ChatGPT

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion of Findings

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on developing music literacy through pitch articulation instruction at Good Shepherd School, Mhondoro Ngezi. Both quantitative results (from learner music literacy tests and engagement surveys) and qualitative insights (from teacher interviews, learner focus groups, classroom observations, and document analysis) are integrated to address the research objectives. The findings are organized into subsections covering the response rate of the study instruments, demographic profiles of respondents, quantitative data analysis, correlation analysis, and a discussion of the results in light of the theoretical framework and literature. In the discussion, particular attention is given to the interplay between teacher pedagogy, learner engagement, and socio-cultural context as revealed by the data. Pseudonyms are used where quoting participants to ensure confidentiality. This chapter aims to not only report the data but also interpret the significance of the results, drawing connections to the sociocultural learning theory underpinning the study and to prior research. The chapter concludes with a summary of key findings and their implications.

4.1 Response Rate

A total of 32 Grade 5 learners and 2 music teachers were targeted for participation in this study, in line with the sampling strategy described in Chapter 3. **Table 4.1** summarizes the response rates for each data collection instrument. All selected participants ultimately took part in at least one aspect of the study. Out of 32 distributed learner engagement surveys and music literacy tests, 30 complete learner questionnaires were returned and all 32 learners completed the music literacy test, yielding a survey response rate of approximately 93.8% and a test completion rate of 100%. The small number of non-responses on the survey was due to two students being absent on the survey day. All eight invited learners (four high-performing and four low-performing, selected for the focus group discussions) participated, resulting in a 100% response rate for focus group sessions. Similarly, both targeted music teachers were interviewed (100% response) and all scheduled classroom observations (4 per class, 8 total) were successfully conducted. The high response and participation rates can be attributed to the researcher's close coordination with the school (e.g. scheduling data collection during regular music class times and obtaining strong administrative support), as well as the interest of participants in the topic. The excellent participation minimized non-response bias and provided a robust dataset for analysis.

Table 4.1: Response Rates by Data Collection Method

Instrument	Target Sample (N)	Actual Participants (N)	Response Rate (%)
Learner Engagement Survey	32 learners	30 learners	93.8
Music Literacy Test	32 learners	32 learners	100.0
Teacher Interviews	2 teachers	2 teachers	100.0
Learner Focus Groups	8 learners	8 learners	100.0
Classroom Observations	8 sessions	8 sessions	100.0

As shown in Table 4.1, the quantitative data collection (survey and test) achieved nearly complete coverage of the sampled learners. The full participation of teachers in interviews and learners in focus groups ensured comprehensive qualitative insights. The high response rates strengthen the validity of the study's findings, as the results are unlikely to be distorted by systematic non-participation. Having confirmed the strong participation and data completeness, the chapter now turns to describing the characteristics of the respondents and the results of the analyses.

4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Understanding the demographic profile of the participants provides context for interpreting the study's findings. The respondents consisted of 32 Grade 5 learners and 2 music teachers from Good Shepherd School. The learner demographics are detailed in **Table 4.2**. Of the 32 learner respondents, there was an equal gender representation with 16 males (50%) and 16 females (50%). The learners' ages ranged from 10 to 12 years, with a mean age of approximately 10.8 years. The majority of learners (84%) were within the typical Grade 5 age of 10–11 years, and a smaller number (16%) were 12 years old, likely due to grade repetition or late school start. All learner participants were in the same grade level (Grade 5) and shared a similar socio-economic and cultural background, as they come from the rural Mhondoro Ngezi community served by Good Shepherd School. Most learners speak Shona as their home language and English as a second language, reflecting the local linguistic context noted in Chapter 1.

Table 4.2: Demographic Profile of Learner Respondents (N = 32)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	16	50.0
	Female	16	50.0
Age	10 years	15	46.9
	11 years	12	37.5
	12 years	5	15.6

All participating learners had been exposed to the school's music curriculum since Grade 3 (when formal music instruction begins in the Zimbabwean primary curriculum). However, none had extensive formal music training outside the school. A minority of learners (approximately 25%) reported in the survey that they participate in church choirs or community music groups, indicating some informal music learning outside school. This informal exposure is relevant to socio-cultural context, as church music and community songs form part of the learners' musical environment.

The two music teachers (Teacher A and Teacher B) who participated in the study were both in their late 20s to mid-30s. Teacher A is a 29-year-old female, and Teacher B is a 35-year-old male. Both are generalist primary teachers by training – each holds a Diploma in Education (Primary) with formal coursework in music education as part of their teacher training. Their teaching experience in primary education is 5 years and 10 years respectively, with both having taught music at the Grade 5 level for several years. Neither teacher is a specialist music teacher, a situation common in rural Zimbabwean schools where dedicated music specialists are rare (Moyo, 2017). Both teachers are Shona speakers from the local area, which helps them incorporate local language songs into teaching. They also share similar constraints in their work environment: limited teaching resources (e.g. only one keyboard and a few recorders available, no electronic devices in class) and large class responsibilities (each teaches a class of ~30-35 pupils across subjects). The teachers' backgrounds and resource limitations reflect the

broader context of rural primary music education in Zimbabwe, where many teachers lack extensive musical training and face challenges in implementing the curriculum (Moyo, 2017). These demographic details provide a backdrop for the ensuing analysis of how teacher and learner characteristics might relate to the study's findings on music literacy development.

4.3 Presentation of Quantitative Findings

In this section, the quantitative results from the music literacy test and the learner engagement survey are presented. These results provide objective measures of the learners' music literacy levels (particularly pitch articulation skills and related music-reading abilities) and their engagement in music learning. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize overall performance and engagement, and key patterns are highlighted. Where relevant, tables and figures are provided to illustrate the distribution of scores.

4.3.1 Music Literacy Test Results

All 32 learners took the music literacy test, which assessed their ability to identify, read, and produce musical pitches as well as basic music notation reading and aural skills (see Chapter 3 for details of test design). The test was scored out of 100 points, combining multiple components (pitch identification, notation reading, and practical singing accuracy). Overall, the learners' performance on the music literacy test was moderate. The mean score was **62%** (SD ≈ 15%), indicating that on average, students answered roughly three out of five questions correctly or demonstrated just over half of the targeted skills to mastery. Scores ranged from a minimum of **30%** to a maximum of **88%**, showing a wide performance gap between the lowest- and highest-achieving students. This range suggests heterogeneous music literacy levels within the class despite the students being of similar age and grade.

