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# A Conceptual Model of Spirituality in Music Education

Liesl Van der Merwe<sup>1</sup> and John Habron<sup>2,3</sup>

## Abstract

This article aims to describe the phenomenon of spirituality in music education by means of a model derived from the academic literature on the topic. Given the centrality of lived experience within this literature, we adopted a hermeneutic phenomenological theoretical framework to describe the phenomenon. The NCT (noticing, collecting, and thinking) model was used for the qualitative document analysis. Atlas.ti 7, computer-aided qualitative data analysis software, was used to support and organize the inductive qualitative data analysis process. After data saturation, we used Van Manen's lifeworld existentials (corporeality, relationality, spatiality, and temporality) as guides to reflection and to help organize the many quotes found in the literature. The model that results assigns quotes to codes and categories, which in turn appear within one of these four lifeworlds. This article not only offers a working conceptual model of spirituality in music education but may also help to foster an awareness of spiritual experience in pedagogical contexts and thus contribute to what Van Manen calls "pedagogic thoughtfulness and tact."

## Keywords

spirituality, music education, hermeneutic phenomenology, lifeworld existentials

This article is about a conceptual model of spirituality in music education. The idea for this research came during a world conference of music education during which the authors met for the first time. The conversation turned to how teachers' and learners' experiences in music education might be understood in the context of spirituality.

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After returning to our home countries, we embarked on a literature review. This revealed that there has been a recent surge in the study of spirituality within academic discourse beyond the disciplines of theology and religious studies. According to Williamson (2010), spirituality has “academic visibility across the social sciences and the humanities” (p. 37). Indeed, her pioneering development of a space for the discussion of spirituality within somatic movement dance education (SMDE) offers support for this article because her field overlaps with music education; both are embodied creative practices and sister disciplines within the creative and performing arts.

As important for our work is one of the leading writers on spirituality and music education, Boyce-Tillman (2000, 2007). She has developed a phenomenography of spirituality in musical experience per se and discussed its implications in music education (Boyce-Tillman, 2007). In her account, Boyce-Tillman (2007) “seeks to reestablish a notion of spirituality as relationality within the musical experience” (p. 1405) and develops four domains (materials, construction, expression, and values) to encapsulate the encounter between self and other in a musical context (pp. 1408–1410). While she presents an overarching conceptual model, our study differs in that it has been arrived at through a systematic document analysis of relevant sources.

For the sake of clarity, it is important to emphasize that this article’s focus is on spirituality. It does not specifically address any of those areas that may be associated, or sometimes confused, with spirituality, such as religion, ethics, or morality, although these did naturally feature on many of the sources we read. According to a dictionary definition, religion is “the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2013). Discussions of religion will normally entail spirituality, but the spiritual need not pertain to the religious (Williamson, 2010; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005). Hence we understand *spirituality* as a broad and inclusive term. We agree with Yob (2011) that “Religion has shaped and been shaped by the spiritual experience but does not have exclusive rights to spirituality and in fact must work diligently to prevent losing it” (p. 44). While religious music within music education (National Association for Music Education [NAfME], 1996) and the relationships between specific religious groups and music curricula (Harris, 2006) are important issues, they are not the subjects of this research. The same can be said for ethics and morality, although we must point out that these terms, along with religion, appeared in the documents we analyzed.

Ethics has been defined as that field of human discourse that is concerned with Socrates’s question: “What we are talking about is how one should live” (Williams, 1985, pp. 1–6). Williams (1985) distinguishes between ethics and morality and views the latter as a narrower set of concerns within the former. For him, morality is a “particular development of the ethical, one that has a special significance in modern Western culture” and which has developed “in particular a special notion of obligation” (Williams, 1985, p. 6). Both ethics and morality may be relevant in music education, for example in the study of racial, gender, and sexual politics within music history (Hayes, 2010) and in educational policy itself (Woodford, 2004).

Even after such a careful demarcation of our research, so wide and complex was the field of spirituality in music education that we identified the need for a conceptual

model to make sense of the multidimensions of spirituality in music education that we encountered in the literature. We are not the only researchers to have noted this complexity. Bogdan (2010) wrote: “In the quest for clarity about the meaning and import of musical spirituality in education theoretically and in practice, many questions still remain” (p. 124). This is also the case in other disciplines that relate to music education, such as SMDE. In the same year as Bogdan (2010), Williamson (2010) referred to a lack of rigorous research into spirituality: “The presence of spirituality in the field of SMDE is under-theorized—there is a lack of definitional and theoretical rigour. Paradoxically, the field is body-mind-spirit-centric” (p. 37). In a similar way, while there are studies that discuss spirituality in music education (Bogdan, 2003, 2010; Freeman, 2002; Palmer, 1995, 2006; Yob, 2011), there is a similar lack of definitional and theoretical rigor, and this is the gap that this article addresses.

However, the notion of definition is itself problematic. It is common in writings on spirituality to find the trope of ineffability or inexpressibility. For example: “These two experiences were an encounter with the ineffable; that is, they were spiritual” (Yob, 2011, p. 42). This notion has a long history in spiritual traditions such as mysticism (Anthony, Hermans, & Sterkens, 2010) and has been articulated in the field of philosophy, perhaps most famously by Wittgenstein (1961): “There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They *make themselves manifest*. They are what is mystical. . . . What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence” (pp. 73–74). For Wittgenstein, the arts were an example of such things. Others have discussed the arts in similar terms: “Music, dance, the visual arts . . . are nondiscursive, nonliteral, and not assertive . . . they hold and express meaning although that meaning may never be captured in normal spoken language” (Yob, 2011, p. 43).

Thus, in studying music education and spirituality, it may be beneficial not to seek a definition of “spirituality in music education” but instead to provide an analysis of the way that music educators and researchers, and those from related fields, describe spirituality, for example, how certain terms group together. The notion that description is more useful than definition is supported by Hyde (2008). Here, too, we differ from Boyce-Tillman (2007), whose model appears, at least partly, to be offered as a diagnostic tool: “To achieve a ‘fit’ that is likely to produce a spiritual experience . . . there has to be sufficient congruence between the various domains of the experience (at least two, I suggest)” (p. 1416).

