



Australia and New Zealand Association for Research in Music Education

Recovering, reconnecting and re-emerging

2023 Online Conference Abstracts

All conference abstracts have been double-blind peer reviewed

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Title: A Look Across Two American Universities: Preservice Elementary Teachers' Comfort with Music Integration

Presenters: Amorette Languell, Northern Michigan University, USA and Jennifer Gee, San Diego State University, USA

Abstract

Music methods courses are common components in many teacher education curricula and play an important role in teacher licensure for preservice elementary education majors (Battersby & Cave, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2006). Integrated music education promotes authentic interdisciplinary connections between music and other subjects, addressing standards in multiple disciplines at a time (e.g., Bresler, 1995). Interdisciplinary knowledge and activities between music and non-music subjects offer ways to enhance student understanding and engagement, promote abstract thinking, foster critical thinking skills, and students demonstrate gains in attitude, behavior, and attendance (e.g., Barrett, McCoy, & Veblen, 1997; Harney, 2020). The purpose of this study was to examine elementary preservice teachers' perceptions of and level of comfort with music and music integration in the elementary classroom across their participation in a music integration course at two different American universities.

The music integration courses took place over a 16-week semester in the Fall 2022 semester. Our course outcomes focused on: (1) applying musical ideas to a K-6 classroom; (2) infusing melody, rhythm, harmony, and form into other core subject experiences; and (3) designing appropriate elementary lesson plans for peer teaching episodes to hone music and music integration skills. Utilizing an author developed questionnaire, we surveyed participants (n = 44) three times during the semester. Surveys ranged from 5-12 multiple choice or Likert-type questions with two open-ended responses. Participants also taught their integrated lesson plans, submitting a teaching reflection for analysis.

Survey results indicate a wide range of musical backgrounds among participants, positive changes in outlook and expectations of frequency of integration in their future classrooms, and feelings of increased preparedness, comfort, and confidence regarding how to integrate music into their classrooms. Participants also comment on their areas of improvement throughout the semester and denote their surprise at their enjoyment in the class, content, and their peer teaching experience.

Title: Perceptions of Rapport and the Instructional Behaviour of Preservice Music Teachers

Presenters: Nicholas Matherne, University of Melbourne, Australia, and Jennifer Blackwell, Northwestern University, USA

Abstract

The relationship between teachers and students is inherently interpersonal (Dobrasky & Frymier, 2004) where both teachers and students have relational goals. Additionally, students have reported that rapport is an essential characteristic of effective teachers (Catt et al., 2007; Faranda & Clarke, 2004). However, relatively little is known about how rapport develops in preservice music teachers. The purpose of this study was to investigate relationships between perceptions of rapport and teaching behaviors in a beginning band setting. Research questions included:

1. What teaching behaviors are observed in the teaching of preservice teachers who rate highly on a measure of perceived rapport?
2. To what degree are observable behaviors associated with rapport evident in the teaching of preservice teachers?
3. How do teacher perceptions of rapport compare to student perceptions of rapport?

We analyzed lesson videos of pre-service teachers for interpersonal and instructional behavior and created a qualitative contextual narrative characterizing each of the videos. The high school students and preservice teachers also completed a modified measure of student-teacher rapport (Frisby & Martin, 2010). Previous studies using this rapport measure (e.g. Gremler & Gwinner, 2000) reported notably lower mean scores ($M = 39.70$, $SD = 14.88$) than the present study (preservice teachers, $M = 60.1$, $SD = 6.61$; high school students, $M = 54.58$, $SD = 2.27$). Additionally, all but one of the preservice teachers reported higher scores on this measure than the high school students.

The contextual narratives of lessons with the highest perceived rapport scores were characterized by explicit goals, clear identification of progress, and a positive, confident teacher demeanor. Behavioral analysis suggests that the quality of behaviors was more important than the frequency of specific behaviors. Results suggest that the opportunity to develop relational teaching practices in music teacher education might help to develop the skill to foster rapport.