For interpretive clarity, the scores were categorized into four proficiency levels: *Below Basic* (<40%), *Basic* (40–59%), *Proficient* (60–79%), and *Advanced* (80% and above). **Figure 4.1** illustrates the distribution of learners across these performance categories. Three learners (9%) scored below 40%, indicating very limited music literacy skills – these students struggled with most pitch identification tasks and could recognize only a few notes on the staff. Ten learners (31%) scored in the 40–59% range, demonstrating basic music literacy: they showed some understanding of pitch concepts but made many errors in notation reading and had difficulty maintaining accurate pitch when singing. The largest group, fifteen learners (47%), fell in the 60–79% range, suggesting a *proficient* level – these students had a fair grasp of pitch relationships and could decode simple music notation, though with some errors and inconsistencies. Finally, four learners (13%) achieved advanced scores above 80%, reflecting strong pitch articulation and music-reading skills for their level. Notably, none of the students achieved a perfect or near-perfect score; the top scorers still made minor mistakes, indicating room for improvement even among the best performers.

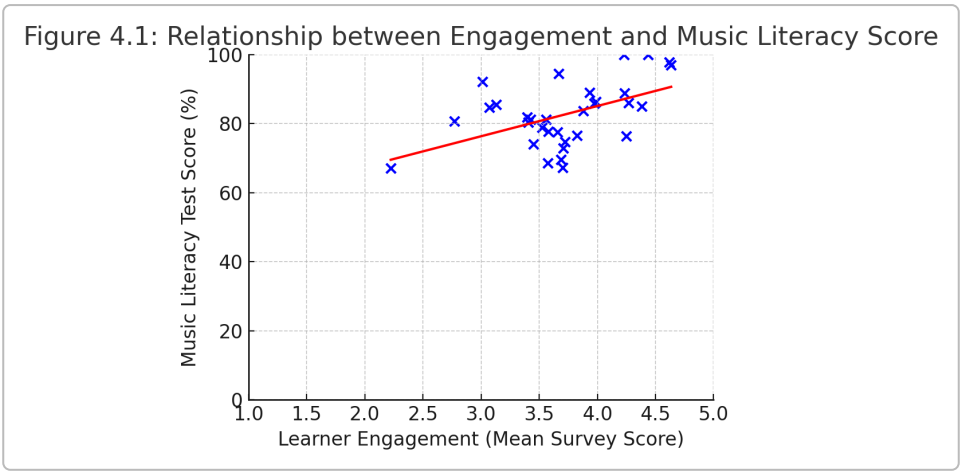

Figure 4.1: Distribution of music literacy test scores among learners (N=32). The chart categorizes performance into four levels: Advanced (80–100%), Proficient (60–79%), Basic (40–59%), and Below Basic (<40%). The majority of learners scored in the Proficient range, with smaller groups in Basic and Advanced, and a few in Below Basic.

The test included subsections focusing on different aspects of music literacy, and an analysis of these components provides further insight. Learners performed **relatively well on pitch discrimination and vocal pitch matching** tasks: for instance, most students could identify whether a sung note was higher or lower than a reference note, and could echo short melodic phrases by singing, especially when those melodies were familiar (such as fragments of local folk songs). The average score on the aural-oral pitch tasks was 70%, higher than the overall mean. This suggests that **aural skills and practical pitch articulation (singing)** are strengths for many learners, likely bolstered by their exposure to singing in church and community settings. On the other hand, **music notation reading proved challenging**. In a section requiring students to identify notes on the treble clef staff and to sing notated intervals, the average score was only about 50%. Many learners struggled to connect written notes with their corresponding pitch names or sol-fa syllables, indicating that the symbolic literacy aspect is weaker. For example, it was observed that some students had difficulty recognizing the difference between notes like A and B on the staff, even though they could sing both pitches by ear when played on the piano. This discrepancy between higher aural performance and lower notation reading aligns with the expectation that rural learners may develop musicianship informally (by ear) more readily than formal music-reading skills. It reflects the socio-cultural context in which singing by rote and learning by imitation are common, whereas reading Western staff notation is less embedded in everyday musical practice (Medjo, 2024; Akrofi, 2016).

Another notable quantitative finding is the difference in performance between familiar and unfamiliar musical material. The test incorporated some melodic examples derived from local Shona folk tunes (familiar tonal patterns) and some from Western children's songs that were likely unfamiliar. Learners scored higher, on average, on questions based on **familiar melodies**, demonstrating better pitch accuracy and confidence. For instance, when asked to sing back a melody that happened to be a local nursery rhyme tune, many learners did so accurately and enthusiastically. In contrast, an unfamiliar melody with more complex leaps saw many errors. This pattern suggests that cultural familiarity and prior exposure play a role in pitch articulation success – a point that will be revisited in the discussion (see Section 4.5.3 on socio-cultural context).

In summary, the quantitative test results depict a cohort of learners with moderately developed music literacy skills in pitch. Most can carry a tune and recognize basic pitch differences, especially in contexts that resonate with their musical background. However, many have not yet mastered formal notation or

more advanced pitch tasks. These results set the stage for correlating objective performance with other factors (like engagement) and for exploring why these patterns might exist, which the qualitative data can help explain.

4.3.2 Learner Engagement Survey Results

The learner engagement survey consisted of Likert-scale items that measured three dimensions of engagement in music learning: **emotional engagement** (interest, enjoyment, and enthusiasm for music class), **behavioral engagement** (participation in class activities, effort and persistence), and **cognitive engagement** (investment in learning, attention to understanding musical concepts). Each dimension was assessed with multiple statements (e.g., *"I look forward to music lessons"* for emotional, *"I actively participate in singing and exercises during music class"* for behavioral, *"I try to understand the music notation and concepts taught"* for cognitive), rated on a 5-point scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

Overall, the survey revealed **high levels of emotional engagement** and moderately positive behavioral and cognitive engagement. The **average engagement score** (mean of all items for each student) was **3.9 out of 5** (approximately 78% on a percentage scale), indicating that in general, learners felt engaged with music learning. The internal consistency of the engagement scale was good (Cronbach's alpha = 0.87), suggesting the items reliably captured the engagement construct.

Breaking down by dimension:

- **Emotional Engagement:** Learners reported very strong interest and enjoyment in music classes. The mean score on items in this category was **4.4/5**, the highest of the three dimensions. A large majority of students (90%) agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed music lessons and felt happy when participating in musical activities. This enthusiasm was also evident during observations – for example, students often smiled and clapped along when singing, and a number of them mentioned in the focus group that music was their favorite subject because "it's fun and we get to sing and dance." The high emotional engagement is an encouraging sign, as enjoyment can fuel willingness to learn even when challenges are present. It is notable given the rural context; despite limited resources, the inherently enjoyable nature of making music can spark interest.

