

# Nomadic Teaching: Understanding Itinerant Music Teaching Nationwide



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## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine aspects of itinerant music teaching that exist nationwide in order to better understand them.

## Related Literature

- ❑ Many teachers accept itinerant positions, or positions split between two or more school locations, in order to either obtain or maintain full-time employment within a county or district (Gardner, 2010).
- ❑ It was not uncommon to find itinerant teachers for students with visual impairments utilizing hallways, spare closets, or other communal spaces as their classroom spaces (Meador, 2015).
- ❑ Itinerant music teachers might miss out on opportunities to engage with colleagues, staff, students, families, or community members at each school due to frequent travel (Gardner, 2010; Peshlakai, 2016; Sindberg, 2011).
- ❑ Due to constant travel and the necessary organization to accommodate this travel, itinerant teachers might experience difficulty developing a teaching identity (Benson, 2001).

## Method

- ❑ Development of survey based on a previous phenomenological study of three general music teachers in a single district within Florida, conducted by Schultz (in progress). The survey looked at itinerant music teacher perceptions of their job characteristics, information about itinerant music teaching presented during preservice musical education, professional development experiences, and job satisfaction.
- ❑ Calls for participants went out to three Facebook groups (Music Teachers, Orchestra Teachers, and Itinerant Music Teachers) with a link to the Qualtrics survey that took between 10-15 minutes to complete.
- ❑ For data collection, the survey was closed after two weeks and analyzed for descriptive statistical information using the Stata statistical analysis software available through the University of Florida.

## Results

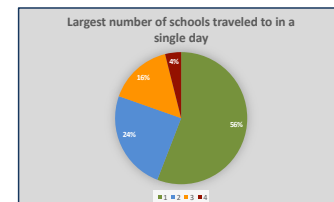
### Participants

- ❑  $n = 64$  (male = 6, female = 58)
  - ❑ Representing 26 states
  - ❑ Courses taught: Orchestra ( $n = 36$ ), General Music ( $n = 27$ ), Band ( $n = 14$ ), Choir ( $n = 14$ ), Other ( $n = 8$ ), Piano/Keyboard ( $n = 4$ ), Guitar ( $n = 1$ ), Music Appreciation ( $n = 1$ ), Music Theory ( $n = 1$ ).

Average cumulative years of experience	Average years in current itinerant position
$M = 12.69$ $SD = 9.61$ Minimum = 1 Maximum = 40	$M = 6.25$ $SD = 5.96$ Minimum = 1 Maximum = 24

### Job Characteristics

- ❑ 78% of participants felt their teaching spaces impacted their content delivery to students.
- ❑ 60.9% of participants indicated that they shared at least 1, with a maximum of 10, communal spaces and/or shared a room with 3 or more colleagues.
- ❑ 88.3% of participants indicated that they had a "home base" school location.



### Preservice Music Education

- ❑ 18.3% of participants remembered receiving information about itinerant music teaching during their preservice music education. Only 10% of the participants remembered that information being presented either positively or somewhat positively.

### Teaching Identity

- ❑ 91.7% of participants identified some kind of shift in their identity between school locations at some point.

### Longevity Perceptions

- ❑ In a given week, only 13.3% of participants were unsatisfied with their position.
- ❑ 60% of participants indicated that they intended to either stay as long as they were able to or until retirement in their current position.

## Conclusions

- ❑ Due to the large number of participants indicating an identity shift between school locations, more research should explore exactly how itinerant music teaching positions impact identity and identity development.
- ❑ 91.7% of participants indicated that they would still accept their current positions even if they knew the demands. This indicates that more research should explore why itinerant music teaching positions are not discussed more widely.
- ❑ More research should explore which aspects of isolation impact job stressors and if itinerant-specific professional development or mentorships are needed and/or beneficial.



<https://tinyurl.com/IMTE-Schultz-ItinerantSurvey>

[www.eschultzmusiceducation.net](http://www.eschultzmusiceducation.net)