Before introducing our method, we would like to contextualize this topic within our national curriculum contexts in order to justify its relevance on a practical level. In England, “All National Curriculum subjects provide opportunities to promote pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development” (Department for Education, 2011). This includes music, which is a statutory subject at primary and secondary levels. Furthermore, the National Association for Music Education, an influential organization that advocates for music education in the United States, states that “Music is a universal expression of the human spirit. . . . Students must have an opportunity to learn and participate in the joy and power that music education brings in uplifting the human spirit and fostering the well-being of society” (NAfME, 2011, p. 2).

In South Africa, the terms *spirit* or *spiritual* do not feature in the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy statements (CAPS grade R-9) (Department of Basic Education, 2011). Children are informed about many different religions but are not explicitly spiritually nurtured. This, of course, does not preclude the possibility that pedagogues and students may have spiritual experiences in the day-to-day business of teaching and learning music. However, in the grade 10–12 CAPS, the subject Music is described as “the art of organising sounds and silence, expressing intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects of human experience” (Department of Basic Education, 2011, p. 8). Therefore this article may be relevant worldwide.

The new knowledge that has emerged from this study is a phenomenological and literature-based model of spirituality in music education, which may be of use to researchers in music education and related fields, practitioners (teachers, lecturers, conductors, etc.), and policymakers. To illustrate the model we included “vignettes” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 115) as descriptions of lived experiences and examples of how the model might be used to “grasp the point or essence of a subject” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 117) and bring experiences to speech. These personal lived experiences were chosen because they stood out in the memories of the authors as examples of spirituality in music education. The authors embedded the vignettes as an important part of the interpretation and as an illustration of the four themes: corporeality, relationality, spatiality, and temporality.<sup>1</sup> These vignettes explicitly claim how our experiences relate to the phenomenon: spirituality in music education (Laverty, 2003).

The purpose of this qualitative document analysis is to interpret the scholarly literature on spirituality in music education in order to develop a hermeneutic phenomenological model of the topic. Relevant examples of literature from dance education and education were also reviewed. The main research question that guided this inquiry was: What theoretical framework provides a foundation to study spirituality in music education?

## Research Methodology

Van Manen (1990) suggests that in fitting ourselves into a research tradition, we should contribute to this tradition by articulating and experimenting with new “methodological approaches that further the human science tradition” (p. 75). We adopted such an organic approach to research methodology in this article. The *philosophical worldview*<sup>2</sup> of this article is interpretivism since we interpret academic literature on the topic, spirituality in music education (see Figure A in online supplemental materials available at <http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental>). We chose an inductive qualitative *design*<sup>3</sup> because it “honors . . . the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation” (Creswell, 2014, p. 4). Given the centrality of lived experience within this literature, we adopted a hermeneutic phenomenological<sup>4</sup> *theoretical framework*<sup>5</sup> to describe the phenomenon. The *strategy of inquiry*<sup>6</sup> is document analysis. “Qualitative document analysis relies on immersion in the subject matter, conceptually informed conversation with numerous document and examples, and theoretical sampling for systematic and constant comparison” (Altheide, Coyle, DeVriese, & Schneider, 2008,

p. 127). We describe and interpret these documents as “texts of life” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 4) to convey an overall essence of spirituality in music education. The NCT (noticing, collecting, thinking) model for qualitative data analysis was followed (Friese, 2012).

### *Data Collection*

The data for this article were 22 academic sources (see Table A available at <http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental>). The keywords that we used for the literature search were *spirituality in music education*. Data collection and data analysis were iterative processes. At first we read through 51 sources and then started coding. Analysis continued for six months until we both agreed that data saturation was reached and no further information or categories were observed in the data. At this point, there were 22 primary documents. It is interesting to note that our sources of data were all published after 2000, a fact that might reflect the recent and rapid expansion of research in the area of spirituality.

### *Data Analysis*

We followed the NCT model for analyzing the data. We noticed, collected, and thought about the data. This process was not linear, and we moved back and forth between noticing, collecting and thinking (Friese, 2012).

*Noticing* refers to finding interesting things in the data when the academic sources were read through as a whole. Significant statements that contributed to the understanding of spirituality in music education were identified. In Atlas.ti.<sup>77</sup> these are referred to as *quotes*,<sup>8</sup> each with its own identification and name. These significant statements were labeled with meaning units/*codes*<sup>9</sup> in Atlas.ti.<sup>7</sup>

*Collecting* refers to comparing data with previously collected data for similarities and differences. Codes that are conceptually similar are grouped together as categories.<sup>10</sup> The conceptualization took place through co-coding (we both contributed to the code list) and during in-depth Skype meetings between us to discuss broader categories.

*Thinking* was the third stage, when we started to consider how categories fit together and relate to each other and how categories could be integrated to form themes. After data saturation, we decided to follow Hyde’s (2005) suggestion and use Van Manen’s lifeworld existentials (corporeality, relationality, spatiality, and temporality) as guides to reflection to help organize the many quotes, codes, and categories into four themes.

*Thinking* was also facilitated through the creation of network views in Atlas.ti.<sup>7</sup> Five of these network views (core concepts, corporeality, relationality, spatiality, and temporality) are available in the electronic addendum (available at <http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental>). As an example, the category awareness with its codes is illustrated in the following in a network view (Figure 1). The numbers behind the themes and categories refer to the groundedness (amount of quotations) and density (amount of links to other codes, categories, and themes). Networks are connected to the data and help to facilitate qualitative data analysis.

