderate effect was discovered for directors with varying years of teaching experience and pressures on directors ($H(6) = 29.110, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 = .111$). Pairwise comparisons indicated directors with 30+ years of teaching experience were less likely to agree they felt pressure from outside factors associated with competitions than directors with 10-14 years of experience ($p =$

.028), 5-9 years of experience ($p = .001$), 15-19 years of experience ($p < .001$), and 0-4 years of experience ($p = .001$).

Another significant difference with a moderate effect was found for band directors from different regions of the United States and pressures on directors ($H(4) = 21.477, p < .001, \epsilon^2 = .082$). Pairwise comparisons found that marching band directors from the Northeastern region of the United States were less likely to agree they felt pressure from outside factors associated with competitions than directors from the Southeast ($p = .002$) and Southwest ($p = .003$). Differences in directors' age was found to be statistically significant with a moderate effect for pressures on directors as well ($H(10) = 28.075, p = .002, \epsilon^2 = .107$). Pairwise comparison discovered directors aged 55-59 were less likely to agree they felt outside pressures associated with marching band competitions than directors aged 25-29 ($p = .020$).

A Kruskal-Wallis H test revealed a significant difference with a relatively strong effect in the style of a marching band and pressures on directors ($H(4) = 45.435, p < .001, \epsilon^2 = .173$). Pairwise comparison revealed show style marching band directors were less likely to feel pressures associated with competitions than corps style directors ($p = .001$) and directors from BOA style marching bands ($p < .001$). BOA style marching band directors were also found to be more likely to experience pressures than directors from other styles ($p = .001$) and corps style ($p = .001$).

A statistically significant difference with a relatively strong effect was discovered between perceived pressures and directors who have participated in competitions within the past two years ($H(1) = 64.650, p < .001, \epsilon^2 = .246$). No pairwise comparison was conducted since there were only two variables. Another statistically significant difference with a moderate effect was discovered between the number of competitions a marching band director attends and the

pressures associated with competing ($H(4) = 16.634, p = .002, \varepsilon^2 = .087$). Pairwise comparison found directors who attend one competition were less likely to feel pressures associated with competitions than those who attend three competitions ($p = .044$), four competitions ($p = .007$), and five competitions ($p = .005$).

A final Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted to analyze the pressures associated with competitions and revealed a statistically significant difference with a moderate effect in the number of competitions directors attend at varying points in their career ($H(2) = 21.232, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 = .082$). Pairwise comparison showed directors who participate in fewer competitions now in their career are less likely to feel the effects of pressures associated with competitions than those who attend the same number of competitions now ($p < .001$) or more competitions ($p < .001$).

Results for Beliefs of Band Directors

The final scale represented beliefs band directors might have towards marching band competitions. Means for these items were compared for each demographic gathered in the first section of the survey.

A Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted comparing the beliefs directors may hold towards competitions with the 17 demographics. The first statistically significant result with a moderate effect was for differences in regions of the United States and beliefs of directors ($H(4) = 19.081, p = .001, \varepsilon^2 = .075$). Pairwise comparison indicated band directors from the Southeastern region were more likely to agree with statements about beliefs in marching band competitions than directors from the Northeast ($p < .001$) or the Midwest ($p = .030$).

Next, school size resulted in a significant difference with a moderate effect in the directors' beliefs concerning marching band competitions ($H(4) = 21.486, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 = .085$).

The pairwise comparison found band directors who teach at schools with student populations of 1001-1500 were less likely to agree with the beliefs about competitions than directors with student populations of 500 or below ($p = .006$), 501-1000 ($p = .010$), 1501-2000 ($p = .015$), and 2001+ ($p = .002$).

A final Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted to look at the beliefs directors might have concerning marching band competitions and a statistically significant difference with a moderate effect was discovered between the directors who have participated in marching competitions in the past two years and directors who have not participated ($H(1) = 14.081, p < .001, \epsilon^2 = .056$). No pairwise comparison was conducted since there were only two variables; however, band directors who have participated in competitions within the past two years indicated they are more likely to agree with the beliefs concerning marching band competitions.