Title: Arts Integration Across the Elementary Curriculum: Administrator Perspectives

Presenters: Amorette Languell, Northern Michigan University, USA, Kristin Harney, Montana State University, USA and Daniel Johnson, University of North Carolina Wilmington

Abstract

Administrators play a vital role shaping the curricular goals of a school or district. Consequently, administrators' perspectives related to integrated arts education (IAE) influence the support that elementary classroom teachers and arts specialists receive. Although there has been considerable research concerning arts integration, especially studies exploring pre-service and in-service K-8 classroom teachers' perspectives on music integration (e.g., Battersby & Cave, 2014; Hash, 2010) and the impact of methods courses and professional development experiences on participants' perceptions about arts integration (e.g., Siebenaler, 2006; Zhou & Kim, 2010), researchers have not attempted to determine the extent to which arts integration is valued or understood by administrators. Examining administrators' perceptions about arts integration is an important step toward advancing meaningful arts integration by K-5 classroom teachers and arts specialists in the United States.

We selected a convergent mixed-methods design, specifically utilizing the questionnaire variant model (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). We collected quantitative and open-ended survey data simultaneously, then conducted follow-up interviews to supplement our qualitative data set. Our participants (n=128) represented all six NAFME regions in the USA. We first utilized descriptive statistics to analyse demographic information, other participant characteristics, and to analyse responses to Likert-type survey items. Additionally, we utilized Spearman's rho and the Wilcoxon signed ranks test to identify relationships and significant differences between variables, respectively.

Although 40% of administrators reported no formal training in the arts and 60% were unfamiliar with arts curriculum standards, the vast majority expressed their support for IAE initiatives under ideal circumstances. Reports of actual arts integration occurring in administrators' districts were significantly lower than their expressed ideals. While administrators appear to support IAE in theory, they need resources, strategies, and motivation to effectively promote its inclusion in the K-5 curriculum and provide the support that elementary classroom teachers and arts specialists receive.

Title: Developing online professional learning modules for primary music

Presenter: Emily Wilson, University of Melbourne, Australia

Abstract

Developing asynchronous online professional learning materials for primary school music in a way that supports the needs of both generalist classroom teachers and new music specialists is a complicated exercise. Professional learning materials have to be necessarily broad to accommodate the needs and contexts of teachers across a broad range of cultural and geographical (urban, rural and regional) backgrounds. This need for flexibility must be balanced with a specificity that is actually useful for teachers in guiding their practice and building their confidence and capacity to use music in their classrooms. This presentation discusses a project currently being undertaken in Victoria to develop online professional learning modules for primary teachers. Using self-study methodology (Samaras, 2011) and reflective practice methods, this presentation discusses the approach taken to develop the online professional learning modules. In keeping with self-study methodology, a personal situated inquiry was undertaken to generate and deepen understanding and insights into how the professional learning modules are being developed. The following emerging findings are discussed: flexibility in supporting the needs of generalists and specialists, developing confidence and capacity to teach primary music through asynchronous online professional learning and foregrounding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures through music.

Title: The well-being of early-career generalists and specialists teaching music in Australian primary schools: A literature review

Presenter: Han Meng (student), Edith Cowan University, Australia

Abstract

Ensuring the wellbeing of early-career teachers is crucial for maintaining a strong workforce and facilitating the delivery of music education in Australian primary schools. This study aims to assess the wellbeing of early-career teachers who teach primary school music using the PERMAH model, identify factors influencing their wellbeing, and develop strategies to support them. The research will be conducted in three phases using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods research design. The first phase involves collecting perspectives on wellbeing through an online national survey from at least 100 teachers who teach primary school music in Australian schools. In the second phase, 21 teachers will be selected for one-on-one 45-60-minute semi-structured online interviews based on their roles, diverse teaching backgrounds and contrasting survey responses to capture individual teacher stories. The final phase will analyse and discuss the combined survey and interview outcomes in relation to existing literature in the field. The study is currently in the planning stage, and no data has been collected as of now. The presentation will primarily concentrate on conducting a literature review and providing an introduction to the research methodology.