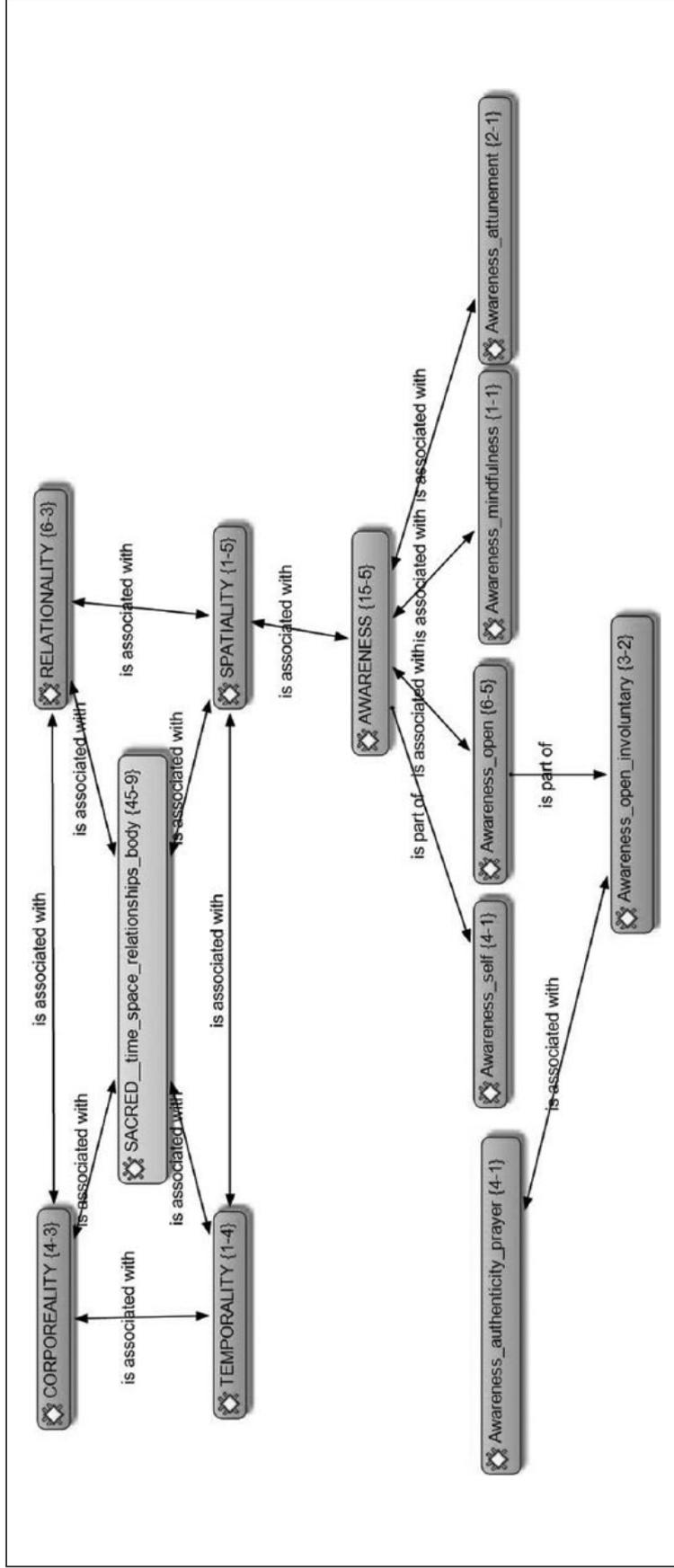
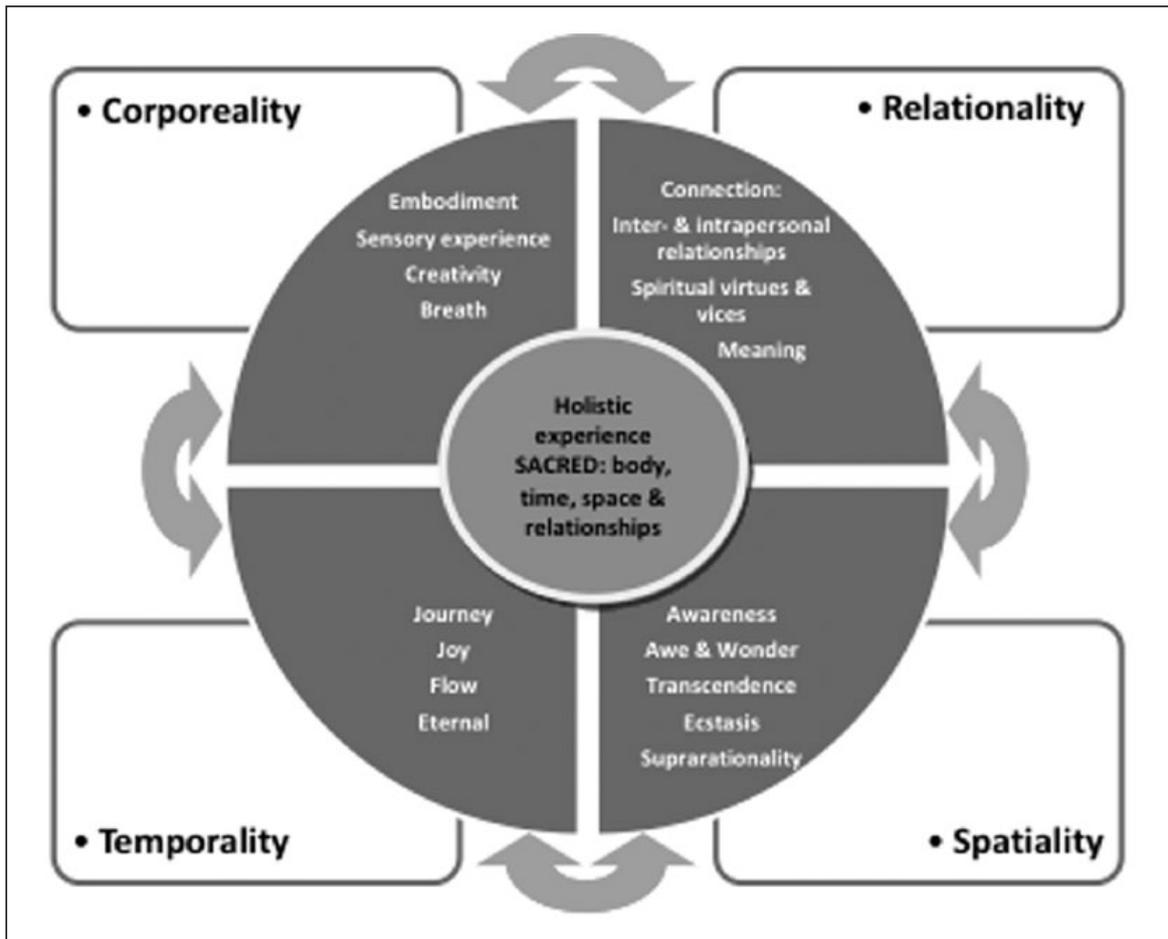


Figure 1. Awareness as a category of spatiality.



**Figure 2.** A hermeneutic phenomenological model for spirituality in music education.

Four validation strategies (Creswell, 2013) were used in this study, namely:

1. prolonged engagement and persistent document analysis;
2. peer review or debriefing—since there are two authors, we continuously played devil’s advocate and questioned each other’s ideas and suggestions;
3. rich thick description of spirituality as described in music education literature;
4. external audits—other researchers, who were not involved in the project, were asked to look critically at this article.