Results for Individual Likert Items

As mentioned earlier, four Likert items (8, 10, 17, and 22) were excluded from the scales due to the results of the Cronbach's Alpha. Each item was examined using the Kruskal-Wallis H test and compared to each of the 17 demographics gathered in the first section of the survey. Likert item 8 asked participants how important the interest level of their students was in their decision to participate in competitions. No significant differences were found for Item 8. Likert item 10 asked directors if the amount of time away from other academic classes was important in their decision to participate in competitions. A significant difference with a moderate effect was discovered for Likert item 10 and directors who have not participated in marching band competitions within the past two years ($H(1) = 20.456, p < .001, \epsilon^2 = .077$). No pairwise comparison was conducted since there were only two variables; however, directors who have not

participated in competitions within the past two years were more likely to feel the time away from other academic class was important in their decision not to participate.

The next Likert item, number 17, asked if preparing for competitions limits the number of musical selections bands could rehearse during class time. A Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted, and a significant difference with a moderate effect was discovered for band directors of various styles of marching bands and Likert item 17 ($H(4) = 16.584, p = .002, \varepsilon^2 = .063$). Pairwise comparison indicated band directors from show band style marching bands felt that limiting the number of musical selections they could work on in class was more important than directors from corps style marching bands ($p = .001$) and BOA style marching bands ($p = .015$).

School enrollment resulted in another significant difference with a moderate effect when compared to the music selections band directors could work on when preparing for a competition ($H(4) = 16.318, p = .003, \varepsilon^2 = .062$). The pairwise comparison showed directors from schools with an enrollment of 1001-1500 students indicated they felt limiting the number of music selections when preparing for competitions was not as important in their decision as the directors from schools with an enrollment of 500 or below ($p = .006$) or 501-1000 ($p = .016$).

A Kruskal-Wallis H test found another statistically significant difference with a moderate effect in how important Likert item 17 was to directors who had participated in marching band competitions in the past two years ($H(1) = 17.933, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 = .068$). No pairwise comparison was conducted since there were only two variables; however, band directors who had not participated in marching band competitions within the past two years indicated limiting the number of musical selections that could be worked on in class was more important to them than directors who had participated. The number of competitions a band director attends was another significant difference with a moderate effect for Likert item 17 ($H(4) = 20.122, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 =$

.094). The pairwise comparison found marching band directors who attend 5 or more competitions rated the idea of preparing for competitions could limit the number of music selections they could work on in class less important than directors who attend 2 ($p = .005$) or 3 ($p = .002$) competitions. The final significant difference with a moderate effect for Likert item 17 was found in the item about the number of competitions directors attend now in their career ($H(2) = 19.149, p < .001, \epsilon^2 = .073$). The pairwise comparison indicated those band directors who now attend fewer competitions felt that the limited number of musical selections was more important than those directors who attend the same number of competitions ($p = .001$) and those who attend more ($p < .001$).

The last Likert item tested was number 22. This item asked participants to what degree they agreed or disagreed with the statement: "I pressure myself to compete." A Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted, and a statistically significant difference with a moderate effect was found for directors from different regions of the United States and Likert item 22 ($H(4) = 28.637, p < .001, \epsilon^2 = .108$). Pairwise comparison indicated band directors from the Northeastern region were less likely to agree they felt pressure from themselves to participate in marching band competitions than directors from the Western ($p = .013$), the Southeastern ($p < .001$), and the Southwestern ($p = .001$) regions of the United States.

A Kruskal-Wallis H test indicated a statistically significant difference with a relatively strong effect was found for band directors from different styles of marching band and Likert item 22 ($H(4) = 51.001, p < .001, \epsilon^2 = .194$). Pairwise comparison indicated band directors from show band style marching bands were less likely to feel pressure from themselves to compete compared to corps style ($p < .001$) and BOA style ($p < .001$). The pairwise comparison also

revealed band directors from BOA style marching bands were more likely to feel pressure from themselves compared to band directors from corps style ($p = .024$) and other styles ($p < .001$).

