THE ROLE AND VALUE OF MUSIC IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION LESSONS, IN MALTESE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

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The Role and Value of Music in Physical Education Lessons, in Maltese Primary Schools

This study aims at investigating the role and value of Music in PE lessons in our Maltese Primary Schools. The focus of this study is to verify whether Music is being made use of during PE lessons in primary schools. The research will study how Music affects the teacher when conducting the lessons and the students themselves during the lesson. As a methodological procedure, twelve PE teachers were interviewed in order to widen the knowledge of the subject under study and to support the main findings. Six PE teachers come from Independent schools while the other six teachers teach at Church schools. Findings showed that Music is being introduced in the majority of our primary schools. Music renders the lesson more motivating and enjoyable. When Music is included in PE lessons, the students are much more motivated and so they involve themselves more during the lesson. This results in better behaviour and better classroom management. Still, there is much room for improvement. Certain PE teachers don’t introduce Music in their lessons because they lack the resources, equipment or facilities. In order to make good use of Music, the teacher must be equipped with good tools so that s/he can be original in the work done in order to conduct the lesson.

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Keywords: PE, Music, motivation, resources, classroom management
DECLARATION

This is a statement to confirm that this dissertation “The Role and Value of Music in PE Lessons, in Maltese Primary Schools” is solely the work of Paul Rapa, carried out under supervision.

______________________________
Paul Rapa
DEDICATION

To my parents,

for all their love and support.
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My thanks and appreciations go to my academic supervisor, Ms. Lara Tonna. She has been very patient, helpful and committed and has offered indispensable advice and guidance throughout this study.

I would like also to thank the Headmasters of co-operating schools, who gave me permission to conduct interviews at their schools. My gratitude also goes to the teachers that accepted to be interviewed in order to conduct this study. Without their input, this study would not have been possible.

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1.1 PE and Music

Physical Education (PE) is a very important subject in the promotion of inclusive education. It gives the students the possibility to demonstrate their talent and their creativity. One can say that there are many students that argue that the PE subject is their preferred at school. PE helps the child to develop physically, physiologically and emotionally.

On the other hand, Music is also a significant subject in which holistic education is given a significant role. Music is a reliable friend to many. Although there are many who do not consider the importance of Music in today’s culture, many admit that Music can affect our emotions and our moods.

When combined together, PE and Music can result in a very interesting mixture. When Music is used in PE lessons, more harmony, creativity and emotions are created. In fact, there are some parts of the PE program that recommend the use of Music in certain PE lessons. This study is focusing on the importance of Music in PE lessons in our Maltese primary schools. Several aspects of the impact of Music in PE lessons on students and on teachers are investigated. The results and conclusions offer a number of recommendations that can help improve the role of Music in PE lessons.
1.2 Aims of the Study

The role of Music in PE lessons deserves to have a higher profile in our primary and secondary schools. In order to make Music more popular and important when it is being combined with PE, the research intends to underline the importance of Music in PE lessons by an examination of its characteristics, values and benefits.

The research also aims to verify whether Music is used in PE lessons in Maltese primary schools. It will investigate for which type of PE activities Music is introduced. The research also intends to verify about how the choice of Music is made. Finally the study aims to find out the impact that Music has on the students during PE lessons.

1.3 Valuable Experiences

PE always fascinated me. It was one of my preferred subjects during my primary and secondary years. Physical activity is also one of my preferred pass-times, thus I would have always wished to investigate this field. Being, hopefully, a future Music teacher I decided to combine the two subjects together in order to study the role and value of Music in PE lessons.

The author will cherish forever the new experiences gained during the planning and the writing of the dissertation. Not being a future physical educator, the author will cherish the meetings that he had with the present PE teachers. They helped him
gain better insights into the subject and has enlarged his admiration for this very interesting subject.

Conversations with some Head of schools were of great encouragement too whilst conducting the research. This study has generated a wider and deeper view of the importance of Music in PE lessons and came up with improvements on how Music can be used better and more frequently in such lessons.

The participants’ comments were of a great help in order to clarify and give a wider view of the issues raised by the research area. They also gave a number of recommendations that give importance to the use of Music in PE lessons.

1.4 Organisation of the Study

This study is based on secondary data and will be presented in the Literature Review Chapter. This chapter outlines the importance of PE and Music as single subjects. It deals with the child's development in early years and how these two subjects can help in order to develop better young children. Chapter two gives us a clear overview of the pedagogical link between Music and PE and how music can be used in PE lessons in primary schools. This chapter also deals with the different types of music used for different kinds of PE lessons. The impact of music in PE lessons and the environment needed for this to happen are also discussed in this chapter.
Chapter three deals with the research design chosen for this dissertation. Its characteristics are discussed in this chapter. The number of participants are mentioned in this chapter. Interviews were carried out with PE teachers coming from church and independent schools. An explanation of the interviews’ questions follows. This chapter also deals with a detailed account about how the interviews took place. Afterwards an explanation on how the data was analyzed follows.

Chapter four presents the themes that emerged from the data. A discussion takes place in this chapter. The aim of this chapter is to present the current situation of the use of Music in PE lessons, in Maltese primary schools. This chapter presents the teachers perspectives about the combination of Music and PE.

The concluding chapter, chapter five, summarises the main findings of this investigation several recommendations are proposed for the teachers, for the institute for Physical Education and Sports and for further research.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Introduction

The role and value of Music in PE lessons will be explored. Initially, the literature review will look into what is meant by PE and its role in the Maltese National Curriculum. The benefits that PE offers, as a subject, are discussed in order to promote the importance of this particular subject.

On the other hand, Music is also considered as a fundamental subject in which students develop their skills. Music and PE give the opportunity to the students to have fun, be creative and display their talents in front of their peers. Music and PE offer the possibility to teach the students lifelong skills.

When combined together, Music and PE creates a different and surprising learning experience. The introduction of Music in PE brings with it innovation and originality. This chapter will focus on how the teachers include music in their lessons, the types of Music used in different types of activities and the effects that Music has on young students.

2.2 What is PE?

PE is a subject in the education programme which is practised regularly during primary and secondary education. It promotes psychomotor learning in a play or movement exploration setting (Anderson, 1989). Children play everyday. "Play is now seen as being crucial to the development of the child – it is through play that
children learn many things about the world around them” (Tassoni & Hucker, 2005, pg1).

Play occurs mainly throughout life and the form of play varies as a person develops. Babies tend to play by experimenting with their hands and feet. Young children dress up differently in order to play. When the child begins to develop, play involves hobbies or leisure activities. This type of play can continue throughout adolescence and adulthood. People who do not involve themselves in such activities are at risk of suffering stress, boredom or depression (Tassoni & Hucker, 2005).

PE plays a fundamental role in educating the whole student. PE gives the student the opportunity to enjoy and participate more during the lesson.

“PE is unique to the school curriculum as it is the only program that provides students with opportunities to learn motor skills, develop fitness, and gain understanding about the importance of physical activity. Students will be provided an individualized, developmentally appropriate, and personally challenging instructional program that will advance the knowledge, confidence, skills and motivation needed to engage in a lifelong, healthy, active lifestyle” (Mason, 2003, pg1).

John F. Kennedy once said that “intelligence and skill can only function at the peak of their capacity when the body is healthy and strong.” Such statement can also represent the children who are learning in our classrooms. To be able to concentrate and understand what is going on, the students have to have their mind and body healthy.

“Students, whose time in PE or school-based physical activity was increased, maintained or improved their grades and scores on standardized achievements tests, even though they received less classroom instructional time than other students in control groups” (Fall, 2007, pg 2).
Students who are more physically active than other students tend to miss fewer classes. They can concentrate more on what is happening in the classroom, less likely to engage in risky behaviour and attain higher scores (Reston, 2011). Unfortunately, too many students go to class feeling unhealthy and this can result in bad behaviour during the lesson.

2.3 The Role of PE in the National Curriculum Framework

The Malta National Curriculum Framework (NCF), that was launched in 2012, “aims at achieving the development of knowledge, skills, competences, attitudes and values that improve the quality of life of our children” (Ministry for Education and Employment, 2012, pg 8). PE is a subject that represents fully such statement.

PE needs to be given the required importance so that our students will achieve results. The NCF suggests that, during the junior years cycle, PE (and health) should be given 5% of the total distribution in class. 60 % of the total time should be dedicated to Maltese, English, Mathematics and Science and Technology.

“The learning experiences that take place during health education activities aim at equipping learners with the necessary knowledge, competences, skill, attitudes, and values which they need to maintain, promote and enhance physical, emotional, psychological and social well-being throughout their school life and as lifelong learners” (Ministry for Education and Employment, 2012, pg 35).

The NCF suggests that such area must be taken seriously in order to achieve such objectives. PE lessons can be divided in movement, dance and educational
gymnastics. Although these three aspects are fundamental for PE, the NCF states that Dance is regarded as an element that forms part of the area “Visual and Performing Arts”.

“The learning area which includes Art, Music, Dance and Drama provides opportunities for learners to be creative and imaginative, to experience enjoyment and inspiration, and to develop skills in the visual and performing arts” (Ministry for Education and Employment, 2012, pg 36). So one can conclude that PE can be regarded as a performing art subject, in which children are enjoying the activities and are invited to be creative. Music, being a fundamental subject in this area, and PE can be combined in order to create fun, motivation and teach lifelong values.