There were no ethical issues in this study since all the data were published academic literature, and the vignettes are our own lived experiences.

## **Explanation of the New Model**

The model that resulted from the process just outlined is displayed in Figure 2. It can be seen as a synthesis of the content of the 22 primary documents in Table A (available

online at <http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental>). We decided to use lifeworld existentials (corporeality, relationality, spatiality, and temporality) (Van Manen, 1990, p. 101) as guides to reflection for this phenomenological model of spirituality in music education. The four lifeworld existentials (Van Manen, 1990) became our themes, and each is shown as a container for a group of categories. For example, the theme corporeality has four categories: embodiment, sensory experience, creativity, and breath.

Each category has its place due to the quotes that correspond to it, and we will give examples of these in the following. The bidirectional arrows emphasize the multidimensional and interconnected nature of spirituality as described in the literature and allow for any one term to be connected to any other. For example, an embodied experience (corporeality) may at the same time be joyful (temporality), transcendent (spatiality), and replete with meaning (relationality). It will become clear that it is difficult, if not impossible, to talk about one lifeworld without implicating one or more of the others because being in the world is always constituted in these four ways.

### *Core Phenomena: Sacred and Holistic Experience*

From the literature, we identified two core phenomena that tie the four lifeworld existentials (corporeality, relationality, spatiality, and temporality) together: music as a holistic experience and music as drawing on body, space, time, and relationships to offer an experience of the sacred. These core phenomena are placed in the center of the model (Figure 2). In terms of holistic experience, there was unanimity within the primary documents that spirituality is an experiential matter, both at the levels of individual and group. Hyde (2008) describes Champagne's view that "spiritual experience is human experience, and that spirituality cannot be dissociated from human experience" (pp. 53–54). Spirituality is also described as an aesthetic (Boyce-Tillman, 2007), musical (Bogdan, 2010), or peak experience (Yob, 2011). Similarly, authors agreed that spirituality is inherently holistic. We are not referring here to "holistic spirituality," that is, a particular type or practice of spirituality (Williamson, 2010, p. 55), but the idea that spiritual experience is multidimensional and may encompass all aspects of human existence. Yob (2010) is typical when she notes that: "mind, body, and soul do not operate in isolation from each other, for in spiritual manifestations the body and mind are likely to be implicated" (p. 147).

Sacred has also been placed in the middle because spirituality "has been called a vehicle for meeting what is sacred" (Albanese, 2001, p. 2). In Beringer's (2000) conceptual analysis of spirituality, it is revealed that the sacred is fundamental to an understanding of spirituality. Williamson (2010) also considers the sacred a key component of spirituality. Sacred, as a category in Atlas.ti 7, had a very high density and groundedness. In other words, sacred had 45 quotes and was linked to all four themes and five other categories.

In the subcategory sacred body, the moving body is seen as "an integrative vessel in which sacred energies flow" (Williamson, 2010, p. 51). Debenham and Debenham (2008) conclude that the sacred is experienced through the moving body. Relating to sacred time, Kraus (2009, p. 52) explains that spirituality is an ongoing journey to

discover one's understanding and experience of the sacred. Aspects of sacred space are, for instance, an extra special attentive focus or spatial delineation (Williamson, 2010) or a manifestation of the divine through wonder (Debenham & Debenham, 2008). Lastly, sacred relationships are characterized by compassion (Debenham & Debenham, 2008) and love (Williamson, 2010). Spirituality is also often described as a connection to self, others, the world, and the transcendent (Hyde, 2005, p. 33). The centrality of these terms serves as a reminder that all the categories in the model may be objects of experience, that all may hypothetically be experienced together—holistically—as aspects of a singular spiritual experience and that spiritual experiences connect us with the sacred, however this is construed for individuals.

### *Corporeality*

Corporeality (Figure B, available online at <http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental>), one of Van Manen's (1990) four lifeworld existentials, includes four categories of corporeality as an expression of spirituality: embodiment, sensory experience, creativity, and breath. Van Manen states "Lived body (corporeality) refers to the phenomenological fact that we are always bodily in the world" (p. 103). That the human body is the locus of experience means all our experiences are embodied. Sensory experience—hearing, touch, movement, and so on—is included here along with processes of cognition because these are inextricably bound up with each other in the embodied mind. As Bowman (2004) notes: "The mind is *not* in the brain, but in the vast network of neural interconnections that exist throughout the body" (p. 36). Human creativity is a function of being embodied and may afford or relate to spiritual experience. Our spiritual experiences may be afforded by and made clear through our awareness of fundamental processes, such as breathing.

We begin with embodiment, one of the four aspects of corporeality. It is through our bodies that all sensation comes and is felt and lived. As Hyde (2005) puts it: "Phenomenologically, human beings are always bodily in the world. It is our way of *being-in-the-world*" (p. 38). For all the authors we studied, although there were differing emphases, the connection of body and spirit was deep and ineluctable. For example, Williamson (2010) tells us that "Hannah (1994:4) writes that the science of somatics 'sees the human spirit as transparently embodied and sees the human body as transparently inspired'" (p. 45). The body is the seat of sensory experience, the second category within corporeality. Logically, this may extend to spiritual experience, a point made by Palmer (2010), who writes: "George Lakoff and Mark Johnson make the case that spiritual experience is embodied, that there is 'no disembodied mind or Soul'" and that since this "experience can only be embodied . . . it must be a consequence of what is happening in our bodies and brains" (p. 162).

Human creativity, a third aspect of corporeality, is dependent on corporeality and through this is connected to embodied spirituality. Boyce-Tillman (2000) tells us that "Philosophers and psychologists have linked creativity to states of ecstasy and transcendence although creativity always involves some bodily action" (p. 91). That is, the spiritual and bodily aspects of creativity are intertwined. Furthermore, "a notion of

transcendence as part of a ‘peak experience’” can be present within the creative process (Boyce-Tillman, 2000, p. 91). Yob (2010) sees the potential of human creativity to express spirituality as significant. If we “begin with the notion of spirituality as a human capacity capable of being expressed in a rich array of religious, semireligious, and non-religious manifestations, we begin to see how productive and creative spirituality is” (p. 148).