The next Kruskal-Wallis H test discovered a statistically significant difference with a moderate effect between school enrollment and band directors feeling pressure from themselves to compete and Likert item 22 ($H(4) = 17.427, p = .002, \varepsilon^2 = .066$). The pairwise comparison indicated band directors from schools with 1001-1500 students were less likely to feel pressure from themselves to compete compared to directors from schools with 1501-2000 ($p = .043$) and 2000+ ($p = .002$) students.

The fourth Kruskal-Wallis H test revealed a statistically significant difference with a relatively strong effect for Likert item 22 for directors' participation in competitions within the past two years ($H(1) = 58.048, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 = .220$). No pairwise comparison was needed since there were only two variables; however, band directors who indicated they had competed in marching band competitions within the past two years were more likely to feel pressure from themselves compared to the directors who have not competed within the past two years.

The final Kruskal-Wallis H test yielded a statistically significant difference with a relatively strong effect between directors feeling pressure from themselves to compete and the statement directors chose indicating the number of competitions they attend now in their career ($H(2) = 42.670, p < .001, \varepsilon^2 = .164$). The pairwise comparison indicated those band directors who now attend fewer competitions were less likely to feel pressure from themselves compared to those directors who attend the same number of competitions ($p < .001$) and those who attend more ($p < .001$).

Summary

The results of this study yielded three key findings. First, marching band directors reported the educational value of competitions was the most important factor in their decision to participate in marching band competitions. While directors agreed preparing for competitions provided their students with a goal, the overall interest level of students, and the costs associated with a competitive show were important, over half of the participants considered the educational value of competing was the most important. Next, the pressure to compete can come from many different directions, but most directors agreed they received the least amount of pressure from their administrators. Third, participants varied in their attitudes towards participation in marching band competitions.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

In this quantitative study, I attempted to examine the reasons high school band directors choose to participate in marching band competitions. I hypothesized that directors would possess varying attitudes towards participation in marching band competitions. Based on my research goals and literature reviewed, I developed the following research questions:

1. What are band directors' attitudes towards participation in marching band competitions?
2. Are there any differences in band directors' attitudes based on the following demographics: gender, director's age, years of teaching, location, highest degree earned, collegiate marching band experience, grades in marching band, style of marching band, school enrollment, size of marching band, and competition participation?

Participants ($N = 265$) completed a researcher created online, anonymous survey consisting of 52 closed-ended, multiple-choice, open-ended, and Likert-scale questions about their attitudes towards marching band competitions. The survey was divided into three sections: (a) demographics, (b) how important 17 selected variables are to participation in competitions, (c) level of agreement with various beliefs about competitions.

Past studies have explored the attitudes and opinions of band directors and principals towards the value of marching band competitions (Banister, 1992; Rogers, 1985), the shared experiences of students who participate in marching band (Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; O'Leary, 2019), and effects of marching band competitions on concert band music performance (Dawes, 1989). This study focused on the band directors' attitudes towards competitions and explored various reasons why they might choose to participate in marching band competitions.

Three key findings emerged from this study:

1. Marching band directors reported the educational value of competitions was the most important factor in their decision to participate in marching band competitions.
2. Marching band directors indicated that pressures associated with competitions were the least important factor in their decision to participate in marching band competitions.
3. Participants varied in their attitudes towards participation in marching band competitions.