Title: Developing the inclusive practice of school music teachers to enhance wellbeing of students with disabilities: initial research findings

Presenters:

Associate Professor Louise Jenkins and Associate Professor Renée Crawford, Monash University, Australia, Oskar Bleeker, Shelford Girls' Grammar, Australia and Priya Wilson, Alphington Grammar School, Australia

Abstract

In 2022 the authors reported an important finding from the investigation of the critical literature relating to working with Students with Disabilities (SWDs) in school classroom music. Despite an existing abundance of research about inclusive approaches in school classrooms, there is still a significant gap in the knowledge about ways to support SWDs in school music programs and classroom music. Our recommendation was that more extensive school-based research be implemented to identify crucial future directions and inclusive teaching practices for school music teachers.

This presentation in 2023 will report on the initial findings from the second stage of the research which is an ongoing case study in a Melbourne independent P-12 school. The authors wanted to explore if the music teachers were implementing inclusive SWD practices in the school music program and if so, how this impacted students' wellbeing. An online anonymous survey with open and closed questions was implemented with 19 students who had major roles in the school musical production, including SWDs and non-SWDs. Semi-structured individual interviews were completed with 3 classroom music teachers about their inclusive practices and the perceived impact of these practices on their students' wellbeing. Classroom observations were made of two classroom music teachers' inclusive practices with SWDs.

The most significant initial finding, whilst acknowledging the small number of student participants, indicates that participation in a school musical production positively impacts students' wellbeing and nurtures connection with other students. The music teachers also observed that some SWDs, whilst finding the rehearsal process very challenging, were unexpectedly able to manage the complex and noisy musical context during the public performance. The early recommendation is for more extensive investigation to be implemented across school music programs to broaden the understanding of how musical productions impact SWDs and whether this early finding is observed more widely.

Title: Music and Science: improving student engagement through Art and Electronics

Presenter: Christian de Sá Quimelli, University of Waikato, New Zealand

Abstract

Student engagement in Brazilian classrooms is a matter of concern in the post-pandemic setting in a country that spent almost two years in lockdown and had one of the highest fatality rates from Covid-19 in the world. My research proposed the use of the exotic instrument, the Theremin, to increase the engagement of these students in Science and Art. The Theremin was the first electronic instrument created that is played without physical contact. Its execution is achieved by waving the player's hands in the air near its antennas, creating a direct link with image, gesture, and sound. This instrument's sonority became known as the eerie and spooky sounds from the sci-fi and horror movies from the '40s-'50s. Using this instrument, twelve encounters were held with four classes of 20 students between 13-15 years old. During the first round of workshops, the students interacted with the instrument through activities such as free exploration, storytelling, and dialogue between Theremins, and composed their own music using alternative music notation. The second stage consisted of an electronics workshop, where students built an optical theremin based on peer-to-peer teaching and learning. Data collection was carried out before, during, and after the workshops. This consisted of interviews with the Arts and Science teachers, and focus groups with students. I also kept a reflective journal throughout the data collection period. I use grounded theory to guide my encoding and processing of data to identify and conceptualise different ways that the interdisciplinary programme of science and art enhanced student engagement. This research is currently in the data analysis stage.

Title: Body Percussion Activities and Student Engagement Among Malaysian and Korean Students in a Music Workshop: A Case Study

Presenter: Edna Wellington, SEGi University, Kota Damansara, Selangor, Malaysia

Abstract

Student engagement has gained global interest in the field of music education through the power of musical instruction and one of the ways that is gaining popularity in a Malaysian context is through body percussion activities. Body percussion is a type of imitative percussion behaviour that uses one's body as a percussion instrument to create rhythms through clapping, snapping, stomping, and more. Even though recent studies have indicated that students are more engaged by informal styles of musical instruction (Evans, Beauchamp & John, 2015), there is still a lack of studies on the potentials of using body percussion activities among university students from different cultural backgrounds to enhance student engagement. As using body percussion as a musical instruction was a new experience for these students from two different countries, a case study inquiry was conducted to generate a deeper understanding of how and why body percussion music activities can impact student engagement from diverse cultures.