Last, spiritual experience may be intimately bound up with its fundamental processes, such as the breath, the last category within corporeality. Breath is linked to spirituality not only etymologically but also culturally; the breath has often been correlated with beliefs about the very essence of life. “Harkening back to Roman civilization, the word spirituality originates from the Latin spiritus: breath. . . . The spirit, like breathing, keeps a person alive” (Freeman, 2002, p. 2). Matsunobu (2011) states that for one of the respondents (Andrew) in his study, the breath is vital “to achieve personal and spiritual maturity through the realization of the ‘ultimate tone’ (called *tettei-on*)” (p. 281). Matsunobu quotes Andrew:

And if you think about sound and nature like rock falling down a hillside or the sound of water, or any of those kinds of things, you realize really how beautiful and how powerful your breath is as a tool of creation. It doesn’t have all those restrictions [of metre and equal temperament]. It can blossom into something that is much more powerful than what the normal music is. (p. 280)

To consider the breath in this way allows Andrew to transcend his own bodily processes and connect himself with the natural world.

In line with the phenomenological nature of our model, we next present a vignette of one of the author’s experiences of music education (a class of Dalcroze Eurhythmics) and discuss it in terms of the theme corporeality. The phrasing exercise that formed the basis of this experience was done in pairs; one person showed in movement the saxophone line and the other the choral texture in a recording of the Hilliard Ensemble’s collaboration with Jan Garbarek (1998).

*Hand on hand*

I am being led, my eyes are closed.

We do not hold hands but my hand rests firmly on hers.

We run and glide, dip and turn.

(This is the nearest I’ve ever been to feeling what a bird must feel.)

The choir intones and the saxophone spins out its line.

Other sensations quickly fade.

My whole being is concentrated in that single point of contact: hand on hand.

I want nothing; all is trust and movement.

I am aware of the space of the entire room,

Right up to the corners beyond my reach.

It seems as if this point of contact—the ever-renewing beginning point of the phrase—can travel anywhere.

As we turn I feel the sun on my face.  
As we soar forward my mouth drops open.  
I am overcome with exhilaration and gratitude.  
All is trust and movement. (Habron, 2009, p. 7)

This experience was a spiritual one for the author. In terms of its corporeal aspects, it is fully embodied (“My whole being”) and involves spontaneous creative responses to the music (“We run and glide, dip and turn”). Senses are mentioned: touch (“I feel the sun on my face”), hearing (“The choir intones”), and the kinesthetic sense (“all is . . . movement”). There is also a connection, via the instrumentation (saxophone, choir), to the breath, as the phrases to which the class responded were dictated by this fundamental attribute of being. As noted previously, accounts such as this encompass elements of all four lifeworlds. In this case, for example, there is also an intimate connection to another person and to the music (relationality), transcendence of the limits of space (spatiality), and a sense of in-the-moment flow (temporality).

### *Relationality*

Relationality (Figure C, available online at <http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental>), as *lived other*, “is the lived relation we maintain with others in the interpersonal space that we share with them” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 104). In our model, relationality refers to the connections that exist between people as well as the relationships between individuals and communities, the natural world, cosmos, and the divine. It also includes the relationship with the self. Through such relationships and connections with others and the absolute Other, meanings are constructed, enacted, and maintained. The categories that will be discussed in this theme are connection, inter- and intrapersonal relationships, meaning, and spiritual virtues and vices (Figure 2).

In this study, connection is one of the categories with the highest density and groundedness. In other words, many significant statements were found in the primary documents, and the meaning labels of these quotes (codes) are linked to many other codes. This might be an indication of the importance of connection in spirituality. According to the Sufi tradition, music is considered to connect us with the universe, the divine, and connect the outer with the inner on all aspects of existence (Bogdan, 2003, p. 83; Palmer, 2010, p. 161). Connections through music with others and the sacred can be a healing and nurturing experience (Boyce-Tillman, 2000; Debenham & Debenham, 2008). Through our connections to other people, we may experience God closer. Spirituality is “generally understood as a personal search to connect with the sacred” (Kraus, 2009, p. 51). Beringer (2000) describes this as a spiritual connection when we unite with the sacred through the physical-material-perceptual world.

An aesthetic musical experience can lead to a spiritual experience or musical spirituality (Bogdan, 2010; Boyce-Tillman, 2000; Carr, 2010; Schoonmaker, 2009), though it need not have this effect. Boyce-Tillman (2000) argues that “In the West, the aesthetic experience is seen by some to be the last remaining spiritual experience” (p. 97).

This is a trend whose origin stretches back at least to nineteenth-century thought, which “elevated the aesthetics of nature to the realm of spiritual enlightenment” (Crawford, 2009, p. 313). Recent empirical research supports the connection between aesthetic and spiritual experience across the life span in terms of music (Juslin, Liljeström, Laukka, Västfjäll, & Lundqvist, 2011) and the natural world (Van Wieren & Kellert, 2013), but the authors in neither piece claim that the one necessarily flows from the other.

Grise-Owens (2011) believes “that spirituality in its fullest sense/potential is both individual and communal” (p. 153). So, it is not only interpersonal but also intrapersonal, and this interconnectedness is ensured by the spiritual virtues “love” (Grise-Owens, 2011, p. 153), “compassion” (Debenham & Debenham, 2008, p. 50), “forgiveness,” and “hope” (Carr, 2010, p. 134). “The unitive nature of the [musical] experience leads to feeling connected with something beyond and outside the self—the wider community of human beings and/or the natural world and/or spiritual beings” (Boyce-Tillman, 2007, p. 1418). Spiritual vices such as hate, fear, pride, and egotism have the opposite effect and do not allow us to transcend ourselves but rather to disconnect from all that is (Carr, 2010).

In music-making and listening experiences, these intrapersonal and interpersonal connections are experienced as deep and have meaning (Freeman, 2002). This conversational relation “allows us to transcend ourselves” and find a sense of purpose and reason for living” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 105) in our relation to the absolute Other, God. Music can facilitate this meaningful transcendence and connection to the Sacred (Palmer, 2010).

The following vignette, written by one of the authors, illustrates how a lived aesthetic musical experience can connect us to each other and God.