Educational Value was the Most Important Factor

Results indicated that over half (54.4%) of the respondents ranked the educational value associated with competitions as important or the most important variable when choosing to participate in marching band competitions. This finding contrasts with some previous literature which asserted competitions had no educational goals or objectives (Griffith, 1983). Respondents to this study indicated with an average Likert score of 3.94 they believe competitions give their students a goal to work towards. Previous literature described some directors as more concerned about winning contests rather than focusing on educational goals (Austin, 1990). However, directors in this study indicated they value the educational aspect of competing. One of the main reasons for competing should be to improve performance, and one way to accomplish this would be to provide students with constructive comments for improvement (Whitney, 1966). The directors in this study seemed to agree with Whitney's statement. When asked if they listened to judges' tapes after competitions, 50.6% ($n = 133$) strongly agreed and 32.7% ($n = 86$) agreed. Also, when asked if participants allowed their students to listen to comments made by judges after competitions, 34.7% ($n = 92$) strongly agreed and 46.0% ($n = 122$) agreed to allowing their students to listen to judges' comments.

Cost associated with competitions was another important variable in the attitudes of band directors towards participation in competitions. Approximately 41.5% of participants ranked the scale of costs associated with competitions as the second most important variable for choosing to participate in competitions. The Likert item that specifically focused on costs associated with a competitive show received the highest average score ($M = 3.66$) and the distance of travel was the second highest ($M = 3.53$). This mirrors a recent study by Rawlings (2019) where he indicated the consideration for selecting a performance venue for large ensemble competitions is important to directors, but the inconsistency of finances was the most important. It also follows recent studies that have highlighted the disparity of smaller band programs and how larger programs are able to design elaborate shows that enhance the overall general effect of a performance (O'Leary, 2019; Rawlings, 2019).

Pressures Associated with Competitions

A common theme in the literature is concern about both internal and external pressures that directors experience from a highly competitive marching band culture. A study conducted by Burnsed and Sochinski (1983) revealed 60% of directors indicated their participation in competitions was because of pressure from parents, students, and administration. In the current study, more directors disagreed or strongly disagreed (43.3%) about statements concerning pressures associated with competitions than those who agreed or strongly agreed (36.4%). Directors indicated they felt the most pressure from their students to compete ($M = 3.19$), followed by pressure from themselves ($M = 3.11$), from band parents ($M = 3.04$), from their community, ($M = 2.42$), and finally from administration ($M = 2.10$). Opponents of marching competitions have argued that pressures, including the pressure to win, are a negative aspect of competition, and can weigh heavily on band directors (Burnsed & Sochinski, 1983). The results

of the current survey indicate that outside pressures to compete might not weigh as heavily on directors as once thought.

Directors ranked size and instrumentation of their band as the second least important consideration for marching competition participation. Although 39.7% ($n = 106$) ranked the Likert scale for size and instrumentation as important and very important, 42% ($n = 112$) ranked it as slightly important or not important. O’Leary (2019) suggested that having a marching band with a complete instrumentation would greatly enhance the group’s overall competitiveness. According to responses from the current survey, directors agreed with O’Leary. Directors ranked “the instrumentation of the band” highest ($M = 3.04$) among the Likert scale for size and instrumentation of the marching band. The item rated the least important in this Likert scale was “the age of students in my marching band” ($M = 2.09$). However, when examined more closely, directors who include younger students in their marching band rated this item more important than other directors. Marching band directors with students in the sixth grade rated this the highest ($M = 3.67$), followed by seventh grade ($M = 2.44$), eighth grade ($M = 2.38$), ninth grade ($M = 1.90$) and finally tenth grade ($M = 1.00$).

Regional Attitudes

A Kruskal-Wallis H test was conducted for each of the 17 demographic items and compared to each Likert scale and the Likert items excluded from the groupings. The demographic for regions of the United States resulted in several statistically significant differences.

The region a band director lives and works in seems to have a greater impact on their attitudes and decisions associated with competitions than any other demographic. The Southeastern region of the United States had the highest mean in three of the five Likert item

scales (Educational Value of Competitions ($M = 35.2881$), Size and Instrumentation of Marching Band ($M = 9.1475$), and Beliefs Associated with Competitions ($M = 35.7018$.)