2.4 What is Music?

“Music education is a field of study associated with the teaching and learning of Music. It touches on all domains of learning, including the psychomotor domain (the development of skills), the cognitive domain (the acquisition of knowledge), and the affective domain, including Music appreciation and sensitivity” (Yudkin, J. 2008, pg 4).

Music, too, plays a fundamental role in the educational system. Music education helps in the development of the personality, in order to gain self-discipline and to take responsibility in life. Music education also helps in order to have a successful integration of personality in the society (Islam, 2012).

A student is successful if s/he finds a school environment that would meet his/her educational needs. If Music and other type of Art subjects are taken seriously,
students can develop better personal skills. Primary students who received regular piano tuition tended to develop better language and mathematics skills that those who didn't learn the piano (Costa-Giomi, 2004).

Primary students who performed well at numeracy and literacy, tended to participate in drama projects (Fleming, Merrell, & Tymms, 2004). Young children who participated in singing and movement activities, played instruments and participated in dance activities made greater improvements in cognitive performance than others who did not participate in such activities (Bilhartz, Bruhn & Olson, 1999). One can state that Music plays a very important role in developing our student’s skills.

2.4.1 Music and Life

Music has a definite relation to one's life. It creates a desire for the beautiful and the good. Music brings people into close contact with each other (Rowe, 1924). Music makes us happier and lifts our mood when we are down (Hinkle, 2008). Music develops the mind and boost our self confidence (Singh, 2009).

“Music has a significant role in education. It is used by schools and academics, institutions to generate acceptance of special aids children, to promote equality, to teach them about team effort and ultimately, Music is used as a vessel to promote and inform about general issues that affect teen life and future adult concerns (McCormack, 2010, parag.4).

Music is created by man. When people start to listen to music, they will forget about their problems, situations of fear, their troubles and worries. This can also be
represented in PE classes. Music recreates the individual. It motivates the man and it renders the man different from what he is. (Rowe 1924).

According to Rowe (1924), when PE and Music are combined together every individual can be made over into a new man. One can fight his/her fears, worries that creep into today’s life. One is able to build a strong body in order to face such aspects of life. A strong body will also house a strong character.

Music has the power to motivate us and to lift our moods. It makes a sad person feel happy again and give the hopeless fresh hope (Du Plessis, 2011). “Without Music, the world would indeed be a very dull place” (Marcell, 2005, parag.12).

Music gives us the possibility to forget our troubles and enjoy our life. In PE and Music one has the possibility to enjoy himself and be relaxed.

“Everyone that comes under our direction (PE and Music teachers) should, in a measure be made over into a new man, so that he may be more able to fight the tendencies of evil creep into his/her life, and that he may build up a strong body which will house strong character. Music as an accompaniment to physical exercise will do much to attain this goal” (Rowe, 1924, pg 13).

2.5 Common aspects between PE and Music

There are reasons why teachers of Music and Physical Educators should be aware of each other’s work. These subjects have something more in common than is generally realised.
2.5.1 Transmission of fun and joy

Young students normally show a natural enjoyment in these two fields. They are usually ready to devote some of their spare time to such activities as playing instruments, singing in choirs, competing in sports or playing games (Thackray, 1965). Both subjects involve the teachers and students in out-of-school activities, probably more than with any other subjects. Most teachers give their extra time to sports coaching, teaching instruments, producing concerts and choir practising. The enthusiasm and dedication for their subject goes beyond their school commitments (Thackray, 1965).

Although such teachers have the advantage of teaching popular subjects, such subjects can be regarded by the same students, teachers of other subjects and parents as an activity (Thackray, 1965). So, in some cases, both subjects are not taken seriously. For example, an absence from a lesson in PE or Music is usually not looked upon so seriously as missing a lesson in other “important” subjects like Mathematics or English.

Apart from the fact that the students are given the opportunity to enjoy themselves and have fun during Music and PE lessons, the students are also invited to display themselves.

“The prospect of an important match or a public concert can be a great stimulus to all participants; the triumphs of the games field and the successes of the concert hall are both satisfying goals worth striving for, which can bring out the best efforts in the players” (Thackray, 1965, pg 2).
These subjects are giving the opportunity to the students to build up their self-esteem while displaying their talent. Such opportunity is not found in other academic subjects.

2.5.2 Creativity

Creativity is about originality, imagination, inventiveness and innovation. Creativity is thinking beyond what you see and creating something new that was never seen or heard before (Kamaga, 2010).

Music, Art and PE give the students the opportunity to be creative and original. When the students are being creative they are using different parts of the brain that they do not use in other academic subjects, such as Maths or Science (Sullivan, 2009). Music can be used in order to achieve creativity of the students by giving them a concept and ask them to develop a tune out of it. The teacher is inviting the students to think and to be creative and original in order to compose a piece of Music (Tyrone, 2012).

On the other hand, PE permits the students to be creative in their movements of the body. To improve the children's creativity, one can play some popular tunes and ask the children to dance to them (Yang Tan, 2008). Dance is an art form which invite the students to be creative (Jerusha, 2011). PE helps the children develop in a holistic way. They develop their language skills, social interactions, co-operation and their creativity (Grigg, R. 2011).
2.5.3 Relationship between teaching Music and PE

One can argue that the actual material taught in both subjects, and the teaching techniques involved are very common. When a coach is running a training session he uses similar techniques that a conductor makes use of when conducting an orchestra. They need to be motivated in order to create a beautiful atmosphere. They need to motivate the people that are playing in order to render the session very interesting. Both subjects offer the individual to be emotional and creative during the teaching of such subjects. “The continual encouragement now given in the teaching of PE to exploration, inventiveness and originality might well be applied to creative work in Music far more than is usually done” (Thackray, 1965, pg 3).

2.6 The Use Of Music in PE

PE teachers use music in their lessons in order to motivate the students and to keep them on task (Krystosek, 2003). With the help of music, the students will concentrate more and enjoy more the lesson.

2.6.1 The Appreciation of Music

Children seem to be born with a sense of rhythm. They can really enjoy music from a very young age. This is linked to the mother’s unconscious rocking of her child and the heartbeat heard by the child in the womb. Babies immediately respond very
positively to the human voice, and mothers will sing to their children in the initial stages of their development (Tassoni & Hucker, 2005).

Today, many people do not play any musical instrument, but still, music can play an important role in their life when listening to music on a daily basis. One must not forget that Music is part of a country's culture and tradition. So this must not be taken for granted and the children must be aware of this.

Teachers must also help children listen to music. “Helping children to listen to music can improve their overall listening skills as well as helping them to enjoy music more” (Tassoni & Hucker, 2005, pg 288). The adult must not only sit down and listen to the music with the students but is urged to ask questions in order to discuss it further. For example, the teacher may ask: “Can you hear any drums or loud sounds?” or “The instruments are playing soft or loud?” This type of questioning activity can help the students to appreciate music more. Children need also to listen to the same songs several times before they become familiar with it.

2.6.2 Movement

An important area that requires the use of music during lessons is Movement. “A Music and Movement class uses music as a medium to inspire and encourage children to experience and participate in the making of music through the use of different senses in the body” (Cheow, 2010, parag.2). We live in a life full of movement as movement is the manifestation of life itself. One can learn to
understand the world itself through touch and movement. Movement is expression. Young children can express themselves through movement. Joy, anger, sulkiness can all be observed in the children’s movements. “Movement is the manifest, both as a means of expression in itself and as a vehicle of expression in other arts” (Russel, 1987, pg 5).

Music and movement work to inspire different areas of the brain, supplying long-term benefits for a wide range of cognitive functions (McCarthy, 2011).

“Listening to music actively engages both hemispheres of the brain, meaning that left-sided language functions such as grammar and vocabulary are stimulated in tandem with right-sided functions, including intonation, accentuation and processing of audiological stimuli. This comprehensive stimulation enhances language development. This development is complemented by the effect of movement and rhythm on the brain’s frontal lobes” (McCarthy, 2011).

The importance of Music and movement in junior schools cannot be underestimated as the combination of these two skills can prepare the children’s mind to develop and be prepared for learning throughout their school years (Perles, 2012).

2.6.3 Dance

In schools, art education is not aimed at artistic perfection or creating and performing exciting dances. Today, teachers aim to transmit the beneficial effect of the creative activity of dancing (Laban, 1975). Students have to focus on their creativity rather than learning by memory different dancing styles.
Children must be educated in order to be spontaneous in their movements. They must be educated in a way that they will act natural up to school-leaving age and beyond into adult life (Laban, 1975).

Another goal of dance education is not to impose a style on our children, but that of creating a warm environment at an early age that gives space to use the body as a healthy and expressive communicative tool (Van Der Grinten, 2009).

There are many benefits of educational dance. As Jerusja (2011, parag. 6) stated:

“Dance develops physical skills like coordination, balance and flexibility. Dance is an art form and therefore develops creativity and uncovers unique talents. Dance develops children’s social skills and improves self-esteem. Dance improves overall posture and physical appearance building long and lean muscle”

2.6.4 Gymnastics

“Gymnastics is a great way to keep the children in shape, teach self-respect, teach discipline and give the kids an activity that is fun to do” (Middleton, 2011, parag.1). Participating in gymnastics-related activities can develop better our children. Gymnastics can improve the physical and motor fitness of children and can play an important role in the goals of PE (Pangtazi & Dauer, 1992).