A total of fourteen Korean and seventeen Malaysian students between the ages of 19-21 years attending the Early Childhood Education Summer Up-Skill Programme participated in the workshop. To gain insights of this study, multiple data collection methods were utilised. The researcher collected data through observation of activities in action, video recordings and document analysis from the workshop. The data was analysed across the cognitive, affective, and behavioural engagement domains. Four themes that emerged from the combination of these engagement domains and the power of using body percussion activities as a musical instruction is encouraging "communication" through participation in group activities, "collaboratively" working together on a task, building "social relationships" beyond cultural boundaries, and demonstrating "empathy" by engaging with compassionate actions. This study could further predict future directions in music education by providing new insights to curriculum planners, administrators, and teachers in the post pandemic era.

Title: Transforming identities: Positive ageing through a program of piano lessons in residential aged care

Presenter: Ellina Zipman, Monash University, Australia

Abstract

Older adults in residential aged care facilities are often marginalised and lose their sense of identity. Finding solutions to assist residents of care facilities maintain their sense of self is essential to encourage them to age positively. This paper reports on two longitudinal case studies, conducted as a part of a PhD project exploring the music learning experiences of two residents of aged care facilities. The case studies examined 90-year-old Jay and 80-year-old Herbert's participation in 12-months program of regular piano lessons taught by the researcher. Using a qualitative case study methodology, the research investigated the impact piano lessons had on Jay and Herbert's quality of life. Collected data included video recordings of piano lessons, interviews, emails, reflective journal, and phone conversations. Nvivo software assisted with identifications of themes, which included passion for music, desire to learn, self-efficacy and wellbeing among others. The data was analysed utilising PERMA wellbeing model (**P**ositive emotions, **E**ngagement, **R**elationships, **M**eaning and **A**ccomplishments) and Bandura's sources of self-efficacy.

This study provided evidence that systematic engagement in music learning and music-making creates new realities for older adults, transforms their identities and contributes to a meaningful life. The study demonstrated that long-term participation in activities of choice (in this case piano playing) offers a solution to engage residents in care facilities based on things they are passionate about, linking them socially, building relationships with other people, and creating a sense of belonging. Since the aged care homes are unlikely places for formal learning and since older adults, especially in residential care, are not considered likely candidates for learning, this research opens the door for innovative thinking about where and to whom educational programs can be delivered. By addressing the educational needs of residents in aged care facilities, this study contributed to the under-researched field of fourth age learners.

Title: The Maltese Band Club School of Music as a recovering, reconnecting, and re-emerging communal hub

Presenter: Jes Grixti (student), Western Sydney University, Australia

Abstract

The paper explores the recovery, reconnecting, and re-emerging of the Maltese Band Club School of Music (BCSoM), a community-based non-profit organization providing free music lessons. The study examines the club's role as a community hub and the instrumental pedagogy employed by its instructors. The research uses a qualitative methodology, including ethnography, narrative inquiry, and semi-structured interviews, to analyse data and present information. The researcher, acting as a participant observer and interviewer, respects the territory, domain, and practice of the participants, ensuring a respectful and effective study.

Research Questions

1. Recovering: Has the BCSoM recovered from the COVID-19 aftermath? This will look at the practice before, during, and after COVID-19. It aims to provide a current snapshot of the situation. [Practice]
2. Reconnecting: Has the BCSoM reconnected with its bandsmen, members, supporters, and the larger community? This will look at the 2023 calendar of events and evaluate participation and comradeship. [Participation]
3. Re-emerging: What kind of re-emerging force is in place? Hence, taking context seriously Tradition creates context, but context also dictates tradition. Consequently, tradition vis-à-vis new possibilities and ideas [Possibilities].

Ethics was approved by Western Sydney University Ethic Committee and participants were of consenting age. The communication with participants was via social media apps and face-to-face colloquia.

Findings:

The participant group in the study embraced diversity, inclusivity, and musical comradeship, leading to personal growth and confidence. The BCSoM has recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic by reverting to pre-pandemic teaching and organizing traditional events more intensified. Re-emerging factors, such as technology and environmentally friendly practices, are open for interpretation. However, limitations exist due to the socio-political-religious trichotomy of Maltese society and the voluntary nature of institutions with limited financial resources and professional management.