It is uncertain why the Southeastern region placed more importance on the Likert scales than the other regions. This might be a byproduct of the region's emphasis on high school and college football. Perhaps future research could seek to identify reasons as to why these differences exist. The Western region indicated the costs associated with competitions were the most important ($M = 13.2326$) variable for their participation in competitions. This may be a result of the distance needed to travel to competitions. The majority of Western region directors (58%) reported attending three or less competitions whereas the majority of Northeastern region directors (63%) reported attending five or more. Western region directors also ranked the cost of transportation more important than any other region. Further research is needed to examine whether the cost of travel, due to distance, is associated in the difference in the number of competitions attended.

The demographic for total years of teaching experience resulted in multiple statistically significant differences. Directors with 30+ years of teaching experience had the lowest mean in four of the five Likert item scales (Costs of Competitions, Size and Instrumentation of Marching Band, Educational Value of Competitions, and Pressures on Band Directors). It is uncertain why directors with 30+ years of experience ranked items as they did; however, it may be due in part that directors with many years of experience have learned to prioritize matters and are not affected by the same factors as younger directors. It may also be that directors with 30+ years of teaching experience indicated they attend fewer competitions than any other age group. Approximately 63% ($n = 26$) of directors with 30+ years of experience indicated they attend 3 or less competitions and, of those, 15 had not attended a competition within the past two years. This

mirrors Dawes' (1989) findings that younger band directors with less experience tend to participate in more marching competitions in comparison with older colleagues who have more experience.

Finally, the style of marching band a director teaches seems to have an impact on their attitudes and decisions associated with competitions. Directors who selected Bands of America performance style for their marching band ranked the costs associated with competitions, pressures from competitions, and beliefs associated with competitions as the most important factors in their decisions to participate. Band directors who selected show band for their style of marching band ranked the Likert cluster "educational value of competitions" ($M = 26.39$) as the least important factor for participation. The perceived lack of educational value in competitions may explain the lower number of competitions attended by show style marching bands. These directors may feel their band's style of performance will not be judged as equitably as the BOA or corps style bands. More than half of the directors who selected show band for their style of marching band (56.4%) indicated that they had not participated in a marching band competition in the past two years. Further research is needed to understand the level of value directors from show bands place on competitions.

Adjustments and Errors

Results of this study should be considered in light of the following concerns. I acknowledge that my sample size and the number of analyses I conducted using the same data set may have increased the possibility for Type I errors. I attempted to control this by using the pairwise comparisons Bonferroni adjustment. This resulted in a lower p value ($\alpha = .003$) and was a conservative estimate. In hindsight, a different approach to data analysis might have resulted in more robust results. Due to the relatively low response rate, findings should not be generalized

beyond the respondents of this study. This was not a psychometric study. Additional trials with a larger sample size would be needed to develop a reliable scale for measuring these constructs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on results of this study, it can be concluded that band directors have different attitudes and beliefs about participation in marching band competitions. Directors should at least be aware of the costs associated with marching band competitions and the pressures that are associated with running a competitive program. It appears that the region in which a band program is located, the years of teaching experience for directors, and the style of marching band had some effect on attitudes of marching band directors and participation in competitions.

Marching band directors rated the costs associated with competitions, and the educational value of marching band competitions to be important or very important based on a Likert-type scale of 1: Not Important and 5: Very Important. Directors from the Western region of the United States rated the costs associated with competitions the highest among other regions, possibly due to longer distances of travel to competitions. Band directors who attend only one competition a year rated costs the least important. Directors from the Southeastern region of the United States rated the educational value of competitions highest among the other regions. This may be due to longer marching seasons and the region's emphasis on football and halftime performances. Those directors with an educational specialist degree rated the educational value of competitions the lowest, as did directors who identified their marching band style as show band. Not surprisingly, directors who participated in competitions within the past two years rated the educational value of competitions higher than those who did not compete.