We are in the bus with the North-West Youth Orchestra on our way to the annual orchestra festival. The atmosphere is one of excitement. Suddenly, I realize that my conducting scores are left in the trunk of my car. It feels like someone has just poured a bucket of cold water over me. I have never conducted without music! After considering all the possible options, I realize I will have to surrender, pray, trust myself and the orchestra and conduct without music. We start with the *Swan lake* waltz. Our next item is *Schindler's List* for solo violin and orchestra. As Carli, the violinist, steps onto the podium, I step down, towards the orchestra. Standing close to them, I show, by placing fingertips on fingertips, that we should stay connected and remember the tragedy behind the music. As the melancholy bassoon solo started, I felt a calmness coming over me and by the time the soloist entered I experienced a sublime peace. In that moment I realized that everyone in the orchestra was focusing their attention on the same goal. I remember becoming unaware of my movements and rising above time and space to a sacred connectedness with the music and each member in the orchestra. My thoughts were: “Thank you, God for music and for these young musicians who are playing it so passionately.” It was only when the applause broke through that I became aware of where I was. Comments from the audience made me realize that they had noticed what happened on stage. They said “there is such a positive energy” and “we could feel the love you have for each other in the way you played together.”

## Spatiality

Spatiality (Figure D, available online at <http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental>), as *lived space*, is felt space and is always a part of our being in the world. Merleau-Ponty (1962) states that “there would be no space at all for me if I had no body” (p. 117). We experience space through our body (*lived body*), at a specific moment (*lived time*), in relation to something or someone (*lived relationality*). Here again, we see how the four lifeworld existentials are interrelated. The space in which we find ourselves affects the way we feel and the way we experience music (Van Manen, 1990). Yob (2011) even suggests that we move out of the music classroom into different spaces to create opportunities for spiritual experiences. Space is not limited to geometrical and geographical space but can also be metaphysical space that we might experience as the realm of mystery (Hyde, 2005) or transcendence. We might also be longing for another space and through this longing transfer ourselves to an imagined space. This imagined space might help us to facilitate meditation. Nicol (2010) found that music “transformed space in many ways” (p. 360) and can even free one from physical space, time, and body.

In this theme, the categories of our model are awareness, awe and wonder, transcendence, ecstasis, and suprarationality. Each of the categories of spatiality (Figure 2) will now be discussed as it emerged from the primary documents.

Awareness is a way into a spiritual experience because “extra special attentive focus or an extra ordinary temporal or spatial delineation could be considered sacred” (Williamson, 2010, p. 42). When we become aware, present in the moment, or mindful, “we experience the situation, ourselves and others fully” (Debenham & Debenham, 2008, p. 49). Therefore, awareness is a way of connecting to others, ourselves, and divinity (Bogdan, 2003). This authentic relationship with others can even be considered prayer (Lerman, 2008). Attunement to silence can open one to the spiritual power of music (Yob, 2010). This voluntary and involuntary openness creates opportunities for spiritual experiences and is even considered a requirement for transcendence (Palmer, 2010).

Awareness leads to awe and wonder, and wonder draws us closer to an experience (Debenham & Debenham, 2008) to go beyond every day experiences (Hyde, 2008). Therefore “wonder opens the door to sacred transformative experiences” (Debenham & Debenham, 2008, p. 50). Music is indeed a vehicle for this intense wonder because it expresses the human spirit (Palmer, 2010).

Schoonmaker (2009) considers awe and wonder to be part of transcendence, or as some call it, otherworldly states (Williamson, 2010). Yob (2011) and Bogdan (2010) emphasize the importance of preparing for transcendence through silent contemplation in a meditative, peaceful state. Music can facilitate this kind of meditation (Palmer, 2010) and be a meditative practice in itself (Matsunobu, 2011). Carr (2010) explains that music can provide an experience of being lifted “above our everyday cares and concerns” (p. 132). Music is believed to have transcendent powers, and this is often connected to dancing (Boyce-Tillman, 2000). When we are aesthetically moved by music, “encountering the divine momentarily suspends us in time and space and we

transcend the mundane of this life, moved by a higher force to an expanded reality of ourselves and the world” (Debenham & Debenham, 2008, p. 47). Especially in this category, transcendence, it is evident that we do not only transcend space when we are aesthetically moved by music, but we also transcend time, place, and body (Debenham & Debenham, 2008). This can be illustrated by the following lived-experience description of one of the authors and might give us an idea of what it is like to experience transcendence in the context of a spiritual musical experience.

It is 5 am on a freezing winter’s morning and we are standing outside in the dark on parade in our browns. The corporal is angry and frustrated and she is screaming at me and scolding me for who knows what. I cannot make it stop because I am not allowed to respond or leave. I feel trapped and abused. Then I start to listen to the opening of Wagner’s *Tannhäuser* overture in my head and slowly the ranting voice moves to the background and the rich harmonies and the slow tempo fill my being. My heart beat slows down and I am in awe of the beautiful rich harmonies of the winds. I am carried to a better place on the wings of the music and in this state I am unaware of my body, where I am or for how long I am up here. All is calm, peaceful, weightless, timeless and in harmony with God and myself. I am free.

Ecstasis is described as “being seized and transported outside ourselves by pleasure so intense that it seems sometimes almost painful to endure” (Bogdan, 2010, p. 119). The use of spatial terminology (*outside*) here shows that ecstasis relates to the transcendence of space. This can happen when the “‘total form’ of an artistic work” is simultaneously perceived and experienced (Bogdan, 2010, p. 120). Suprarationality also relates to transcendence because our rational understanding is transcended in experiences that are not amenable to description through discursive language, that is, they are beyond logic. In such experiences, “the space . . . entered is a space beyond, or outside of, enlightened thinking—the space of mystery” (Hyde, 2005, p. 38). It is in this domain that spiritual understanding lies (Yob, 2011). Music is a non-discursive medium, which may nevertheless put human emotions into audible form (Boyce-Tillman, 2000). While it is generally considered that music is not a universal language (Nettl, 2005), Matsunobu (2011) claims that “spirituality [is] the universal language of music” (p. 275).

### *Temporality*

Temporality (Figure E, available online at <http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental>) relates to experience in and of time. “Lived time (temporality) is subjective time as opposed to clock time or objective time” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 104). Just as our way of being in the world is always corporeal, relational, and spatial, so it is unavoidably temporal (Van Manen, 1990). This theme includes the notion of journey, which indicates movement through time and space. Joy is linked to temporality, as it points to the emotional quality of the present moment (immanence). Temporality also refers to altered perceptions of time or obliviousness to time. The latter is a characteristic of

*flow*, a term theorized by Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1992) and that also appears in six of the primary documents (Bogdan, 2003, 2010; Boyce-Tillman, 2007; Matsunobu, 2011; Palmer, 2010; Williamson, 2010) of this study. Eternity also features here because it relates to concepts such as timelessness.