Students make use of basic movement skills in their everyday life and also in many different sports. Gymnastics can form the basis for the movement abilities that can be further improved by practise and relate to the ability to perform specific sports and other motor tasks (Corbin, Pangrazi & Franks, 2000).
Gymnastics is a great way to have children interact with adults and kids alike. Gymnastics can serve as an important motivation for the students to keep fit, willing to learn and to be leaders (Middleton, 2011).

2.7 Types of Music Used

The types of music used in the PE lessons are important in order to render the lesson motivating and enjoyable. The choice of music must be relevant to the objective of the lesson so that the children will have fun and achieve their objectives for that lesson.

2.7.1 Timing in Child Development

“A child’s timing – ability to feel and express steady beat – is fundamental to both movement and music, affecting sports skills and musical performance, as well as speech-flow and performance of timed motor tasks” (Kuhlman, Schweinhart).

Many young students enter primary schools without having the ability to identify and express a steady beat. One study revealed that fewer than 10% of kindergarten children could independently feel and express the steady beat of recorded Music (Wright, Schweinhart, 1994). Children’s personal tempo, then, improves with age (Ellis, 1992).

These researches suggest that the choice of music in the early primary years has to be different than that in the later stages of primary.
2.7.2 Different types of Music in Different Activities

Primarily, music can be used for marching, which can be written in 4/4 or 6/8 march time. Marching is a type of movement and so Music plays an important part in marching. “It should be lively, with plenty of rhythm and the time well accented so that the class will respond readily to it and keep in time” (Rowe, 1924). Marching can be useful in the classroom. It can be used as an introduction to a lesson. It can be used as a warm up in order to get the students ready for the lesson.

Similar music can be introduced during aerobics activities. Rowe (1924) argues that “Standard” (music with established popularity) and “Classical” music will live forever. Selection from Operas and Musical Plays are recommended. It is important that the teacher selects the right genre of Music as it will stimulate the students to make greater effort and makes the work more enjoyable and successful.

With the help of music, the children will feel better and more relaxed (Taylor, 2011). The teacher must be aware that the children forget all their worries and problems during these types of activities and thus the right kind of Music will help them to achieve this feat.

In the last few years, gymnastics (as a sport) has gone through changes in the way it is performed. Earlier, the focus was much more on technique. Nowadays, it’s all about presentation. (Annely, 2006). The use of pleasant background music is suggested in order to compliment the student’s performance and it also appeals to the viewer’s eye (Annely, 2006).
It is difficult to imagine gymnastics routines without music as the music puts life and spirit in the performance. It also helps the students to interpret correctly this spirit. Dancing without music does not make sense at all. It just is not natural as it is like conducting a circus without a band (Rowe, 1924).

Music plays a fundamental part in dance. Simonian (2011) argues that Music and Dance have some aspects in common. They share the rhythm and pitch though there can be dances with rhythm alone, and they are usually performed with percussion instruments. There are whole musical movements which are based on dance. Such dances include the bourée, minuet, jig, courante, sarabande, barcarole, mazurka, tarantella, bolero and waltz (Simonian, 2011).

“Slower, more relaxing music, such as natural landscapes decreases one’s fitness potential capacity, which in turn will facilitate cool down (movement) activities and mind body exercises like stretching, Yoga and Pilates” (Remon, 2005, parag. 6).

### 2.7.3 Equipments used during PE lessons

Seutman (2001) highlights the importance of making use of a CD player in order to introduce Music during cool-down activities. Smolka (2008) also makes use of a CD player when using Music in her lessons.

Technology is making giant steps today and the introduction of technological apparatus in today’s classes is only a formality. Leight and Nicholas (2011) highlight the importance of the use of the tablets in today’s schools. Tablet
computers are becoming popular with the teachers and students. They are lighter and more portable and can be used inside and outside the classrooms.

Leight and Nicholas (2011) argue that if the students don't understand a particular skill, the teacher can download a video instantly and show it to them. If the teacher is going to include music in her classes, the s/he can have the opportunity to make use of the music library download and can create playlists for different classes and different activities.

2.8 Music as a Motivational Tool

Music is now playing a greater part in PE classes than ever before. Teachers and students feel the need for musical ability during the PE lessons. In some instances during their work, music is indispensable, in others it is a useful addition (Thackray, 1965).

Maintaining student motivation during classroom hours is one of the most difficult steps in delivering the education (Ruch, 2008). Without motivation the students cannot enjoy the lesson and they will not learn. The teacher must be aware of this and must do his/her best in order to motivate the students.

“Highly motivated students actively engage more in the learning process than less motivated students. Motivated students have a positive impact on learning. They take advantage of a given opportunity and show intense effort and concentration in the implementation of learning process. Also, they reveal positive emotions such as excitement, enthusiasm, interest and optimism during learning” (Romando, 2007, parag. 2).
The use of music in PE lessons motivates the students in order to enjoy more the lesson as music can be used as a distracter when doing exercises. Music can cause one to work hard because they do not realize how hard they are working (Krystosek, 2003).

A study by Ward and Dunnaway (1995) used Music in order to try to increase the number of laps run by students in a PE class. The result was that there was a substantial increase in the exercise patterns of students when Music was played. “Music is a power tool to raise your levels of arousal and achieve inspiring sport performances” (Tong, 2001, parag.2).

Apart from developing the child’s creativity, music gives the possibility to the students to develop both sides of the brain. A child full potential is acquired when he or she learns how to use his or her entire brain (Hopkins, 2010). It eases the pain of exercise and also allows one to move in a certain rhythm that divert his/her mind from the activity that s/he is performing (Gi. 2010).

When the student is working in harmony, then the student will enjoy working and will be healthy thus music is essential to create this harmony (Rowe, 1924).

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter studied the importance of the use of music in PE Lessons. It investigated the role of PE in the schools and its importance in transmitting lifelong
skills to the students. This chapter also explored the relationship between music and the human being and the effects of music on the students when combined with PE.

The next chapter identifies the methodological procedures, the data collection methods and designs and how the data was analysed in order to carry out this particular study.
CHAPTER 3: DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY
3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion about the research method used in this dissertation. The research method used was a qualitative one. This method guarantees a wider overview of this particular study, in which the importance of music in PE lessons is being investigated.

Twelve teachers were chosen in order to be interviewed. They were asked ten open-ended questions whilst they were recorded by means of a recorder. The data was then transcribed. In order to analyse the data the transcripts were read through and were given different codes. From these different codes, different themes were identified in order to discuss the research questions.

3.2 Aims and Objectives

Research objectives consists of the perception of primary PE teachers about the use of music during their lessons, for which type of PE lessons music is being used, how is the choice of music being made and the impact of music on the students during PE lessons. The gathering of feedback and recommendations on how music can be introduced in PE lessons was helpful in meeting the research objectives.
3.3 Research Design

The method of data collection that was the most relevant to this type of study was the qualitative method.

"Qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis (Cochran & Patton, 2002, pg 2).

Qualitative research studies the knowledge and practises of the participants. It takes into account that the viewpoints and knowledge in the field are different because of different subjective perspective and social backgrounds which are related to them (Flick, 1995).

"Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particular to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data” (Creswell, 2008, pg 4).

With the help of the qualitative method, the researcher is collecting a lot of in-depth and useful information (Scott, 2011). Qualitative methods intend to answer questions about “why,” “how” or “what” of an experience, rather than “how much” or “how many”. The latter are answered by quantitative methods (Cochran & Patton, 2002).

"It would appear that field research involves observing and analysing real-life situations, of studying actions as they occur. The field researcher, therefore, relies upon learning firsthand about a people and a culture” (Burgess, 1980, pg 1).
Qualitative research proposes an excellent opportunity to form a rich and in-depth record of the respondent’s reaction and thoughts (Semans, 2009).

“One advantage of qualitative methods in exploratory research is that the use of open-ended questions and probing gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do (Mack, N., Woodsong, C., MacQueen, K.M., Guest, G., Namey, E., 2005 pg 4).

Qualitative researchers tend to collect the data at the natural location where the participants experience the issue that regards the study. Watching the individual behave in his context is a major characteristic of qualitative research. Qualitative researchers collect the data themselves by observing, examining documents or interviewing the participants. They don’t need to rely on instruments or questionnaires developed by other researchers (Creswell, 2009). The table in the following page explains the characteristics of a qualitative research method.
# QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

| General Framework | Seek to explore phenomena.  
| In instruments use more flexible, interactive style of eliciting and categorizing responses to questions.  
| Use semi-structures methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups and participant observation. |

| Analytical objectives | To describe variation.  
| To describe and explain relationships.  
| To describe individual experiences.  
| To describe group norms. |

| Question format | Open-ended. |

| Data format | Textual (obtained from audio tapes, video-tapes, and field notes.) |

| Flexibility in study design | Flexible aspects such as the addition and exclusion, or wording of the questions.  
| Participant responses affect how and which questions researchers ask next.  
| Study design is iterative. |

Source: http://www.ccs.neu.edu.pdf
3.4 Sampling Technique

The target research audience of this study was Physical Educators. Twelve teachers were chosen across Malta from twelve different primary schools. Six teachers form part of Independent schools while the rest form part of the Church sector. In these schools, those teachers are permanent and so they are not responsible for more than one school. In State schools the PE teacher is peripatetic and so s/he is shared between one school and another. The reason for not choosing the state sector is that it would have been difficult to make up an appointment during school hours as peripatetic teachers don’t have free lessons during their stay at a particular school.