Participants disagreed with past literature concerning pressures associated with competing based on a Likert-type scale of 1: Strongly Disagree and 5: Strongly Agree. Previous

literature reported directors feeling pressured from principals and parents to participate in competitions (Burnsed & Sochinski, 1983; Goolsby, 1983). More than half of the directors in the current study rated the Likert scale for pressure as the least important factor in participating in competitions. Approximately 64% ($n = 169$) of directors strongly disagreed, disagreed, or neither agreed nor disagreed with the pressure to compete.

Future Research Implications

Further research is needed to address key areas of this study. Younger directors (0 – 4 years of experience) indicated they pressure themselves to compete at a higher level than any other age group; a more in-depth study of how pressures directly affect band directors should be conducted. The first five years for a new director are a critical time for their development and continued success in the field of teaching. Do younger directors know how to cope with stresses associated with marching band and competitions? Do younger directors know where to find the resources to assist in designing shows and arrangements for their marching band? How are music education programs preparing future teachers for the demands of marching band?

Seeking out mentors and talking with other band directors is a great way for young directors to cope with the stress and demands from marching band competitions. There are many workshops and clinics at various institutions that focus specifically on marching band for directors to hone their skills of show design, arranging, and musicianship.

Another area of this study that carries implications for future music education research is the importance directors placed on the educational value of competitions. Directors rated this as the most important variable in the decision to participate in marching band competitions. A study that focuses on the development and implementation of standards-based competitions would be beneficial. As stated earlier, many directors and administrators believe the purpose of

competitions is to motivate students to practice and achieve a higher level of performance (Anderson, 1950/1993; Gomes, 1983; Hutchinson, 1983; Ponick, 2001). Directors need to continue to develop competitions that are equitable for all marching bands that choose to participate and provide ways for students and directors to receive positive and constructive feedback that improves student performance.

Closing

Marching band competitions can be an enjoyable, competitive, and creative outlet for both students and their director. However, marching band competitions can also be a dreaded, time consuming activity that forces directors out of the music classroom. The success of a marching band program rests with the director and the attitude the director has towards the marching band activity. Generally, students will reflect the same type of attitude towards marching band as their director. Despite negative arguments that have been made against marching band, it is a large part of today's American music classroom and future band directors need to understand the value of a good marching band and how it can be a positive addition for their overall music program.

Undergraduate music education majors are inundated with courses to prepare them to become music educators. However, not all of these courses are completely relevant to 21st Century music education classrooms. Our profession could benefit from universities incorporating into their curriculums the basics of drill design, copyright laws, arranging, music technology in the classroom, and real world scenarios that all band directors face like budgeting and administrative aspects of running a music program.

There are many reasons for directors to decide to participate or not in marching band competitions, as well as many opportunities and different venues. Competition in any form is a

part of American society and our educational system. As Bachman (1958/1993) described, this “safeguard against complacency,” (p. 133) can continue to fulfill one of its primary functions when used as a part of a standards-based music education program.

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Appendix A:

IRB Approval Email

Use IRBsubmit@auburn.edu for protocol related submissions and IRBadmin@auburn.edu for questions and information. The IRB only accepts forms posted at <https://cws.auburn.edu/vpr/compliance/humansubjects/?Forms> and submitted electronically.

Dear Robert,

Your protocol titled “Attitudes of Marching Band Directors Towards Participation in Marching Band Competitions” was approved by the AU IRB as "Exempt" under federal regulation 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).

Official notice:

This e-mail serves as notice the protocol has been approved. By accepting this approval, you also accept your responsibilities associated with this approval. Details of your responsibilities are attached. Please print and retain.

Information Letter:

A copy of your approved protocol is attached. However, you still need to *add the following IRB approval information to your information letter(s):* **"The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from June 30, 2020 to ----- Protocol #20-308 EX 2006, Glasscock"**.

You must use the updated document(s) to consent participants.

Expiration:

Continuing review of this Exempt protocol is not required; however, all modification/revisions to the approved protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB.

When you have completed all research activities, have no plans to collect additional data and have destroyed all identifiable information as approved by the IRB, notify Office of the IRB via e-mail. A final report is **not** required for Exempt protocols.