To begin with journey, Kraus (2009) states,

Spirituality is a journey to discover something larger than ordinary life. It is a dynamic, ongoing process, which sometimes includes negotiating one's understanding of and experience with the sacred. A spiritual journey can occur within religious institutions or outside these organizations in a variety of small groups, nature, or in one's home. (p. 52)

The element of "ongoing process" places journey firmly within the theme of temporality, and yet this quote also points to the core of our model (the centrality of experience and a relationship to the sacred). Spiritual journeys are also described in terms of endeavor (Grise-Owens, 2011), "an experiential journey inward" (Debenham & Debenham, 2008, p. 44), a "growth journey" (Palmer, 2010, p. 165), and as a trajectory that develops over the life span (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005).

The ideas of growth and development are echoed by Boyce-Tillman (2000), who writes that

Music has, however, elements of both the public and private because its meaning cannot easily be read. It is, therefore, a way of gaining a wider acceptance of painful private areas of human experience. It thus aids the process of maturity. (p. 95)

The possibility of struggle within a spiritual journey that Carr (2010) identifies may also exist alongside the possibility of a journey toward "wholeness and engagement" (Debenham & Debenham, 2008, p. 46).

Joy is also included within temporality. In her discussion of the acquisition of automatic movements (such as are necessary to play an ostinato), in order to give the student the challenge—and pleasure—of adding more spontaneous movements (e.g., an improvised melody), Levitz (2001) notes that "Jaques-Dalcroze himself never allowed this automatization to take the upper hand, always insisting that its ultimate purpose was the release of joy, a feeling of spiritual fulfillment, or the development of personality (Le Rythme 97)." In this way, joy is described as a process, happening over time. Joy may also affect our experience of time passing: "The phenomenological understanding of time refers to a time that seems to speed up in enjoyment and slow down in periods of boredom or anxiousness" (Hyde, 2005, p. 40).

The notions of fulfillment through challenge and the seeming alteration of time through joy are both aspects of the psychological state of flow. Flow experiences have been extensively theorized by Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1992), who consider them as "peaks of involvement that produce intense feelings of enjoyment and creativity" (p. 95). Flow is discussed in relation to music education by Custodero (2005) as well as Elliott (1995), who writes, "Dynamic musical practices provide the conditions necessary to attain optimal experience, 'flow,' or enjoyment . . . [and]

frequently include a loss of self-consciousness” (pp. 116–117). Bogdan (2003), in linking flow with spiritual experience, notes that another of flow’s characteristics is the dissolution of dualities, “in which there is little distinction between self and environment, between stimulus and response, or between past, present, and future” (Csikszentmihalyi cited in Turner, cited in Bogdan, 2003, p. 86).

The notion of the eternal features prominently in Yob’s (2011) work, where she links it to the awareness of one’s own limitations: “I glimpsed the eternal and, although sensing my own limitations, knew that infinity was hospitable and safe” (p. 43). Eternality has been defined as “proper to an entity identifiable as a mind or a person . . . but existing beginninglessly, endlessly and timelessly” (Stump & Kretzmann, 2000, p. 255). Thus, a seemingly atemporal concept may exist in a dialectic relationship to temporality. For example, as Wittgenstein (1961) put it, “If we take eternity to mean not infinite temporal duration but timelessness, then eternal life belongs to those who live in the present” (p. 72). In the realm of music education, Palmer (2010) claims that spiritual understanding “can only come when intense listening or performing allows one to fully inhabit the moment without regard for past or future” (p. 166).

In order to illustrate the temporal aspects of spiritual experience within music education, what follows is a vignette of a rehearsal that took place during the postgraduate study of one of the authors. He played in an improvisation collective with other composition students who were also multi-instrumentalists. They always used their voices, but never with words.

From tentative beginnings the music grows. The oud adds a groove to the toy piano’s single notes. Quietly, a voice enters. This draws me in and I sing a line in a different register. More voices. All four of us are now playing and singing, all open vowels. Loud. I travel from bass to falsetto. The double bass throbs out a pulse and the cello echoes. We turn our focus to our instruments. Tremolos, percussive pizzicati, lots of rising gestures. Very high repeated sounds counterpointed against wooden percussion. . . .

. . . We have no idea where we are going and yet we play with the utmost conviction. Each moment is a now, and I am not aware of past or future. The sort of analytical frame of mind that stands back and compares one moment with another is absent.

We sit in a circle. As usual, I spend most of the session with my eyes closed. My ears guide me. A sense of facing forward and looking ahead in one direction is replaced with a sense of listening to, and projecting, sound all around. Sounds enter me and carry me. I make no distinction between the music and myself.

Time stands still. I feel a sense of profound happiness and belonging, as if this and this alone is what I was put on earth to do. I do not want the music to stop, especially when we are in full voice. In these sections unpremeditated sounds leave our mouths and we speak a tongue that exists in the present only; it recalls nothing, it names nothing and it predicts nothing. The immense energy that we feel in each other’s contributions is immense and this provokes us to vocalize in ways that shift and swerve continually.

The music changes and gradually fades. When we do eventually fall silent, we wait for a few moments then check the recording equipment. We have been improvising for 55 minutes.

The notion of journey is present (“where we are going”), as is the joyful emotion of “profound happiness.” The experience of improvisation as processual and ongoing can be interpreted as a flow state (“Sounds enter me and carry me”). The lived experience of time shifts (“Time stands still”) and the sensation of each moment as a “now” begins to diffuse notions of before and after. A sense of eternality is therefore present, and this is also echoed in the glossolalia-like vocalizations that do not use grammar or the concomitant notion of tenses. It is, perhaps, even reflected symbolically in the circle in which the group sat.