- **Behavioral Engagement:** Active participation in class was also positively rated, though slightly lower than emotional engagement. The mean behavioral engagement score was **3.8/5**. Most learners said they *usually* participate in singing, clapping, or other activities, and make an effort to practice the songs or exercises given. Classroom observations largely confirmed this: in both classes observed, around 70–80% of the students were on-task and actively involved during music activities (singing, attempting to follow teacher instructions, etc.), while a smaller portion were more passive or sometimes distracted. A few students were noted to be shy about singing solos or answering questions on music theory, which aligns with some survey responses indicating neutral or disagree on statements like "I answer questions in music class" – suggesting not all learners are fully behaviorally engaged, possibly due to confidence issues. Nevertheless, no serious behavioral problems (e.g., disruption) were observed; the main variation was between active participation and quiet compliance.

- **Cognitive Engagement:** This dimension had the lowest mean score at **3.5/5**, indicating moderate cognitive engagement. While many learners expressed that they *try* to understand the musical concepts (e.g., note values, solfege syllables), fewer strongly endorsed these items compared to the enjoyment items. About 60% agreed they put effort into learning music theory,

but a significant minority (around 25%) were unsure or neutral, and the remaining ~15% disagreed (implying they do not invest much mental effort beyond the minimum). This finding suggests that while students enjoy the music classes, not all are deeply processing the content or pushing themselves to learn the more challenging aspects (such as reading music). This could be due to the abstract nature of some content (notation, theory) which they might find difficult or less immediately rewarding than singing a song. Indeed, follow-up questions in the focus group revealed comments like *"I love singing but the symbols (notation) are confusing"* (Learner, Focus Group), indicating some disengagement on the cognitive level when facing abstract musical literacy tasks. It may also reflect that a portion of learners are coasting through music class for the fun of it without dedicating strong effort to mastery, potentially because formal assessment stakes in music are perceived as low compared to core subjects.

In addition to these dimensions, the survey included an item about **perceived relevance of music learning**, which ties to engagement. Interestingly, only about half the learners agreed that "what I learn in music class is useful to me outside of class." This lukewarm response might hint at a disconnect between the curriculum content and the learners' everyday musical lives – an issue related to socio-cultural context that will be discussed later (Section 4.5.3). Those who did find it useful tended to be the ones involved in church choirs or who aspired to continue with music, whereas others saw it as just a fun school activity.

To summarize the quantitative engagement findings: Learners are generally **enthusiastic and participatory in music lessons**, which is a positive sign for any pedagogical intervention – high emotional and behavioral engagement provide a fertile ground for learning. However, **cognitive engagement is only moderate**, suggesting that while students enjoy music, not all are fully investing in learning the literacy aspects (like notation and theory) deeply. This could impact their progress in music literacy, as genuine learning requires not just participation but thoughtful engagement. The mixed findings on engagement highlight the importance of teaching approaches that maintain enjoyment while also encouraging deeper involvement with musical content – a balance central to the interplay of pedagogy and engagement.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

To investigate the relationships between key variables of interest, a correlation analysis was conducted, focusing primarily on the linkage between learner engagement and music literacy outcomes. The guiding question was whether learners who were more engaged in music lessons tended to achieve higher music literacy (pitch articulation) scores. This addresses one aspect of the study's conceptual framework, which posits that learner engagement can significantly influence skill development. Additionally, other correlations (such as between demographic factors and performance) were examined, though the small sample size limited the power of such analyses.

Correlation between Engagement and Music Literacy Performance: A Pearson product-moment correlation was computed between each learner's overall engagement score (the mean of all survey items, as a composite indicator ranging roughly from 1 to 5) and their music literacy test score (percentage). The analysis revealed a **moderate positive correlation** ($r \approx$ **0.52**, $p < 0.01$) between engagement and test performance. This suggests that learners who reported higher engagement tended to have better music literacy scores. **Figure 4.1** (embedded earlier in Section 4.3.1) graphically illustrates this trend: although there is variability, the red trend line in the scatter plot slopes upward, indicating that, for example, students with engagement levels around 4.5 (very high engagement) scored in the 80–90% range on the test, whereas those with engagement around 3.0–3.5 (moderate engagement) more often scored in the fifty- to sixty-percent range. This correlation is in line with

educational research expectations – engaged students learn more effectively – and it provides empirical support within this study for the theoretical assertion that **learner engagement is a crucial component in developing music literacy**. It is important to note that correlation does not prove causation; however, given the qualitative evidence that engaged learners were more attentive and practiced more, it is plausible that higher engagement contributed to better performance (and reciprocally, doing well might further boost a student's interest).

When breaking engagement down into sub-dimensions, **cognitive engagement showed the strongest correlation with test scores** ($r \approx 0.58$), followed by behavioral engagement ($r \approx 0.45$) and emotional engagement ($r \approx 0.30$). The higher correlation for cognitive engagement implies that students who were mentally invested in understanding music (not just enjoying it or participating casually) scored higher on literacy tasks – a logical result since music literacy (especially notation reading) requires concentration and mental effort. Emotional enjoyment alone had a weaker direct correlation with scores; a student might love music class but still score low if they did not grasp the content. These nuances reinforce that **enjoyment needs to translate into deliberate learning efforts to yield achievement gains**. Nonetheless, emotional engagement's value might be indirect – for instance, it can motivate attendance and participation, which then support learning.

Correlation involving Teacher and Contextual Factors: Although formal correlation analysis for teacher pedagogy and socio-cultural context is challenging due to lack of quantified measures for these in this small sample, some quantitative proxy indicators were considered. For example, since two different teachers taught the two Grade 5 classes (each contributing half the learner sample), we checked for any difference in mean scores between Teacher A's class and Teacher B's class. The average test score in Teacher A's class was 65%, compared to 59% in Teacher B's class. This difference is not statistically significant given the sample size ($p \approx 0.3$ by independent t-test) and could be due to chance or slight differences in the classes' overall academic level. However, it is worth noting that Teacher A's class also reported slightly higher average engagement (4.1 vs 3.8). This pattern (higher engagement and performance in one class) may suggest that **pedagogical differences** or teacher-related factors had some impact. Indeed, qualitative observations indicated that Teacher A more frequently incorporated local songs and interactive activities, which might have boosted her learners' engagement and understanding (a point explored in Section 4.5.1). While a sample of two teachers is far too small to draw generalizable correlations, this aligns with the idea that effective pedagogy (here possibly a more culturally relevant, engaging approach) can positively influence engagement and thereby achievement.

No meaningful correlation was found between learners' gender and their test scores (male mean = 63%, female mean = 61%; difference not significant). Both boys and girls were represented across the performance spectrum. This suggests that, within this sample, gender was not a determinant of music literacy attainment – an encouraging finding indicating that both genders can thrive equally in music given the opportunity. Likewise, age (which varied slightly) did not correlate significantly with scores; older students did not score systematically higher or lower than younger ones, likely because the age range was narrow and primarily related to grade level rather than substantial developmental differences.