Throughout the data collection, all steps towards ensuring the protection of the participants from any breach of their rights were respected. The participants participated in the interviews of their own free will. They had the right to withdraw their consent and to discontinue their participation in this project at any time. They also agreed to participate in electronically recorded interviews. They understood that the related material will be kept completely anonymous.

All the interviewees were very helpful during the interviews. They showed particular interest in the related subject and contributed to answering the research questions posed by this study.
3.5 Methods of Data Collection

As indicated before, the method of data collection used in this study was a qualitative one. An advantage of qualitative research is that it involves a more personal approach to the subject that is being studied. The results can be better understood by the individual who does not comprehend statistical methods (Scott, 2011). It is a matter of interpretation.

Interviews were chosen in order to represent this type of method. The author decided to interview twelve PE teachers in order to evaluate the use of Music in PE lessons. With the help of the interviews, the teachers will feel more comfortable in order to discuss certain topics that will arise during the interview.

3.5.1 Single, Face-to-Face Interviews

Interviews are not similar to everyday conversations. When we conduct interviews, we are concerned to conduct them in the most accurate way in order to ensure reliability and validity (Cochran & Patton, 2002). Interviews offer a more profound picture than inconsistent correlations of quantitative studies (Silverman, 1993). The interview method involves questioning and discussing different topics with other individuals. This method can be a useful technique in order to collect the data which would not be probably accessible when conducting other techniques such as observation and questionnaires (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 2001).

"If interviews are going to tap into the depths of reality of the situation and discover subject's meaning and understandings, it is essential for the
researcher: to develop empathy with interviewees and win their confidence and to be unobtrusive, in order not to impose one's own influence on the interviewee” (Woods, P., 2006, parag.8).

Open-ended questions were included in the interviews conducted with twelve PE teachers. Open-ended questions give the person the possibility to answer the question freely. (Cohen, L., Manion, L., Morrison, K., 2000). Flick (1995 pg.95) also highlights that “Open questions may be answered on the basis of the knowledge the interviewee immediately has at hand.”

3.5.2 The Interview Schedule

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers. This type of interviewing method is very practical. Despite that the interviewer is utilising an interview guide which includes set questions, one is free to ask and interpret the questions according to how the conversation develops. Such flexibility is of an advantage to the interviewer. One can simultaneously focus and deviates from the text prepared with no possibility of moving away from the subject while still keeping an easy flow during the conversation (Babbie & Rubin, 2008).

The interview was made up of ten open-ended questions (Appendix I). The interviews were conducted face-to-face with the interviewees in order not to rush the interview and the teacher will have all the time available to answer to all the questions. A pilot interview was also conducted before all other interviews took
place. Changes to two particular questions were made as these two questions were not particularly clear and the interviewee didn’t fully understand them.

Twelve PE teachers were interviewed. As already stated, the teachers came from Independent and Church schools. Approval to carry out this study in Church Schools was obtained from the Secretariat for Catholic Education (Appendix III). Permission for the Independent schools was obtained from the particular heads of schools and then the teachers were informed through the e-mails in order to set up meetings with them and to carry out the interviews.

The approximate length of each interview was around twenty to twenty five minutes. This amount of time was enough in order to discuss all the prepared questions. The interviews were held in twelve different primary schools over a fifteen day period.

The interviews were audio recorded by the means of a recording device. Afterwards the interviews were transcribed word by word and saved on word documents (Appendix II).

3.6 Data Analysis

The data was evaluated through the means of thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative analytic method for:

“identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However,
frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic” (Braun, V., Clarke, V. 2006, pg 79).

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that initially the researcher has to become familiar with the data. Afterwards s/he will begin to generate initial codes. Then the researcher must search for themes that will consist of these codes. After reviewing the themes, the researcher must define and name the themes before producing the final report.

All the gathered data was recorded and then transcribed. Ten interviewees preferred to answer in English whilst the remaining two preferred to do so in Maltese. The recorded audio in Maltese was primarily transcribed in Maltese. Afterwards the document was then translated into English.

The transcripts were read through and given different codes. Hundred and forty codes were inserted in an Excel sheet in order to number these key codes. Parts of the transcriptions which incorporated these important codes were saved in other word documents so that the author will refer to them when he comes to the discussion chapter.

Nine different topics began to emerge from these codes. The topics were then grouped under four new themes. Finally the themes were clearly identified and named.
3.7 Enhancing the Quality of the Study

In order to enhance the quality of the study, the interviews’ questions were developed on the information gathered from the literature review. This will make sure that there is a flow in the arguments throughout the whole study.

As this research studies the role of music in PE lessons, teachers who specialise in PE were interviewed. The teachers discussed their perception about the arguments brought up by the study and recounted their personal experience on what they are doing during their lessons.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

There were no ethical concerns regarding the data collected. The interviewees participated at their own free will. Initially they had to sign a consent form in which they agreed to be interviewed in order to help in this project (Appendix IV).

They were informed of the confidentiality of information collected for this study and that they will remain anonymous thus all interviewees were given a different name such as Interviewee 1, 2, 3, etc. They were free to withdraw their consent and to discontinue their participation in the project at any time. They also agreed to be electronically recorded and that their material will be kept anonymous and will be used only for the sake of this study.
3.9 Conclusion

This chapter was based on the methodology which was used in order to discuss and answer the research objectives. This research transmits to the reader a clearer view about the role and importance of music in PE lessons in our primary schools. The next chapter deals with the research findings and provides the analysis and discussions from the data collected.
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
4.1 Introduction

In order to evaluate the role and value of music in PE lessons, a number of interviews were conducted in Maltese primary schools. Twelve PE teachers were chosen to be interviewed. Six teachers teach in church schools and the remaining six teach in private schools. This chapter highlights the input of the teachers that were analysed and interpreted. Themes emerged from the analysis of the data collection. These are:

- Education Approach and Teaching Method
- How Children Learn
- Music in PE
- Resources

The first main theme that emerged was the educational approach and the teaching method of the teachers. Teachers play a fundamental role in introducing music in PE lessons. The challenges that the teacher face, in order to introduce music, are also going to be discussed in this chapter. The next important theme is about the right environment needed to make sure that the children are learning and enjoying the lessons. This theme also highlights the effects that music will be transmitting to the students.

Another fundamental theme that emerged was about how the choice of music is being made. This chapter will discuss which types of music are being introduced and for which types of activities. Finally, this chapter discusses the importance of
resources when it comes to introduce music in PE. Resources and equipment are fundamental in order to include music in the lessons.

4.2 Education Approach and Teaching Method

The teacher is responsible for introducing music in PE lessons, thus teachers must be prepared and must be original in their planning. Such work will render the lesson more interesting and enjoyable.

4.2.1 Teachers’ Awareness

Today, teachers must be prepared and have the right skills in order to teach students to the highest standards (Darling-Hammond, 2005). In order to include music in PE lessons, teachers need to be prepared. Some teachers argued that without the adequate preparation, no interesting teaching can take place. This was highlighted by Interviewee 2 who stated that:

“Nowadays teachers must be prepared when they enter the classroom. If the teacher is not prepared than the students are not going to learn anything. Music in PE requires a lot of preparation. I use it because I prepare my lessons. Others don’t use it because they just don’t prepare their lessons. Preparation is very important.”

Good preparation results into good class management and organization. Many argued that with a good preparation of music choice and the inclusion of music in
PE lessons, the students will enjoy the lesson more and so there will be beautiful harmony during the lesson. Interviewee 3 argued that:

“Good choice of music for particular work motivates students. I can say that music motivates the students and makes them enjoy the lesson more. When I use music in my lessons I have fewer problems regarding classroom management because the students are concentrated more on the lesson.”

Discipline in class is a very important aspect. In the classroom a teacher is dealing with different personalities. When the teacher imposes good classroom management, the teacher will be able to control the students’ behaviour in the classroom (Sun. 2009). Many teachers argue that with the use of music in PE lessons, they are experiencing better classroom managements as the students are enjoying the lesson. When the students are enjoying the lesson, they will behave well because they are having fun. The teachers also stated that the children are learning how to be disciplined. Interviewee 10 said that

“Children are learning discipline, so during PE lessons they learn how to keep certain rules. They learn how to organize themselves. It is all they need.”

Today, teachers are constantly facing new challenges in an ever-changing world. The teachers must adapt their teaching strategies in order to work in different environments. One major challenge that each teacher face is that of teaching in multicultural environment (Welsh, 2010). Nowadays, this phenomenon is increasing rapidly. This can result in a problem for the teacher in order to involve
all the students in the classroom. A particular teacher (Interviewee 3) tackles the problem in a particular way: “I try to use music in different languages because thirty percent of the students are foreigners. I try my utmost to involve all the students in the lesson.”

4.2.2 Teacher’s Objectives

Teachers need to give a lot of importance to the objectives that need to be reached during the lesson. If a lesson has no objectives, than the students are going to learn nothing. Teachers need to prepare objectives in order to be successful in the classroom. With the help of music in PE lessons, certain objectives can be reached easily.