## Implications

We envisage that this model has many potential applications for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. The following suggestions are not exhaustive. For researchers, our model could support qualitative studies into spirituality in music education that use a variety of strategies of inquiry: grounded theory, narrative research, ethnography, phenomenology, and case study. In particular, it could help to describe and explain the lived experiences of learners and teachers. The model could also be used in conceptual studies that investigate document sources, such as the writings of music pedagogues. Philosophical essays and literature reviews could also be based on or structured around the model. Finally, it could support studies in other fields of music research that consider issues of spirituality, such as music therapy (Potvin, 2013), ethnomusicology (Keister, 2008; Matsunobu, 2011), and music psychology (Ahmadi, 2013). Interdisciplinary studies based on the model and carried out between music education researchers and those in any or all of these disciplines are therefore also a possibility.

For practitioners (e.g., teachers, lecturers, conductors, etc.), our conceptual model could be used to develop sensitivity to and holistic awareness of the potential for spirituality in their own and their students’ experiences. This potential is important since spirituality itself has been shown to be a determinant of well-being. Wills (2009) concluded that

Well-being is not as much associated with feeling instant pleasure but more with a virtuous exercise of competences and skills of the individual. In this sense, satisfaction with spirituality . . . may also help to understand how people relate better with others. (p. 65)

The results of another empirical study ([AQ: 1] Van Dierendonck, 2012) prompted the author to state “spirituality may provide an extra psychological dimension for people to live the good life” (p. 697).

To facilitate such possibilities of sensitivity among practitioners, our model could be discussed in teacher training to foster awareness of time, space, body, and relationship

and their combined potential for spiritual well-being within music education contexts. This in turn might prompt practitioners to consider activities that relate to all four of the themes. For example, Yob (2011) suggests that

If a particular space and time can help a listener or performer access deeper meanings in music, then music educators may want to consider exposing their learners to different venues and occasions in which to encounter music of their own or other's making. (p. 46)

Out-of-the-classroom learning, the use of imaginary spaces (“Imagine you are on top of a high mountain and sing that again”), and changing the look or feel of teaching spaces could all be practical ways to draw on the potential of spatiality. To create opportunities for group creativity, vocal work and physical contact between students, such as in Orff or Dalcroze Eurhythmics classes, might enhance a sense of relationality and corporeality. And the many facets of music's temporal image (Begbie, 2000; Brubaker, Decroupet, Delaere, London, & Pace, 2009; Hatten, 2006; Lippmann, 1999, pp. 40–64; Monelle, 2000, pp. 81–114) provide readymade opportunities for altered experiences of temporality through activities such as deep listening (Oliveros, 2005), performance, and improvisation. In all these examples, the themes and categories could therefore provide vocabulary for use in practical music education contexts, for example: “Let's stay connected in this section” (relationality), “Allow yourself to be aware of all your feelings and sensations as we listen” (corporeality), “If your composition were a journey, where would you want to take it next?” (temporality), and “Imagine your sound touching all the corners of the room” (spatiality).

In terms of policymaking, we argue that our results confirm the place of spirituality in existing music education policy (NAfME, 2011) and national music curricula, such as those in South Africa (Department of Basic Education, 2011) and England (Department for Education, 2011). The holism of our model and its foundation on experience, especially when supported by the literature that connects spirituality to well-being ([AQ: 2] Fisher, 2007; [AQ: 3] Van Dierendonck, 2012; Wills, 2009), may therefore support advocacy for the value of music education itself. At a time when music as a subject in secondary education is under threat in England (ISM, 2013a, 2013b), such advocacy is crucial.

Since this is a hermeneutic phenomenological model, it does not attempt to offer an all-encompassing theory, but rather a literature-based theoretical framework that offers us possible insights that in turn may “bring us into more direct contact with the world” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 9). It is an attempt to “bring to speech” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 20) our reflective understanding, as a textual expression, of the essence of spirituality in music education. Yob (2011) states that “If we knew what spirituality was, we would teach for it.” Schoonmaker (2009) on the other hand concludes that educators need to become aware of the inherent spirituality in each learner. Therefore, given that spiritual experience is personal, the model does not present criteria for, or a definition of, spirituality in music education.

We hope that this model will provide a working and open conceptualization for future research into spiritual lived experiences in music education and that it will be

discussed, adapted, and refined as more research is done and further insights are developed. We also hope that it may offer support for those who advocate for music education. Finally, we hope that it might afford to practitioners awareness of and sensitivity toward such spiritual experience and in so doing contribute to “pedagogic thoughtfulness and tact” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 143). Therefore, we would like to rephrase Yob’s title (2011) as our final thought: If we knew what spirituality was, we would be aware of it.

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### Notes

1. Themes contain categories and are the broadest conceptual groupings. “Themes give control and order to our research and writing” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 79). Themes are the focus or simplification to make sense of a phenomenon (Van Manen, 1990).
2. As Creswell (2014), we chose the term *worldview* as meaning a philosophical orientation to research that leads actions.
3. Creswell (2009) names three types of designs, namely, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods.
4. “Hermeneutic phenomenology is consequently the study of experience together with its meanings” (Friesen, Henriksson, & Saevi, 2012). Allen (1995) describes hermeneutic phenomenology as non-foundationalist, as it emphasizes meaning that results from the interpretative relations between historically generated texts and the reader.
5. According to Merriam (2009), *theoretical framework* and *conceptual framework* are terms that can be used interchangeably. The theoretical framework “is the body of literature, the disciplinary orientation that you draw upon to situate your study” (Merriam, 2009, p. 68).
6. Creswell (2009) refers to *strategies of inquiry*, but in (2013) he calls these *approaches* and in (2014) he calls them *designs*. We chose the term *strategy of inquiry* since other authors such as Denzin and Lincoln (2011) also use this terminology. All these terms refer to *types* of qualitative studies (Merriam, 2009), such as case study, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative, and phenomenology. Document analysis is a strategy of inquiry in qualitative research.
7. ATLAS.ti.7 is a useful tool to organize qualitative data and support the process of qualitative data analysis. It is a type of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS).
8. Quotes are “marked data segments that have a clearly defined start and end point” (Friesen, 2012, p. 22). Quotes are usually when one notices interesting things in the data (Friesen, 2012).

9. “Keywords that are generally linked to quotations” (Friese, 2012, p. 21). Codes are meaning labels that describes and conceptualize the data segments. “The process of coding involves aggregating the text or visual data into small categories of information, seeking evidence for the code from different databases being used in a study, and then assigning a label to a code” (Creswell, 2013, p. 184).
10. Categories “are broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea” (Creswell, 2013, p. 186).

## Supplemental Material

The online table and figures are available at <http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental>.

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