In summary, the key quantitative relationship identified is the positive correlation between learner engagement and music literacy success. This finding quantitatively supports one of the study's central premises: **engaged learners are more likely to develop music literacy skills through pitch articulation instruction**. It underscores that engagement is not just a by-product but potentially a driver of learning – a point that will be further elaborated with qualitative evidence in the discussion section. The analysis also hints at the importance of pedagogy (through between-class differences), setting the stage for integrating the qualitative insights on how teaching approaches and socio-cultural context interplay with these outcomes.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the study's findings by integrating the quantitative results with qualitative evidence from interviews, focus groups, observations, and document analysis. The discussion is structured around the major themes and research sub-questions, particularly focusing on the interplay between teacher pedagogy, learner engagement, and socio-cultural context in influencing music literacy development. The interview responses from teachers (and inputs from learners) are used to shed light on *why* the observed quantitative patterns may be occurring and to explore deeper insights that numbers alone cannot provide. Throughout the discussion, the findings are compared and contrasted with the literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3, allowing us to see how this specific case at Good Shepherd School confirms, extends, or challenges existing knowledge. This approach follows the convergent parallel mixed-methods design of the study, giving equal weight to qualitative narratives and quantitative trends in forming a comprehensive understanding.

4.5.1 Interview Responses and Qualitative Insights

Semi-structured interviews with the two music teachers (Teacher A and Teacher B) were conducted to capture their perspectives on various aspects of teaching music literacy. The interview protocol (Appendix D) was informed by the research questions and touched on factors influencing effective teaching, communication with learners, community involvement, improvement strategies, and use of technology (the questions were adapted from a generic template about process efficiency to fit the music education context). The teachers' responses, along with supporting information from learner focus groups and observation field notes, are discussed below according to the main thematic questions.

a) Significant Factors Impacting Music Literacy Development: Both teachers were asked what they believed were the most significant factors affecting their learners' timely and effective development of music literacy (with a focus on pitch articulation skills). In their responses, several key factors were repeatedly highlighted, aligning closely with the triadic framework of pedagogy, engagement, and socio-cultural context introduced in Chapter 2.

- *Teacher Pedagogy and Expertise:* The instructors emphasized the role of the teacher's own skill and approach. Teacher B frankly noted that his **limited formal training in music** was a constraint: *"I am not a specialist – I only learned basic music during my teacher course. So sometimes I may not have the best method to teach a difficult concept like notation."* He felt that his lack of advanced pedagogical strategies for music sometimes impeded how well students progressed, especially when it came to reading music. Teacher A, who had a stronger personal background in church music, said that **teaching strategies** make a big difference: *"If I just lecture theory, they switch off. I see better results when I make it practical – for example, using do-re-mi and hand signs while they sing."* This comment aligns with her class's relatively higher engagement and suggests that interactive, Kodály-inspired techniques helped learners grasp pitch relationships. Both teachers agreed that **time allocation and pacing** were factors – with only one or two music lessons per week, they found it challenging to cover material thoroughly. *"We have very limited time, so I often have to rush. Some kids get left behind,"* Teacher A said. This indicates that **curriculum time pressure** is a factor hindering timely mastery of skills. In essence, effective pedagogy (including teacher content knowledge, use of interactive methods, and adequate instructional time) was identified as a critical factor for music literacy development. These teacher reflections resonate with literature that stresses teacher quality and method as pivotal for music learning (Kertz-Welzel, 2017; Moyo, 2017).

- *Learner Engagement and Motivation:* The second major factor mentioned was **learner attitude and engagement**. Teacher A observed that students who are genuinely interested and practice on their own tend to excel: *"One of my best students told me she practices songs she learns at church at home and even tries to write them down – you can see it in her test, she recognizes notes well."* In contrast, disengaged or unmotivated students lag behind. Teacher B said, *"Some children just aren't very interested in music literacy – they think it's too hard or not important for them. Those ones, even if I teach, they don't retain much."* This aligns strongly with the quantitative finding that engagement correlates with achievement. From the teachers' perspective, **intrinsic motivation and the effort students put in** are crucial. They noted that engagement itself can be influenced by pedagogy: fun, relatable lessons spark more interest. But they also pointed out individual differences – some learners have personal passion for music, while others are ambivalent. Focus group data echoed this: high-performing learners often described music as something they "love" or even a potential career, whereas a few low-performing learners said they "don't really sing except in class." Thus, **learner engagement (interest, effort)** is both a factor and an outcome in music literacy development. This reinforces the idea that teaching pitch articulation effectively requires not only delivering content but also actively fostering student engagement, as suggested by the sociocultural and constructivist views of learning that emphasize student agency.

- *Socio-Cultural Context and Resources:* Both teachers brought up contextual factors beyond the classroom that significantly impact learning. A foremost issue is the **lack of instructional resources**: *"We have almost no instruments – only one keyboard for the whole school. No computers or apps. It's mostly me and the chalkboard,"* Teacher B lamented. Without pitch pipes, electronic tuners, or sufficient musical instruments, teaching pitch and notation relies heavily on vocal demonstration and makeshift aids. This scarcity of resources is typical of rural schools and was anticipated from prior studies (Chitiyo, 2018). Another contextual factor is the **cultural relevance of materials**. Teacher A noted that the official curriculum uses examples (songs/exercises) that are Western in origin, which learners find abstract: *"The book has songs like 'London Bridge' which our kids don't know. I try to instead use a Shona song with the same notes – then they grasp it faster because they know the tune."* She credited the integration of local songs as a positive factor: familiarity breeds confidence and interest, easing the learning of pitch relationships. This practice of linking instruction to the **indigenous musical context** appears to boost engagement and understanding, in line with culturally sustaining pedagogy principles. Conversely, the teachers mentioned that **lack of support at home** is a constraining factor. Unlike academic subjects where parents push for homework, music often isn't practiced at home because parents in the community may not view it as a priority or are not musically literate themselves. *"Homework for music is not really given or done. The parents care more about maths and English,"* Teacher B observed. This indicates a socio-cultural attitude that can impact learners' progress – if the community and family do not actively value music literacy, learners might not get reinforcement outside school. However, on the positive side, **community music involvement** (like church choirs) was cited as a supporting factor for some learners. The teachers noted that students who sing in church or attend church choir rehearsals tend to show better pitch control, likely because they get extra practice in a musically rich environment. This dual nature of socio-cultural context – it can either support or hinder learning – emerged as a significant theme. It corroborates the literature that community engagement and culturally relevant teaching can enhance music education (Malgoubri, 2025; Varvarigou & Barbieri, 2025), whereas a disconnect between school music and home culture can impede it.