Best wishes for success with your research!

IRB Admin
Office of Research Compliance
Auburn University
115 Ramsay Hall
Auburn, AL 36849

Appendix B:

Survey Instrument

Attitudes of Marching Band Directors

Towards Participation in Marching Band Competitions: A Descriptive Survey

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use.
6/30/2020 Protocol #20-308 EX 2006

Information Letter

Date June 30, 2020

Title of Project: Attitudes of Marching Band Directors Towards Participation in Marching Band Competitions: A Descriptive Survey

Principal Researcher: Robert Glasscock, Doctoral Student
Auburn University, Department of Curriculum and Teaching
334-399-7604

Faculty Advisor: Nancy Barry, Ph.D.
Auburn University, Department of Curriculum and Teaching

You are invited to participate in a research study to determine the factors that directors take into consideration when deciding to, or not to, participate in marching band contests. Robert Glasscock, a doctoral student in Music Education at Auburn University, is conducting this study under the direction of Nancy Barry, Ph.D., in the Auburn University Department of Curriculum and Teaching. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a current high school band director in the United States of America.

What will be involved if you participate? If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to complete an anonymous online survey, consisting of 50 questions, in which you will indicate your opinion on factors that affect participation in marching band contests. Your total time commitment will be approximately 15 minutes.

Are there any risks or discomforts? The potential risk or discomfort you may have for this survey is time required to complete the anonymous online survey.

Are there any benefits to yourself or others? If you participate in this study, you can expect to make a contribution to the field of music education that can lead to the development of future research studies about marching band contests.

Will there be any compensation and/or costs for this survey? There is no compensation for completing this survey. There are no costs for completing this survey.

Your privacy will be protected. Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous. No personal or identifiable information will be collected in connection with this study. Information obtained through your participation will be used in partial fulfillment for the requirements for the Principal Investigator's Ph.D. in Music Education and may also be disseminated through professional publications and/or conference presentations.

If you change your mind about participating, you can cancel your participation by closing your browser window at any point prior to hitting the final "Continue" button. When your answers are submitted, they are anonymous, no identifying information is collected, and it is not possible to remove them from the data group. Your decision about whether to participate or not participate will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn university.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact Robert Glasscock by phone at 334-399-7604 or by email at reg0031@auburn.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone at 334-844-5966 or email at IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

Having read the information above, you must decide if you want to participate in this research project. If you decide to participate, please click on the "Next Button." You may print a copy of this letter to keep.

Thank you for your assistance in this project.

Are you currently teaching marching band in a secondary school?

- Yes
- No

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- I prefer not to answer

Including this year, how many years have you taught high school marching band?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16

- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 30 +

In what state do you currently teach?

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California

- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana

- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington

Washington, DC

West Virginia

Wisconsin

Wyoming

What is your age?

20 - 24

25 - 29

30 - 34

35 - 39

40 - 44

45 - 49

50 - 54

55 - 59

60 - 64

65 - 69

70 +

I prefer not to answer

What is the highest degree that you hold?

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Education Specialist Degree
- Doctorate Degree

What was your major for your highest degree?

- Music Education
- Music
- Conducting
- Performance/Instrumental/Vocal
- Theory
- Composition/Arranging
- Music Industry
- Musicology
- Music Therapy
- Educational Leadership/Administration
- Other

While earning your undergraduate degree, did you participate in marching band?

- Yes
- No

How many years did you participate in marching band in college?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 or more

Was participation in marching band a requirement for your undergraduate degree?

- Yes
- No

What is the youngest grade included in your marching band?

- 6th
- 7th
- 8th
- 9th
- 10th
- Other

What style would you consider your marching band?

- Corps Style
- Show Band
- Bands of America Performance Style
- Military
- Other (Explain) _____

What is the total enrollment of your high school?