Motivation is a very important aspect as motivating the students is a fundamental aspect when it comes to effective teaching and good classroom management. If the students are not motivated to learn, they are not going to involve themselves during the lessons. So, they are likely to cause classroom management problems. It is critical for the teachers to increase student motivation to learn (Waxler, 2007). The teachers stated that motivation is a very important aspect in the lesson. Without motivation the children cannot enjoy the lesson. Interviewee 3 believes that:

“Motivation is really important. I think that the teacher needs to motivate the students. Without motivation, the teacher cannot be successful in the classroom. Music helps achieving motivation.”
Interviewee 8 thinks that

“with music in PE lessons, the children are motivated. There is something unusual going on. Something new that the students would not be expecting.”

On the other hand some teachers stated that the teacher needs to be motivated too. How can a lesson be successful when the teacher is not motivated? Interviewee 5 argued: “I enjoy conducting PE lessons when using music. I feel at ease during the lesson. I really enjoy it!”

Another objective that the teacher needs to keep in mind is achieving balance in the lessons. Many lessons go wrong because the teachers exaggerate in doing something and so the students get bored. There is no need to use music all the time. When something is used all the time it gets boring and the children will get used to it. So music will not be motivating at all. Interviewee 8 explained that “obviously, you have to learn to use music because it can be distracting. That way, you will not be motivating your students. Therefore one has to be careful.” Interviewee 3 argued that “Well, I’m balancing to maximum the use of music. Obviously when we have a football lesson outside in the yard, it’s more difficult to use music.” Interviewee 6 believes that “One must be careful. The teachers do not need to exaggerate in order to use music all the time. This type of approach cannot motivate the students.”

Another important objective is the involvement of all students during the lesson. Students should be all involved during the lesson because the students’ involvement is the most fundamental aspect of the learning process (Fernando,
The teachers stated that the subject of PE helps in order to involve all the students, and with the help of music, students are being more involved than ever.

Interviewee 1 believes that:

“When I use music in PE lessons, there will be some shy students who gain confidence when they hear music and involve themselves more during the lesson. These shy students are not only being involved during the lesson, but they are being creative as well. Some students imitate them in their movement. I am really pleased with them.”

4.2.3 Teacher’s challenges

One must be realistic. There are still many problems that hinder the use of music in PE lessons. PE lessons face problems when conducting PE lessons, let alone when making use of music in their lessons. The majority of the teachers stated that the subject of PE is not valued by the senior management team, by the teachers of the other subjects, by the parents, and sometimes also by some students. Some teachers also stated that music (as a single subject) faces the same reality. This renders the job of the PE and music teachers very difficult. Interviewee 6 said that:

“PE and Music are not valued at all. In my case, some people call my subjects just sports. They remove the educational side of the subject and they think it’s only sports. They think that children will learn nothing during PE lessons.”

Interviewee 4 believes that “other persons think that those subjects are a waste of time. This is not fair.” A particular teacher explained that in some cases the parents would not let their children take part in PE lessons:
“Ultimately I get a lot of “silly” notes from parents trying to excuse the children from having their PE lesson which most of the time I don’t accept because once a child is at school, he or she is capable of taking part in a PE lesson.”

Interviewee 10

Some teachers argued that they are not given enough time in order to conduct their lessons. They complain about the time-table because not enough lessons are given to the students. Interviewee 2 argued that: “Both PE and music are part of the time-table. Each student has two lessons of PE a week. Well, it is not as much as we would like.” Interviewer 12 argued that:

“When I need to prepare for the sports day and I would need another lesson a week, they look upon it as if I am taking time out of another subject. And, of course, they just don’t give me that extra lesson needed.”

Some teachers argued that some people’s mentality prevents the use of music in PE lesson. They stated that these people needed to change their mentality in a world that is changing all the time. Interviewee 8 believes that:

“Many problems arise when the environment of the school provides challenging students and the teacher finds it hard to rise to their challenge. They lose heart quickly and this is a negative thing. It is easy to let yourself go with the flow. We hide behind this mentality and this is wrong. To change a culture you have to act against it and you have to fight it.”

Another challenge, that can be considered world-wide, is the covering of the programme. Different teachers of different subjects start the year with only one objective in mind that is to cover the entire syllabus. This can be a very dangerous
approach and this can hinder learning. Some of the teachers that were interviewed stated that they feel that they need to cover all the topics, but because they don’t have enough lessons during the week, they have to rush through the syllabus. This can lead to the exclusion of music in PE lessons because the teachers do not have the time to prepare such lessons. Interviewee 11 argued that: “At this school, students have only one lesson per week for PE and you have to cover the whole syllabus in that time. You have to do everything in a limited time.”

Other challenges that the teachers have to face are those of the facilities, premises or equipment. Two teachers argued that unfortunately they do not use music in their PE lessons because of lack of facilities and equipment. Sometimes this is not the teacher’s fault. It can be an administrative problem when the school does not invest in the proper facilities or equipment. Interviewee 9 stated that “I don’t use music in my PE lessons because I don’t have the equipment available here. I don’t have a gymnasium or speakers. It’s a bit difficult to use music in PE in my school.” Interviewee 2 argued that “For me it’s very difficult to use music in my lesson. I don’t have the equipment available here. I made myself heard with the administration of the school but they never bought the equipment needed. It’s a shame.” A particular teacher described his past experience where he was denied the chance to use music in his PE lessons.

“Last year I went through a negative experience. The system was very demotivating. I had no facilities. I had nothing to work with. Because of this it is sometimes hard to criticize teachers who descend to the state when they stop trying new approaches in their lessons.”

Interviewer 8
This situation in no way is helping the teacher to achieve his/her set of objectives thus it is minimizing the opportunities for the students to reach their own objectives in learning.

4.3 How children learn

In order to help the children learn, the teachers are duly bound to conduct enjoyable and motivating lessons. Such ingredients are conducive to high quality learning. With the help of music in PE lessons, such objectives can be reached easily.

4.3.1 How the students develop their skills

Cheow (2010) argues that if the children need to develop their skills, they need to communicate. The children need to be self confident and to demonstrate some self control. Music and Movement classes help the children in order to develop such skills.

The teachers interviewed argued that, as single subjects, PE and Music are essential to the students. They give them something that other subjects do not. Interviewee 11 stated that: “Subjects like PE and Music give the individual something which is beyond the scope of other subjects.”

With the help of Music and PE, young children develop their skills better. Interviewee 8 argued that:

“I do believe a lot in these two subjects because these subjects focus on creativity. Students feel that they have a way of expressing themselves.
They give them important roles as values. These subjects give them responsibility. The students build up their self-esteem a lot.”

Interviewee 2 believes that: “I’m hundred per cent sure that with PE and Music, they will develop into better children, from a health perspective and even from the psychological perspective.”

With the help of subjects like PE and Music, the students are learning life-long skills. Interviewee 7 stated that:

“In PE and in Music we teach the students how to behave. We are preparing our students for lifelong education. PE gives importance to the physical aspect. Music teaches an important cultural background.”

This was reinforced by Interviewee 5 who was adamant in stating that “in Music and PE we can teach a wide spectrum of lifelong learning skills. With this we combine self-respect, human dignity and the appreciation of ourselves.”

Many argue that through these two subjects the students can develop and express their talents in front of their own peers. Interviewee 12 believes that: “These two subjects can help you express, develop your talent. Many have the talent of playing football, basketball or netball. Others have the talent of playing different instruments.”

Many interviewees agreed that both Music and PE help the children develop their creativity. Interviewee 4 argued that:
“Music and PE help the students to be more creative. Music and PE are both creative subjects in which they leave room for the students to experiment with their creativity. This is an advantage for the students.”

Interviewee 8 stated that: “I believe that my subject, Music and Arts offer the students the chance to express themselves and develop more their creativity.”

4.3.2 Students’ feelings when Music is combined with PE

All the teachers agreed that when Music is combined with PE the students enjoy the lesson more and they express positive feelings. This makes the teachers proud because they knew that they prepared well the lesson in order to render it enjoyable and not boring and were well prepared in order to achieve their objectives.

Motivation is an important aspect in today’s classrooms. Without motivation, the students will learn anything. The teachers try to do their best in order to motivate the students. They try to conduct original lessons. The element of surprise is fundamental. One needs to surprise his students in order to render the lesson interesting. The teachers agreed that with the introduction of Music in PE lessons, the students are really motivated. As a result they enjoy more the lesson. Interviewee 11 stated that: “The students are really motivated when I combine Music and PE. The students participate more and the lesson comes out more to the full.”
Interviewee 5 argued that: “Students are really motivated when Music is included in our lessons. They involve themselves more in the lesson and that is a positive outcome.” Interviewee 6 stated that: “Definitely. Young students are already motivated but it gives them that extra excitement. They will be more creative during the lesson and that helps. They enjoy more the lesson.”

The teachers stated that after a PE lesson, the students will be refreshed in order to face the rest of the day in the classroom. PE is giving them the opportunity to relieve their stress in order to enjoy taking part in physical activities.

Interviewee 2 stated that:

“When the children arrive for the PE lessons, one can notice that they release their tensions from class. The fact that they are doing a lesson of PE, helps them in order to go back to the class refreshed and so they can concentrate more for the upcoming lessons.”

4.4 Music in PE

Different types of Music introduced in different PE activities can render the lesson enjoyable and motivating. This results in the involvement of the students during the lesson.