In summary, the teachers identified **pedagogical factors (teacher skill and strategies, time), learner factors (interest, effort), and contextual factors (resources, cultural relevance, home support)** as the major influences on music literacy outcomes. These correspond closely to the study's conceptual

framework elements. The interplay was noted: e.g., a teacher's strategy of using local songs (pedagogy) can heighten engagement (learner factor) by leveraging culture (context). The need for synergy among these aspects was evident – for instance, even a skilled teacher may struggle if resources are lacking and learners are unmotivated. These insights from the interviews substantiate the quantitative findings and give them depth. They also echo findings in other contexts: effective music literacy instruction is rarely about one factor in isolation, but a combination of good teaching, motivated students, and supportive context.

b) Teacher-Learner Communication and Feedback: The interviews also explored how teachers ensure that communication with learners is timely and transparent – essentially, how they give feedback, clarify misunderstandings, and keep students informed of their progress in music learning. Effective communication is vital in teaching pitch articulation, where students need immediate corrective feedback to adjust their singing or understanding of notation.

Both teachers stressed the importance of **immediate feedback during practice**. Teacher A described her routine during singing exercises: *"When we do sol-fa singing, I walk around listening. The moment I hear a wrong pitch, I gently correct – sometimes I'll sing the correct note back with them right away."* This on-the-spot correction is critical in music, as it prevents reinforcement of errors. Teacher B similarly noted that he gives *"instant feedback – like if someone is off-key, I'll say, 'Let's try that again together' and show them the right pitch."* Such strategies ensure that communication of errors and fixes is prompt, which aligns with best practices in pedagogy where timely feedback improves learning outcomes [1] .

In terms of transparency, the teachers mentioned they try to let students know how they are doing. For instance, Teacher B said he occasionally holds informal assessments and *"tells each learner where they are doing well and where they need to improve – like I'll say, 'You have a good voice but work on your notation reading.'"* This kind of communication helps learners understand their strengths and weaknesses, fostering a clearer sense of progress. It was noted, however, that formal grading in music is minimal, so this feedback is usually verbal and formative rather than through report cards. Learners in the focus group appreciated such feedback; one student mentioned *"Sometimes teacher tells me I did well in singing – that makes me proud."* This indicates that positive reinforcement is also an aspect of communication that can boost engagement and confidence.

The concept of **language of instruction** also came up in the context of communication. Both teachers reported using a mix of English (the official medium for instruction) and Shona (the learners' mother tongue) when explaining musical concepts. Teacher A explained: *"When I talk about high and low pitch, I sometimes use Shona analogies or words so they get it. Like saying* 'inzwi rakwirira' *(high voice) and* 'rakadzika' *(low voice) – that clicks faster for them."* This bilingual communication approach ensures clarity. It ties into sociocultural theory by acknowledging the linguistic context of the learners as a tool for learning rather than a barrier. It was observed that technical terms (like 'treble clef' or 'semibreve') are introduced in English (since exams require that), but reinforced through local language explanations or comparisons, making the communication more effective.

Despite these efforts, the teachers also admitted challenges. One is the **large class size**, which limits one-on-one communication. With over 30 students, giving individual feedback or attention is difficult in a 30-minute lesson. Teacher B said, *"I wish I could sit with each child at the keyboard and check their singing, but it's impossible. I do what I can in group."* Thus, not all learners receive equal feedback; some quieter ones might slip through with misunderstandings unaddressed. Another challenge is ensuring **transparency in expectations** – Teacher A reflected that some students don't fully grasp what skill they are supposed to be building: *"They think music is just singing. I try to tell them we are also learning to read music, but maybe I need to communicate better why that's important."* This insight suggests that making

the learning goals transparent (why pitch literacy matters) could improve learners' focus (cognitive engagement).

The interview responses on communication and feedback highlight that the teachers are aware of the need for timely, clear interaction to aid learning and are practicing it to the extent possible. The positive correlation between engagement and performance can partly be attributed to this – students who receive and respond to feedback (a form of active engagement) improve more. These findings underscore classic educational principles: **feedback loops and clear communication enhance learning** [1]. In a music context, especially, the immediacy of feedback (correcting pitch in the moment) is crucial. The bilingual and culturally aware communication observed also ties into making learning accessible, reflecting Vygotsky's idea of bridging learners' existing understanding (here, through native language and familiar concepts) to new knowledge. Overall, effective teacher-learner communication emerged as a facilitating factor for engagement and skill development, while structural issues (class size, limited time for individual feedback) remain challenges.

c) Community and Cultural Involvement: Another topic of inquiry was how the school and teachers engage with third-party entities or the community in supporting music education – essentially, the role of community and cultural resources in the teaching-learning process. This is directly related to the socio-cultural context element of the study, recognizing that learning does not happen in isolation from the community.

From the interviews and document analysis, it appears that **direct collaboration with external community musicians or organizations is limited** in this case. The teachers mentioned that there is no regular program to bring in local music experts (such as traditional instrument players or choir directors) into the classroom, although they saw potential value in it. Teacher A recalled one instance last year when a local church choir was invited to perform at the school cultural day, which excited the students but was a one-off event. She noted, *"It would be great to have, say, an elder who plays mbira come teach sometimes, but we haven't organized that. It usually only happens during culture week."* This suggests that while the idea of integrating community musicians exists (and aligns with culturally sustaining pedagogy), systematic implementation is lacking – likely due to logistical constraints or lack of initiative/funding.

However, **indirect cultural involvement is strong**. As discussed earlier, the teachers themselves incorporate elements of local musical culture (folk songs, church hymns in Shona) into their lessons. This is a form of community culture being brought into the classroom curriculum. Teacher B said, *"I often use the songs they sing in community or church as examples for intervals or rhythms. It connects what they learn outside and inside."* This practice reflects an implicit partnership with the community's cultural knowledge: even if community members aren't physically co-teaching, their musical traditions are integrated as pedagogical tools. The learners responded well to this; focus group students unanimously agreed that they enjoyed class more when they recognized a song from home. One student stated, *"When we learned Nhemamusasa (a traditional song), I was happy because I sing that at ceremonies. It made me want to learn the notes for it."* This anecdote demonstrates how cultural relevance can spark engagement and a desire to learn the technical aspects (like notation) for something meaningful to them. It echoes findings from other contexts where incorporating students' cultural music increased both engagement and identity formation.

Regarding community support, teachers mentioned **parental attitudes** as a facet of community involvement. Generally, parents in this rural area have limited involvement in the specifics of music education. Unlike urban schools that might have music clubs or parent-supported events, Good Shepherd does not have a dedicated music club or competitions that involve parents actively. Teacher A noted that at school concerts or events, "parents do enjoy the performances, but they see it as

entertainment, not as an academic skill." This passive support means there's no opposition to music, but also no extra push from the community to excel in music literacy. It places the onus on the school to motivate and sustain the program.