- 500 or Below
- 501 - 1000
- 1001 - 1500
- 1501 - 2000
- 2001 +

What is the total number of students participating in your marching band? (Please include playing members and any auxiliary members in your total.)

Has your marching band participated in a marching competition in the past 2 academic years? (For the remainder of this survey, "Competition" refers to a contest or festival.)

- Yes
- No

Have you ever taken a marching band to a competition?

- Yes
- No

On average, how many competitions does your marching band attend each year?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5+

Choose the following statement that best reflects the number of competitions that your marching band attends.

- Now I attend more marching band competitions than I did when I started teaching marching band.
- I attend the same number of marching band competitions as I did when I started teaching marching band.
- Now I attend fewer marching band competitions than I did when I started teaching marching band.

Please rate the importance of the following in your decision about participation in marching band competitions.

	Not important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important
1. The registration fee to enter a competition.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. The cost of transportation to a competition.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Distance of travel to a competition.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. The costs associated with a competitive show design. (Props, Costumes, Music, Drill)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. The number of students in my marching band.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. The instrumentation of my marching band.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. The age of students in my marching band.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Interest level of my band students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Educational value of competing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Amount of time away from other academic/core classes due to travel.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Preparing for competitions gives my students a goal to work towards.

12. Preparing for competitions will make my students better musicians.

13. Feedback from competitions will make me a better director.

14. Competitions allow me to see where my students compare to other students.

15. Competitions serve as motivation for my students.

16. Superior ratings from competitions reflect positively on me as a band director.

17. Preparing for a marching band competition might limit the number of music selections my band can rehearse during class time.

Please indicate how likely you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning marching band competitions

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
18. I feel pressure from my administration to compete.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. I feel pressure from my students to compete.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. I feel pressure from band parents to compete.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. I feel pressure from members of the community to compete.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. I pressure myself to compete.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. After competitions, I take time to listen to the recordings of the judges' comments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. After competitions, I take time to allow my students to listen to the recordings of the judges' comments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. My decision on attending a specific competition is based on who the judges are for the competition.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. My decision on attending a specific competition is based on the bands that would be competing in my band's classification.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

27. I take the results from competition personally.

28. I believe that participating in competitions will lead to a successful career as a band director.

29. I enjoy the creative process of writing the drill for my marching band's halftime show.

30. I enjoy the creative process of arranging the music for my marching band's halftime show.

31. I feel that judges are biased against small bands.

32. I feel that judges are biased towards large bands.

33. I feel that judges are slow to accept changes in marching band developments (i.e., Including electronics in show.)

34. I feel that bad results from competitions might reflect negatively on me as a band director.

35. I enjoy marching band.

You have completed all the questions in the survey. If you would like to review your answers, please click the "Back" button. If you are sure of your answers, and are ready to submit your answers, please click the "Submit" button. Once you click "Submit," you cannot go back and change any answers.

Appendix C:

Participant Recruitment Email

Subject Line: Attitudes of Marching Band Directors and Competitions

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use.
06/30/2020. Protocol # 20-308 EX 2006

Dear Marching Band Director,

My name is Robert Glasscock, and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching at Auburn University.

I would like to invite you to participate in my research study for my dissertation examining the attitudes of marching band directors towards participation in marching band competitions.

Your participation would involve completing a short anonymous online survey that would take approximately 10 minutes of your time.

Link to Questionnaire: https://auburn.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cA1LPED7XG7aarj

You are receiving this email because you are a high school marching band director in the United States, and a member of NAFME. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at reg0031@auburn.edu or my advisor, Dr. Barry, at nhb0002@auburn.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone at (334) 844-5966 or email at IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

If you have already completed this questionnaire, thank you for your participation! If you have not, please consider participating!

Sincerely,

Robert Glasscock

This invitation is sent as a service to the profession by NAFME, as part of our ongoing efforts to support research in music education. The sending of this invitation does not constitute endorsement of the content or quality of the research project for which this invitation is sent by NAFME or its component Societies or Councils.