4.4.1 Use of Music for different types of activities

All PE teachers are aware that the use of Music in PE lessons is necessary and beneficial. Music can be introduced in different ways. Different types of Music can be used for different types of activities. The secret is that of using the right type of
music with the right type of activity in order to motivate the students to the full and render the lesson an interesting one.

One can state that music is used often in gymnastics than in other types of activities. Interviewee 8 argued that:

“I use music a lot in gymnastics. It is an activity that includes Music a lot. Children relate through it. When I put on background Music, they know that they have to move in a certain way. The students link. They adapt and they link to the Music they are hearing.”

Interviewee 1 stated that: “I use music a lot, especially in gymnastics. It’s easier to introduce music in this type of activity and it goes down well with the students.” Interviewee 5 highlighted that: “When I use music, especially in gymnastic lessons (in floor routines), the children explode their creativity and give more.”

Other teachers try to experiment more with music. They try to introduce music in other physical activities. Interviewee 7 stated that: “I use Music regularly during my lessons. I use it for warm-up, invasion games, net games athletics and dance. Music is used continually.” Interviewee 6 argued that:

“With certain games I use Music. In the game “Musical Hoops”, the students have to run around the hall but they are listening to the Music. Then I switch off the Music, and they have to go into the hoops. It’s similar to musical chairs, but I use hoops. The students are never eliminated obviously.”

Dance is another important topic in the PE curriculum. Without Music, dance can never be appreciated. Music is considered as a fundamental tool in dance activities.
This was sustained by Interviewee 8 who argued that:

“If one takes the topic “Dance” and I don’t use Music in such activities, that’s useless. Dance is also important because it includes movement. They are keeping the rhythm. Music is very important for all this.”

Interviewer 3 was very positive about the use of music and explains: “We use Music for dancing. In fact, these days we are doing a lot of dance during our lessons and the children are really enjoying it. They are looking forward for the next dance session.”

Some teachers also tend to use music to warm-up the students during the initial stages of the lesson, and finally to cool them down in the later stages of the lesson. Interviewee 9 argued that:

“Normally in PE we have a three-part session. We have the warm-up, the principal part and the cooling-down part. During the warming-up I use the Music in order to stimulate and motivate the students for my PE lesson. During the cooling-down, I use Music in order to make the students feel relaxed after an intensive PE session.”

Music is also used for rhythmic purposes. The students are invited to work on different tasks in relation to Music. In certain activities the students have to work in parallel with the beat of the music. Interviewee 12 stated that:

“I try to use Music in outdoor sports as well. I use Music in sports like basketball. The students have to bounce the ball according to the beat of the Music. Such exercise helps the students to be in control of themselves and also in control of the ball. The same thing applies in tennis.”
4.4.2 Different types of Music for PE lessons.

In order to be successful during a lesson, in which music is being used, the teacher has to make good choice of music. Music has to be adaptable to the students concerned and relevant to the lesson's theme.

The teachers start off from the point that, in general, different Music has to be used when it comes to children in the early years of primary and those who are in the later stages of primary. Interviewee 1 stated that:

“We choose different Music. In the early years we use Music which is easier to move on to, more related to their everyday life style. We use nursery rhymes, music current to them. With the older ones, we choose more modern Music.”

This point was emphasized by Interviewer 5 who believes that:

“For me, the use of Music in the early primary years is very important. Throughout the educational development of the child, Music is being emphasized more in the early stages. They start up with nursery rhymes and friendly Music. In these stages the children are being introduced to Music. When they grow up, very different Music is used. One can’t just continue to make use of nursery rhymes. The children are used to it now and it gets boring. They need change. So the teachers try to use different Music such as modern Music.”

The teachers argued that different music is used for different types of activities. Many types of Music can be introduced in order to motivate the students. Interviewee 11 stated that:
“I try to use instrumental music as often as possible. This type of Music makes the students feel relaxed. In fact I use it regularly during the cooling-down exercise. When I need more beat and energetic Music, I introduce modern Music, for example, during the warming-up.”

Interviewee 4 argued that: “With the young ones I use Disney (cartoons music). The students are very familiar with such songs. With the older students I tend to use more modern Music.” Interviewee 7 stated that: “I go for karaoke versions of modern songs. The students prefer club music obviously but sometimes the lyrics won’t be acceptable in the schools. So I opt for the karaoke versions of the songs.”

Other teachers state that they introduce different types of Music depending on the objective of the lesson. Interviewee 12 stated that “If one has an objective in which the body needs to relax then one must go for calm and slow Music, preferably Classical Music.” Interviewee 8 explained that:

“If I tell the students to imitate animal walks, then a type of Music that represents the atmosphere in the jungle needs to be introduced. For example I choose soundtracks from films in order to represent such atmosphere. The students, then, start imitating animals without knowing, in a most natural way.”

All teachers agreed that with students in the latter stages of primary years, they use Modern Music regularly. Such students are familiar with this type of Music and are motivated when they listen to it. Other types of Music, such as Classical Music, makes the children feel bored during the lesson.
4.4.3 How is the choice of Music made?

The majority of the teachers argued that they choose the type of music according to its popularity with the students. The teachers tend to be influenced by the students when it comes to the choice of music. They will make sure it is, at least, relevant to the subject of the lesson. Initially, some teachers ask the students which is their favourite music and then they adapt their lessons according to the students’ favourite music. Interviewee 1 explains that: “I ask the students to bring a CD. I check what music there is on the CD and then I adapt accordingly.”

4.5 Resources

The use of different and original resources is very important in the use of Music in PE lessons. Teachers should be equipped with the necessary resources in order to be original in their lessons. A teacher without the optimal resources can’t introduce music in the lesson.

4.5.1 Equipment

All teachers argued that the teacher must be equipped with original equipment in order to introduce music during the PE lessons. If a teacher has no equipment available, s/he will not be able to use music.
Different teachers use different types of equipment in order to introduce music in their lessons. Interviewee 3 stated that: “I use the C.D player. I have the amplifier, so I can use Music for indoor and outdoor activities.” Interviewee 6 argued that: “I make use of a computer, projector and good speakers. Such equipment permits me to introduce Music in my lesson.” Interviewee 5 stated that:

“We have a PC tower where we put Music through a USB and we have a whole speaker system. In some places we also have surround systems. Right now we are thinking of purchasing a wireless microphones which helps in rigorous activities.”

Interviewee 8 stated that: “Here, in this school I don’t have any problems regarding the equipment. I have the lap-top and speakers. I also have a projector.”

A particular teacher, Interviewee 9, stated that he does not introduce Music in his lessons because of the lack equipment at his disposal. “I don’t use music because I don’t have the equipment available here. I don’t have C.D players or speakers here. It’s a bit difficult to use music in PE in my school.

### 4.5.2 Technology

Nowadays, technology is improving rapidly. Today teachers are urged to use new technology in order to be original in their preparation. Such statement is also adapted by some teachers who try to make use of technology in order to use music in their lessons. Interviewee 3 stated:
“With the help of the projector of my school, I can play videos from youtube and demonstrate different physical activities also with Music. I play Music from the internet so that children will enjoy the lesson more.”

Interviewee 8 stated that: “In my school I have the wi-fi and so I can download videos from youtube. It’s not difficult for me to include music in my lessons as I have lots of resources.”

4.5.3 Musical Instruments

The use of instruments in PE lessons is popular with certain teachers. The teachers state that when the students are playing the instruments, they are getting more involved in the lessons and enjoy more the lesson. The PE teachers also argued that they must find support from Music teachers in order to borrow some percussion instruments that can be used in PE lessons. Interviewee 3 stated that:

“The Music teacher of my school provides me equipment in order to emphasize the use of Music in my lessons. For example, right now I am using the tambourines. The students play the tambourine to create a rhythm. I share the equipment with the Music teacher. We co-operate in order to develop interesting lessons.”

Thus, collaborating with other teachers of other creative arts subjects is very important. Interviewee 11 argued that: “Apart from using the C.D player, I use percussion instruments. Students enjoy themselves playing such instruments.”
4.5.4 Premises or Facilities

All teachers agreed that in order to conduct a motivating PE lesson, a teacher must be in possession of premises or facilities in good conditions. Teachers and students must work in good environment in order to create harmony during the lessons.

Interviewee 1 stated that: “I am lucky enough to have a ballet room in my school. We use it regularly and especially when we do dance. It is equipped with a piano as well.” Interviewee 12 argued that: “we have a beautiful gym downstairs in order to conduct PE lessons. This helps in order to motivate the children. With the help of the gym, I can introduce Music easily and I use it frequently.” Interviewee 4 stated that: “we have a gym that can be used for indoor activities. We have a big yard outside. I have a choice where to conduct my lesson but I have to say that when I use Music, I do it indoors.”

Conclusion 4.6

Findings and discussion about the interviews conducted with PE teachers were interpreted in this chapter. The next chapter highlights the main conclusions and recommendations originating from the body of this investigation.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Introduction

The study investigated the role and value of Music in PE lessons, in Maltese primary schools. PE helps the student in order to keep fit and develop lifelong skills. The students should be encouraged in order to cherish the PE subject and to give it the utmost importance. On the other hand, the introduction of music in PE lessons is a “bonus” for the students. It renders the lessons original and enjoyable. The students are motivated and so they are benefiting more from these types of lessons.

In order to investigate the importance and effects of music in PE lessons, twelve PE teachers were interviewed. During the interviews the teachers were audio recorded and then the data was transcribed. The data was then analysed using the thematic analysis. Four main themes emerged after the data was analysed. These four themes were then discussed in the previous chapter in order to highlight the main findings of this study.