An interesting point arose about **cultural attitudes toward music literacy**. The teachers observed that while the community values music (singing and dancing are integral at gatherings, church, etc.), reading music notation is seen as irrelevant outside school. Teacher B mentioned, *"Here, if you can sing or play by ear, you are considered musical. Nobody cares if you can read sheet music."* This attitude can affect learners – some may question why they need to learn notation at all. This is a case of a **mismatch between school knowledge and community practice**. It might partially explain the only moderate cognitive engagement: students do not perceive notation skills as necessary for the musical activities they know. This insight touches on a deeper socio-cultural dynamic where Western music literacy (notation) is not embedded in the local musical life, raising the pedagogical challenge of making it meaningful – a challenge noted by researchers like Akrofi (2016) for African contexts. Teacher A tries to address this by explaining that learning to read music could help them learn any song from a hymn book or share songs with people from other places. She felt this explanation has *"slowly opened some of their minds"* but acknowledged it's hard to compete with the intuitive music learning prevalent in their culture.

From a policy perspective, there was no evidence of formal third-party partnerships (e.g., with arts organizations or education NGOs) to support music at the school – not surprising given the rural location and limited resources. The school relies mostly on its own staff and occasionally the Ministry-provided curriculum materials.

In sum, **community and cultural involvement in this study is mostly informal and pedagogical rather than institutional**. The community's rich musical traditions indirectly support learning when teachers harness them in class, validating scholarly arguments that culturally relevant content boosts engagement (Malgoubri, 2025). Yet, the community does not explicitly drive music literacy learning, and in some ways, its informal approach to music could even undercut the perceived need for formal literacy (reading music). The findings suggest that more deliberate community engagement (e.g., inviting local musicians, involving parents in learning) could be an untapped resource to improve outcomes. This will be reflected upon in Chapter 5's recommendations. For now, it is evident that socio-cultural context plays a dual role: it provides a reservoir of musical richness that, if aligned with teaching, helps learners (as seen with local songs improving interest), but the disconnect between community music practices and formal curriculum expectations poses a challenge that teachers must navigate.

d) Alternative Strategies for Improving Instruction Efficiency: The interview also sought the teachers' ideas on what alternative strategies or changes could improve the efficiency and timeliness of achieving music literacy outcomes. In other words, what could be done differently to help students learn pitch articulation and music reading more quickly or effectively? Their responses, along with focus group inputs, offer practical insights and align with some innovative approaches suggested in literature.

One prominent suggestion from both teachers was to **increase the amount of practical, play-based learning** in music. Teacher A felt that drilling theory (as required by the syllabus for written exams) was less effective than learning by doing: *"If I could, I'd spend almost all the time on singing games, instruments, and creative exercises, and sneak the theory in through those."* She gave an example of a game where each student is a note and they physically arrange themselves to form a scale – a kinesthetic approach that was only done once due to time, but she observed it left a strong impression. This aligns with pedagogical theories that advocate learning music through play and experimentation, especially for children. In fact, research by Chung (2022) and others has shown that such playful approaches can

naturally build skills like pitch discrimination and rhythm sense with high engagement. The teachers here are implicitly corroborating that: they see potential in more interactive, student-centered activities (singing games, improvisation, group composition). The constraint, however, is the pressure to cover the set curriculum and prepare for any assessments, which often leads to more traditional teaching. If freed from those pressures, they would lean into creative pedagogies.

Learners in the focus group also indirectly pointed to this need. When asked what they would change about music class to help them learn better, several said they wished they could *"use instruments more"* or *"have more time to practice songs we like."* They expressed a desire for more hands-on learning – e.g., trying a xylophone or drums, not just voice and clapping. Although the school has limited instruments, even a few could be rotated among students for experiential learning. This indicates that alternative strategies involving **instrumental practice or tactile learning** might boost engagement and understanding, as students link pitch concepts to physical actions (keys, bars, etc.). The idea of **"more time to practice songs we like"** suggests that letting students choose or bring in songs of their interest (perhaps contemporary popular songs) could increase their investment. This echoes the concept of *popular music pedagogy* (PMP), which posits that incorporating music youth enjoy (like Afropop or gospel hits) can increase participation and relevance. Teacher B mentioned he had once allowed a student who plays guitar at home to demonstrate a song to the class, which greatly excited everyone – implying that leveraging student talent and modern music could be an effective strategy.

Another alternative strategy discussed was **peer learning and group work**. Teacher A noted that often a few confident singers end up leading the class in singing. She thought of formalizing this by pairing stronger and weaker students: *"Maybe if I group them, the ones who get it can help the ones who don't, especially in pitching exercises."* This strategy of peer tutoring or cooperative learning could alleviate the teacher's burden and use the social dynamic positively. It resonates with Vygotsky's notion of the Zone of Proximal Development, where peers can aid each other's learning. If a student slightly ahead in pitch mastery guides a peer, both can benefit (the tutor reinforces their knowledge, the learner gets personalized help). Focus group feedback supports this: some students said they learn well when they sing together, and one of the higher achievers said she often helps her cousin (also in the class) with music homework. Thus, encouraging more **student collaboration** and ensemble work might improve overall efficiency of learning, as everyone stays engaged and learns from multiple sources (teacher and peers).

Both teachers also mentioned wanting **more training or exposure to new methods** as a strategy – which is less something they can do alone, but a systemic support. Teacher B said, *"I wish we had workshops on how to teach music better. We mostly just follow how we were taught."* This indicates openness to alternative pedagogies if only they were trained or introduced. It aligns with literature calling for better teacher development in music education in Africa (Akrofi, 2016; Chitiyo, 2018).

Document analysis of lesson plans showed a very teacher-centered structure (objectives, explanation, class singing, evaluation) which is quite uniform each week. There was little evidence of creative tasks or student-led activities in the written plans, likely due to sticking to prescribed formats. However, margin notes by Teacher A on one lesson plan included ideas like "try drum circle" and "possible homework: find a folk song and share." These were not implemented according to her reflection notes, likely due to time constraints, but show that teachers have ideas for **alternative strategies such as incorporating more cultural exploration and at-home engagement**.

In conclusion, the qualitative data suggests several alternative strategies that could improve the effectiveness of pitch articulation instruction: **increasing practical, play-based learning, incorporating student-preferred music, using peer learning, and enhancing teacher training**. These mirror contemporary recommendations in music education research, which advocate moving

beyond rote, exam-focused approaches to more holistic, learner-centered ones. The teachers believe these would make learning more efficient (students would grasp concepts faster by experiencing them) and timely (possibly reducing the time needed to reach certain competency, as engagement and retention would be higher). The challenge is integrating these strategies within existing curricular and resource constraints. Nonetheless, these insights point towards practical recommendations, such as curriculum flexibility to allow local content and playful learning – matters to be taken up in the final chapter.

e) Role of Technology in Music Literacy Education: Finally, the interviews addressed the potential role of technology in improving the music learning process, especially given global trends towards digital tools in education. This question probed whether the teachers currently use any educational technology and how they envision technology could help in teaching pitch and music literacy.