5.2 Implications of the study

The responses in the interviews conducted showed that the majority of the teachers use music in their PE lessons but there is so much room for improvement. With the introduction of music in PE lessons, the students are introduced to different styles of music. Apart from exercising their physical aspect of their body, the students are appreciating music and get a deeper understanding of musical issues. But there are
many challenges that can hinder the use of music in PE lessons and teachers are not making use of the full potential of music in their lessons.

Teachers welcome the fact that the use of music in their lessons renders the lesson more interesting and motivating. In fact the majority of the teachers interviewed value the use of Music in their lessons and so they try to use it as regular as possible.

Many teachers said that with the use of music, the lesson will be more interactive and inclusive. There are various students who are shy and have difficulties in interacting with the teacher and other students during the lessons. But when music is included in PE lessons, they seem confident and participate more during the lessons.

It was concluded that it is not easy to introduce music in PE lessons and the teachers are aware of this. They face up many challenges that can hinder the use of music in PE lessons. Many argue that because of the lack of equipment, the teacher can’t make full use of Music. Some don’t have the right premises available such as gyms, indoor halls or ballet rooms). Others lack equipment such as CD players, sound system, instruments or computers. Such challenges are common in our Maltese primary schools. It’s not the teacher’s fault but that they are lacking equipment or premises that can help the use of music in PE lessons.

Different PE lessons require different types of music. Not the same type of music can be fine for all PE lessons. Here the teachers agreed with each other that
different music must be used in order to render the lesson interesting and keep the lesson motivating.

The teachers named different games in which they make use of music. Warming-up, cooling-down, gymnastics, dancing, aerobics, movement, yoga, tennis, basket-ball and running were all mentioned by the teachers interviewed. They felt that in these types of activities, music could be introduced easily. Now, it's the type or genre of music used that differentiates the outcome. We must keep in mind that the activities mentioned above can be easily used in the early primary years and in the later stages of the primary. But when it comes to music a different approach must be taken. Not all music can be suitable for early primary years. The same can be said for the latter stages of primary.

The teachers who teach the early primary students are more attentive when it comes to music. The children have to understand the music as well in order to reproduce the required exercise. So the music must be simple as well in order to render the activity successful. Teachers tend to use nursery music, friendly music (simple music), Disney songs, some classical music and some instrumental music. Although they also tend to use modern music, the majority tend to use types of Music that can be more friendly and popular with very young children.

On the other hand, when it comes to the later stages of primary, one can notice a different picture. If a teacher makes use of a nursery song with grown-up students, there will be many repercussions. The students will not be motivated and the lesson could end up into a disaster. With these types of children, teachers tend to
use more different genres of music. Modern music, instrumental music and karaoke songs are the most popular with teachers. One can also admit that modern music is the most used type of music with the grown-ups. One can also notice that teachers don’t make use of classical music with the grown-ups. This could be the result of the lack of use of classical music with the same students when they were younger, and so these students tend not to list classical music as one of their favourite genres.

The choice of music is a really important step when it comes to preparing the lesson. Many teachers state that the choice of Music reflects the idea of the students. Many teachers tend to use music which is popular with the students. In the early years the teacher makes use of nursery rhymes (and sometimes modern music as well) and in the latter stages of primary education teachers prefer to use modern music. One must say that the teacher choose the music according to the preference of the students. One rarely finds a teacher who makes use of classical music with students who are in their final years of primary. This happens because classical music is not popular with them. So, teachers tend to use types of music which are popular with the students.

The teachers argued that the use of music in PE lessons is beneficiary. First of all it renders the lesson more interesting. Music motivates the students. The students love music. Music is part of their everyday life. When the teacher makes use of music in the PE lesson, s/he makes them feel like when they are at home listening to music.
Music does not only motivate the students but it motivates the teachers as well. Many teachers stated that they love conducting PE lessons when they make use of music. This can help in order to include more music in PE lessons.

Music makes the students feel calm during the lesson. Here music serves as a stress-relief instrument. During PE lessons, the students enjoy are invited to enjoy the lessons and think about nothing else. Music helps in order to achieve this objective. Afterwards, the students go back in the classrooms refreshed in order to complete their day at school. PE and music combined together stimulates the minds of the students in order to concentrate ahead of the remaining lessons of the day.

5.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study

The major strength of the study was that the topic in hand was based on data which officially existed. Data was gathered from reliable sources in order to conduct this study.

The teachers who were interviewed were very helpful in order to develop this study. They directly work in the field of physical education and so they were very interested about what was going on. Their perception about such aspects is that they value the use of Music in PE lessons and state that it needs to be introduced more in the PE programme.

Some limitations were encountered during the course of this research. The lack of experience in doing a research and conducting interviews can be considered as
weakness that was met during this study. Another weakness was that a particular interviewee did not give his/her full response. The interview was quite short and so the data wasn’t quite relevant in order to be discussed in depth.

5.4 Recommendations

“For the overall development of the child, along with academics, which develop his mind, a child should participate in physical activities such as sports and exercises as well (Dogra, 2011, pg 1). PE, as a subject in our Primary Schools needs to be given a lot of importance as it helps children to develop themselves physically and psychologically though PE teachers need creativity and motivation in order to work well with these children.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Physical Educators

There are multiple intelligences among individuals and teachers should adapt their differentiated teaching in order to involve all the students during their lessons. This must be the first priority of the teacher who is going to conduct the lesson. In front of the teacher, there are the pupils who are eager to learn and enjoy themselves during the lesson. It is recommended that the teachers plan their lesson attentively in order to include all students in the lesson. If the lessons are motivating, the children are going to enjoy the lesson and will be eager for more.
Motivating lessons, in which the students are having fun, can be achieved by the use of music in PE lessons. It is recommended that the teacher makes use of music regularly during PE lessons. Music motivates the students in order to participate more in the lesson. This can result into a great advantage for the teacher. The students are participating during the lesson and the teacher has less behaviour problems because the students are motivated and enjoying a PE lesson which involves Music.

It is very important that the teachers chose types of music very attentively. The choice of music has to be relevant to the topic of the lessons. It is recommended that the teachers don’t choose their favourite music as this can harm the outcome of the lesson. It is recommended to the teachers of early primary years to make use of nursery rhymes, instrumental music and classical music. The first two types of music are recommended because these are popular with the children of such age. Classical music is recommended. Many do not value the importance of classical music and thus we need a change in culture. Today’s grown-up children don’t value the role of classical music because when they were young they were never taught how to appreciate it. Here we have the chance to get our young students exposed to classical music.

The same can be said for the teachers who teach in the later stages of primary. They need to choose music attentively. The use of instrumental music, classical music and modern music are recommended. One must admit that, with grown-ups (students in the later primary years), the teacher will experiment more on modern music. This type of music is the most popular with children of this age. Children are
motivated when they listen to this type of music. It is recommended that teachers must still keep on using classical music. This can be beneficiary for all students but most of all for those who intend to study Music as an Option subject further on.

When it comes to movement, gymnastics and dance the use of Music is inevitable. One must keep in mind that without the use of music, these activities cannot be conducted. Music plays a fundamental part in these activities.

It is also recommended to use music during the warming up and during the cooling down. During the warming up, the teacher is invited to use energetic music or fast tempo music in order to regenerate the children’s mind. This type of music can motivate the students into concentrating immediately and thus resulting into performing well in the resultant activities. During the cooling down it is recommended to use calm music or calm instrumental music. This type of music can make the children feel relax and exercise their cooling down properly which concludes the lesson.

It is strongly recommended that PE teachers make use of musical instruments, such as percussion instruments, during their lessons. The students will be experiencing something new when it comes to the use of instruments in PE lessons. Something original is going on. The element of surprise in the lessons makes all the difference. It renders the lesson more interesting and motivating. Children tend to be creative when playing musical instruments. In order to achieve this, there must be full co-operation with the music teachers in order to borrow some musical instruments that can be suitable for such lessons.
5.4.2 Recommendations for the Institute for PE and Sports

It is recommended for the Institute for PE and Sports to introduce Music appreciation credits for future PE students. This can result into better knowledge for the teachers when it comes to choose the right type of music. PE teachers need to appreciate music. If a PE teacher does not understand Music, s/he can't use Music in PE lessons because s/he is not capable of choosing music and cannot really link the benefits that it can have on achieving one's objectives for particular PE lessons.

5.4.3 Recommendations for further research

Since this study investigated the use of Music in PE in Independent and Church schools, other research can be carried out in state schools in order to get feedback about the inclusion of Music in PE lessons.

Moreover, another effective research will be that of a study which investigates the present PE curriculum with the other PE curricula in other European countries. The study must focus on the importance of Music in each of the curricula.

Another research could be that of dealing deeper into how music and PE could be linked and practical suggestions are tried and tested
5.5 Conclusion

Throughout this study there was an emphasis on the importance of Music in PE. The collection of data from different teachers aimed at providing in-depth views about this particular combination and gave a highlight of what the present situation is in local Church and Independent schools from the perceptions of PE teachers. PE and Music are important subjects in our education system. When combined together, something new and unexpected comes out. Not everyone expects that Music can be combined with PE. But results showed that this can be achieved. Obviously, there is more room for improvement. But there must be a beginning in order to achieve success. In order to encourage this achievement, PE teachers need to be consulted when a new PE programme, in which music plays a very important role, is established. This can increase the motivation of the teachers in their work which result in conducting motivating lessons which the students can really enjoy. PE teachers should explore the combination of the two subjects in order to make their teaching more successful.
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APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
1. What role do PE and Music (as single subjects) play in our educational system?