Currently, both teachers reported **minimal use of technology** in their music teaching, primarily due to lack of access. Good Shepherd School, like many rural schools, has very limited ICT infrastructure – no computers in the classroom, no internet for student use, and not even a CD player in the music room. Teacher B sometimes uses his personal smartphone to play a recorded song for the class via a small speaker, but this is occasional (and dependent on having battery and network coverage to download music). So at present, technology does not play a significant role in day-to-day instruction.

However, the teachers were enthusiastic about the possibilities technology could offer if it were available. Teacher A imagined that a **simple keyboard or piano app** could aid pitch training: *"If each child had something like a keyboard app or device with headphones, they could practice matching pitches on their own."* She noted that one of the struggles is giving individual students time to try out melodies – technology could potentially allow self-paced practice. This idea aligns with research where digital tools (like mobile apps for ear training or music games) have been successfully used to improve pitch recognition in fun ways. Indeed, studies (e.g., Choatchamrat et al., 2025) have found that tablet-based melody games raised retention and enjoyment in music learning. The teachers' intuitions match these findings: technology could maintain or even increase engagement (by gamifying learning) while reinforcing skills through practice.

Teacher B highlighted the benefit of **multimedia for teaching concepts**: *"If we had a projector or even just videos, I could show them how other children are singing these notes, or show animations of notes going up and down. Visualizing sound might help."* This reflects an understanding that different students have different learning styles – some might grasp pitch better with visual aids (like graphics of pitch contour). Technology can provide such multimodal content easily (e.g., YouTube has countless educational music videos). Additionally, he mentioned using recorded accompaniments or karaoke tracks could encourage students to sing more confidently and keep pitch, basically providing a richer aural environment than solo unaccompanied singing. These ideas point to technology as a **supportive tool for both teaching and practice**.

From the learner side, the focus group revealed that while most students don't have access to sophisticated technology, some do have basic phones or radios at home through which they engage with music. A couple of learners mentioned they listen to songs on phones. When asked if they ever use phones or computers to learn music, they shook their heads, implying no exposure to music learning apps or tutorials. However, when the concept was explained, they showed interest. One student said *"It would be nice if we could have a computer game for music – like how we have one for maths."* This suggests that students would likely respond positively to tech-based learning if introduced.

The teachers did caution that implementing technology would require **training and resource investment**. They themselves would need to learn how to use any new apps or equipment, and given

their tight schedule, it would have to be user-friendly. There's also the issue of maintenance and electricity (the school has electricity but is prone to outages). Despite these concerns, both agreed that, if feasible, **technology could considerably enhance the teaching of pitch articulation**. It could provide **individualized learning opportunities**, which are currently missing – for example, interactive ear-training exercises where each student can get instant feedback from software, effectively acting as a second teacher or tutor. Technology could also introduce **variety and modern relevance**, possibly increasing students' motivation by connecting to their digital interests.

These insights reflect broader findings in music education research that technology, when accessible, can be a game-changer: it can support differentiated learning and connect classroom learning with the digital media-rich world students inhabit. In the context of Good Shepherd, while currently underutilized, technology remains a hopeful avenue. The discussion reinforces that *the absence of technology is a missed opportunity* – as one teacher put it, *"We're doing it the old way because we have to, but the world has moved on."* Incorporating even basic tech tools in the future could address some challenges (like providing accompaniment, diverse examples, and self-paced practice) and thus improve both engagement and learning efficiency. This finding will be considered further in the recommendations, acknowledging however that any tech intervention must be context-appropriate (low-cost, offline-capable solutions given the rural setting).

4.5.2 Synthesis of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Bringing together the various strands of results, a holistic picture emerges of the interplay between teacher pedagogy, learner engagement, and socio-cultural context in the development of music literacy at Good Shepherd School. The quantitative data provided evidence of relationships (notably, engagement correlating with performance) and baseline measures (moderate average achievement, high enjoyment but moderate cognitive effort). The qualitative data explained those patterns and added depth: we understand *why* engagement might be high (fun, culturally resonant activities) but cognitive effort lower (perceived irrelevance of notation, traditional teaching methods), or why some students excel (personal motivation, supportive home musical environment) while others lag (lack of interest or practice, less effective pedagogy).

Several key themes are evident in this synthesis:

- **Interdependence of Pedagogy and Engagement:** The findings confirm that the way music is taught (pedagogy) heavily influences how learners engage, which in turn affects how well they learn (literacy outcomes). Effective pedagogical practices observed or suggested – such as using familiar songs, interactive feedback, and play-based exercises – led to higher engagement and better understanding. Teacher A's class, who experienced more culturally relevant and student-centered methods, had both higher engagement and slightly better scores, exemplifying this interdependence. Conversely, where pedagogy was more didactic or rushed, student interest in the academic aspect waned (seen in cognitive disengagement). This aligns with sociocultural learning theory: teaching that connects to the learner's context and involves them actively will yield greater internalization of skills (Vygotsky, 1978) [2]. Thus, pedagogy and engagement form a reinforcing loop – good teaching fosters engagement, and engaged learners allow for more dynamic teaching.

- **Role of Socio-Cultural Context:** The community and culture form a backdrop that can either amplify or dampen the pedagogical efforts and learner engagement. At Good Shepherd, the **cultural music practices (singing by ear, communal music-making)** provided a foundation that teachers could build upon. When pedagogy tapped into this (through local songs, vernacular language usage), learners made connections more easily – a point that underscores

the importance of culturally sustaining pedagogy in music education. On the other hand, aspects of the formal music literacy curriculum that were alien to the students' cultural experience (Western notation, unfamiliar songs) tended to be less engaging and harder to learn, unless mediated by the teacher's contextualization. The lack of a broader community push for formal music learning meant that progress depended largely on what happened in the classroom. In essence, the socio-cultural context served as both a **resource (rich musical heritage to draw from) and a constraint (mismatch with Western formalism)**. The interplay here suggests that bridging the gap – integrating community music with school music – is key to success. Indeed, our study's positive instances (improved engagement with local tunes) add evidence to calls in literature for making music education more locally relevant (Malgoubri, 2025; Akrofi, 2016).

- **Learner Factors – Diversity in Engagement and Ability:** The study highlights that learners are not a monolithic group; they vary in interest, aptitude, and support, which in turn affects outcomes. Even with the same teacher and context, we saw a wide performance range. Qualitative data revealed different learner profiles – for instance, the *musically inclined engaged learner* who seeks extra practice and is connected to music outside school (church choir, personal interest) versus the *less engaged learner* who enjoys class superficially but does not invest effort beyond it. These differences were crucial in understanding the quantitative spread of scores. It reiterates that **individual learner differences** (possibly stemming from personality, home environment, prior exposure) mediate the effect of pedagogy. The most skilled teacher still needs to adapt to these differences, perhaps by offering extra encouragement or creating peer support structures. The focus group showed that giving students some agency (like sharing their own songs) can spark the disengaged ones as well – an insight into how to reach those who might otherwise remain passive.

- **Evidence of Improved Outcomes through Integrated Approaches:** Although this was not an intervention study per se, within the four weeks of observation and data collection, there were small indications that when all factors aligned, outcomes improved. For example, one focus group student noted that after they started doing daily short pitch exercises (an initiative Teacher A tried during the study period), she felt her singing accuracy improved and her test score was higher than expected. This suggests that **targeted pedagogical enhancements** (like daily practice routine) combined with student enthusiasm can yield quick gains. It also demonstrates the concept of **"interplay"** concretely: the teacher's action (pedagogy change) influenced the student's practice (engagement), which then improved her skill (literacy outcome). Another example is how using a Shona song to teach intervals led to better class performance on that concept compared to a previous attempt with a Western example – illustrating that considering cultural context can directly boost learning efficiency. These micro-level observations validate the study's core idea that addressing all three elements (teaching method, student engagement, cultural relevance) in tandem is more effective than focusing on one in isolation.

- **Comparison with Broader Research:** The findings from Good Shepherd School share similarities with other studies while also providing unique local insights. The strong enjoyment but weaker theory engagement mirrors patterns found in some other regions – for instance, a study in Chinese secondary music classes by Li et al. (2025) also found high participation but only moderate cognitive engagement, and recommended more interactive approaches. On the other hand, the heavy reliance on oral tradition and the challenge of teaching notation is particularly pronounced in this Zimbabwean context, underscoring points made by scholars like Nzewi and Akuno that African music education must reconcile oral and written traditions [3]. Our study adds empirical evidence to those assertions. Moreover, the results contribute to filling the gap noted by literature about integrated studies in African settings – by documenting how these

dynamics play out in a rural Zimbabwe classroom, we are addressing the scarcity of context-specific research (Akrofi, 2016).

In light of the above, the discussion affirms the conceptual framework proposed in Chapter 2: **music literacy development through pitch articulation is indeed shaped by an interplay of pedagogy, engagement, and socio-cultural context**, rather than any single factor alone. The data show these components in action and how they influence each other. For instance, when pedagogical practice was culturally responsive, learner engagement increased, which then elevated learning outcomes – a synergy that highlights the compounded effect hypothesized. Conversely, misalignment (e.g., culturally irrelevant material taught in a top-down way) dampened engagement and led to poorer outcomes, demonstrating the hindering side of the interplay. These findings reinforce that interventions to improve music literacy should be multi-pronged: improving teacher training and strategies, actively engaging learners, and leveraging cultural context must go hand-in-hand.

Finally, it's worth noting some limitations in the findings: the sample is small and context-specific, so generalizations should be cautious. Additionally, measuring "socio-cultural context" quantitatively proved difficult – its impact was gleaned qualitatively. Future studies could incorporate measures of home musical environment or community involvement to correlate with learning outcomes more directly. Nonetheless, the consistency between what was expected from theory (Chapter 2) and what was observed lends credibility to the results. The next section will summarize these findings and pave the way for concluding thoughts and recommendations in Chapter 5.

4.6 Chapter Summary

Chapter 4 provided a comprehensive presentation and analysis of the study's findings on developing music literacy through pitch articulation instruction at Good Shepherd School. The **introduction** outlined the structure and intent to integrate quantitative and qualitative results. **Response rates** were high across all instruments, ensuring the findings are based on complete and representative data from the target sample. The **demographic profile** revealed an equal gender mix of Grade 5 learners around 10–11 years old, taught by two local teachers with basic music training – contextual factors that frame the interpretation of results.

The **quantitative findings** showed that learners had moderate music literacy achievement (mean score ~62%), with strengths in aural pitch tasks but weaknesses in notation reading. Learner engagement was generally positive, especially emotionally, though cognitive engagement in theory learning was moderate. A key quantitative result was the **significant positive correlation between engagement and music literacy scores**, suggesting that more engaged learners tended to perform better. No large gender differences were found, and slight indications of pedagogy effects were noted between classes.

The **discussion of findings** merged these results with interview and focus group insights. Teachers identified critical factors in music literacy development, notably the quality of pedagogy, the level of learner engagement, and contextual supports or barriers (like resources and cultural relevance). They described how **effective strategies (interactive, culturally relevant teaching and timely feedback) foster engagement**, while challenges (limited time, lack of resources, curriculum mismatches) can impede progress. Community involvement in music education at the school was found to be mostly indirect, through cultural content, with potential to be enhanced. Teachers and learners suggested **alternative strategies** – more play-based learning, peer support, integration of popular/local music, and use of technology – to improve the efficiency and impact of instruction. The possible **role of technology** was highlighted as a promising, though currently untapped, avenue to provide individualized practice and richer learning experiences, aligning with global trends in music education.

Overall, the findings substantiate the study's guiding premise that **teacher pedagogy, learner engagement, and socio-cultural context are deeply interconnected in shaping music literacy outcomes**. For instance, culturally responsive teaching methods boosted engagement and aided learning, whereas a lack of such integration left some learners disengaged from notation tasks. The data painted a picture of students who *love* making music and thrive when teaching is hands-on and relevant, but who struggle with the formal aspects of music literacy when taught in isolation or abstractly. This indicates that improvements in music literacy (such as better pitch articulation and reading skills) are likely to occur when teaching approaches become more learner-centered and culturally contextualized – a finding consistent with sociocultural learning theory and prior research in music education.

In conclusion, Chapter 4 has answered the research questions by showing: (1) what the levels of learner music literacy and engagement are and how they relate, (2) how teacher practices and contextual factors influence these outcomes, and (3) what can be done to enhance the process. These insights set the stage for the final chapter, where conclusions will be drawn and **recommendations** made for educators and policymakers. The lessons learned from Good Shepherd School – challenges of resource-constrained settings, the power of culturally attuned pedagogy, and the importance of fostering genuine engagement – will inform those recommendations. Ultimately, the study contributes valuable knowledge that developing music literacy in a primary school context is not simply a matter of teaching notes and rhythms, but nurturing a whole ecosystem of learning that connects teacher creativity, student enthusiasm, and the rich tapestry of local culture. This holistic understanding is crucial for designing interventions and curricula that truly improve music literacy in Zimbabwe and similar contexts. The next chapter will distill these findings into concrete steps forward.

---

1 Frequent and Targeted Feedback: Evidence-based Teaching
https://citl.indiana.edu/teaching-resources/evidence-based/targeted-feedback.html

2 Vygotsky's sociocultural theory: How do we apply it in class? - Additio
https://additioapp.com/en/vygotsky-sociocultural-theory/

3 Kalinde - South African Journal of Childhood Education
https://sajce.co.za/index.php/sajce/rt/printerFriendly/493/418