2. What perception do other stakeholders (s.m.t, other teachers, parents or the students) have about these subjects? Do they value the role of these two subjects?

3. Can Music and PE develop better young children? How?


5. Do you use Music in your PE lessons? Why and in which lessons?

6. Do you have the relevant equipment for the use of Music in your lessons? What would you use and what would you need?

7. Do you think that Music has an effect in motivating your students?

8. What types of Music do you think that are appropriate for PE lessons?

9. Do you think that the use of Music in the early primary years is the same as in the latter stages of primary? What makes it different?

10. Do you believe that Music can have a larger place of importance in the PE program?
Interviewee 8

1. They are two very important subjects. I do believe a lot in them because these subjects focus on creativity. Students feel that they have a way of expressing themselves. They give them important roles as values. Give them responsibility. They build up self-esteem a lot. In my discipline, sports, I believe in these things because unfortunately we tend to emphasise on academic learning and forget the person. At the end of the day it is a person that I have in front of me. If you don’t learn the basics of values you are going to find things difficult later on. If you teach them values, you will be nurturing leaders. If, for example, I help a person to become focused and determined, he is going to succeed in life. But if today you taught him the abc but he learned the a only and it doesn't really matter to him because he is not determined, where is he going to finish? Values are very important and I believe that my subject, music and art, offer students the chance to express themselves.

2. The importance of these subjects has grown compared to the past. Before, we had this perception about PE: “Come on, it’s only giving a ball to the children to play with.” Fortunately the role of PE has changed a lot. Why? Because the content of the subject itself has improved and we are giving importance to research and nowadays everyone knows how important it is not only in a physical way but also socially and emotionally. I see many positive factors in this subject. I can say the same for music and art. These subject help every facet of students’ development. The roles of parents and teachers have huge influence on society. Society is looking with different eyes on these subjects today and that is so because culture is changing. Sports has earned a name for itself now and schools are giving it more importance. To change a culture it takes time. Things don’t change in a day. However, we are improving a lot. Today, I am working to nurture a sporting
culture and sadly one discovers that this is very challenging even for children. To change a mentality, is very difficult and results take time to show. I hope to see the fruit of what I am working for in five years’ time. Take gymnastics: children do not know what gymnastics are. I was giving a lesson today. You have to start from the very basics. If you take things for granted and think that they know certain things you will be mistaken. Gymnastics concern discipline as well. You have to be a disciplined person to progress in gymnastics. You cannot go around shouting. You have to be always on task. If I tell you to walk, you are not allowed to run. Therefore it is challenging to teach even these basic things to children, especially the very young ones. But this way you would be educating children.

3. These two subjects help your self-esteem a lot. They help you build up your values and your personality. God forbid that we have to do without these subjects because we will miss a lot of each individual. Without them we would not be building up the individual. As I said before, we would only be building up his academic side. I think these subjects are very important and believe very much in them.

4. A lot. I think that with music in PE. lessons help children to motivate themselves. There is something unusual going on. Something new that students would not be expecting. Music can help children change their perception about certain areas like “dance”. This year we had a Christmas village. I had a part in it, providing a PE. station. In fact we did dancing through music. You will be surprised how much the children enjoyed it. You know that society impresses on you that dance is for girls only. This is a cultural challenge which must be changed. These students don’t know that dance entails co-ordination, balance and keeping rhythm. But children come to the school with this social up-bringing and that is the reality. It’s a challenge. That’s why I decided to turn that session into dance and I also involved their parents. They found out that dance is fun, even for boys and
parents. Automatically I was conveying a message. They enjoyed themselves, therefore there must be nothing wrong with dance. There was a message behind it. And it was a true success.

5. I use music a lot, in gymnastics, for example, a subject that includes music a lot. Children relate through it. When I put on background music, they know that they have to move in a certain way. They link. If I provide fast music, then their movement isn’t going to be slow. They adapt and they link to the music they are hearing. Music also relaxes them. If you are doing gymnastics you can’t give them boom, boom, boom music. Music must be related and relaxing. This stimulates students. If I do gymnastics without music, that’s a different thing altogether. Music creates an atmosphere where children are more attentive. Sometimes it is difficult because you have to give instructions while the music is going on. It could be contrasting and you have to learn to balance things. I have to stop music to explain things, so that they understand me. If I take the topic “dance” and don’t use music, that’s useless. Dance is important also because it includes movement. They are keeping rhythm. Music is very important for all this.

6. Here, in this school, luckily enough, I don’t have any problems. We have lots of facilities. I have the gym, a laptop and speakers. I also have a projector. I have the wi-fi and can download videos from the youtube. It’s not difficult for me to include music in my lessons as I have lots of resources.

7. Music is very stimulating. Music helps a lot. Music leads you to the objective of the lesson. Obviously, you have to learn to use music because it can be distracting. That way, you will not be motivating students. Therefore one has to be careful. At certain times you will have to stop the music and explain. Otherwise you may lose control. If you are not alert all the time, you can have a disaster. If you provide them with fast music which brings out energy out of them and you have certain students who are naturally very
energetic, then you have to contain their enthusiasm. They always come to the PE. lesson with a lot of enthusiasm. Therefore you have to contain them in a way. Not to correct them as if they are guilty of some bad behaviour, but to show them that they need to remain always on task. At the end of the day the teacher must reach his objective. You have to control the children’s enthusiasm because music motivates them a lot.

8. This depends on the objective of the lesson. If you have an objective like keeping a rhythm to the count of sixteen at a fast pace, you need a type of music. And if you do a lesson about co-ordination and control of the body, you need another type of music. I use any type of music. I don’t have restrictions. It always depends on the objective of the lesson. Even in gymnastics: if today I am doing a theme like: “Can you show me animal walks?” you need a type of music which evokes jungle atmosphere. Without music students would certainly not manage. Our children suffer from a serious lack of creativity. If you ask them to “travel in any way you like, feel free”, they wouldn’t know what to do. For much too long we have been used to a system where we are told what to do and children expect us to show them what to do. When I carry out a demonstration they are sure to copy me. So, I try to help them with the assistance of music to built up their creativity little by little. To return to a previous example I have mentioned, when students listen to “jungle” music they start imitating animals without knowing, in a most natural way. Which means that music stimulates them to express themselves better.

9. I think that tye link. It’s progress. During early years you use soft music and slow music, so that children focus on movements that are easier and simple. Fast music may be difficult for them especially to keep up with the beat. What they have to develop first is co-ordination and fundamental skills. Then you lead them to more complex skills which help them to be
abel to move with the beat of a fast rhythm. It's a link; from basic to more complex movements.

10. There is a need for it to be used more. I note a lack of music. What I want to say is that there are teachers who do not use music because they don’t have resources to do it. The teacher himself can be the problem. I know teachers who have resources but still, the topic “dance” is not on for them because their culture is what it is. Another problem could be the school environment where lots of the students are challenging and the teacher finds it hard to rise to their challenge. They lose heart quickly and this a negative thing. This is very unfortunate for at the end of the day the losers are our children. It is easy to let yourself go with the flow. We hide behind this mentality and this is wrong. To change a culture you have to act against it and you have to fight. But not everyone will have the motivation to fight a culture. And finally, the system itself can be the problem. Last year I went through a negative experience. The system was very demotivating. I had no facilities; I had nothing to work with. Because of this it is sometimes hard to criticise teachers who descend to that state when they stop trying. To make matters worse you are not always respected. Last year was my first year as a teacher and the energy you come out with to start teaching your first year students is different from that after twenty years. Still, I soon felt demotivated and couldn’t work as I wished. I didn't do “dance” last year. I had planned it, but if you can’t make use of any indoor facilities, where are you going to do it? Or if you are not provided with a stereo? All this is restricting. There are many factors which can affect your environment.
APPENDIX III: PERMISSION STATEMENT
The Head

18th January, 2013

Mr Paul Rapa, currently reading for a B.Ed in Music and Italian at the University of Malta requests permission to conduct interviews with Physical Education Teachers in the above mentioned schools.

The Secretariat for Catholic Education finds no objection for Mr Paul Rapa to carry out the stated exercise subject to adhering to the policies and directives of the schools concerned.

Rev Dr. Charles Mallia
Delegate for Catholic Education
APPENDIX IV: INFORMED CONSENT
INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEWS
The Role And Value of Music in Physical Education Lessons, in Maltese Primary Schools.

I, ____________________________, agree to be interviewed for the project which is being produced by Paul Rapa.

I certify that I have been told of the confidentiality of information collected for this project and the anonymity of my participation; that I have been given satisfactory answers to my inquiries concerning project procedures and other matters; and that I have been advised that I am free to withdraw my consent and to discontinue participation in the project or activity at any time without prejudice.

I agree to participate in one or more electronically recorded interviews for this project. I understand that such interviews and related materials will be kept completely anonymous, and that the results of this study may be published in an academic journal or book.

I agree that any information obtained from this research may be used in any way thought best for this study.

________________________________________  Date ________________________

Signature of Interviewee