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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to give potentially pertinent information and ideas for the development of a model and of hypotheses that are relevant in terms of combining the areas of self-concept and creativity. Selected sources from the areas of psychology, education, and music education are presented as the basis for ideas and thoughts for further research. The ideas in this paper focus on a review of selected self-esteem studies and models. Apparently, many self-esteem inquiries have been highly selective in studying certain variables and factors that teachers and psychologists seem to recognize as being linked closely in the process of human thinking. These factors include creativity and motivation among others. The impetus for presenting thoughts on self-esteem and creativity is an interest fostered by recent publications and presentations on creativity in music education and sources in self esteem, attitudes, and motivation in music education. Areas discussed include achievement, gifted and self-esteem, validation of self-esteem, failure and self-concept, experimental studies, self-concept and music, and creativity and self-concept. Among numerous variables reported in the literature, the following are some that have been studied as causal or interactive factors in self-esteem: (1) academic achievement; (2) elementary, adolescent, and adult ages; (3) music; (4) self-esteem training seminars; (5) body shape; (6) careers; (7) clothing; (8) chemical dependency; (9) delinquency; (10) family; (11) extracurricular activities; (12) health; (13) occupation: (14) peer acceptance; (15) sports participation; (16) giftedness; (17) birth order; (18) success or failure; (19) race; and (20) cultural aspects. A model and related hypotheses are given. Contains 72 references. (DK)

Self-Esteem, Creativity, and Music:

Implications and Directions for Research

Sherman VanderArk

Self-Esteem, Creativity, and Music: Implications and Directions for Research

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This presentation seeks to give potentially pertinent information and ideas for the development of a model and of hypotheses which are relevant in terms of combining the areas of self-concept and creativity. Selected sources from the areas of psychology, education, and music education are presented as the basis for ideas and thoughts for further research.

The ideas in this paper focus on a review of selected self-esteem studies and models. Apparently, many self-esteem inquiries have been highly selective in studying certain variables and factors which teachers and psychologists seem to recognize as being closely linked in the process of human thinking. These factors include creativity and motivation among others. The impetus for presenting thoughts on self-esteem and creativity is an interest fostered by recent publications and presentations on creativity in music education (Webster, 1988a, 1988b; Asmus, 1986; Asmus and Harrison, 1988; Baltzer, 1988) and sources in self-esteem, attitudes and motivation in music education (Wink, 1970; VanderArk et al., 1980; Nolin and VanderArk, 1977; Asmus, 1986, 1988; Austin, 1988).

The study of self-concept has been the subject of many research studies. Self-concept is believed to be a critical aspect of a person's academic and personal success. Coopersmith said:

> By self-esteem we refer to the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself. It expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful, worthy. In short, self-esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds toward himself (Coopersmith, 1967, pp. 4-5).

The research on self-esteem has used several terms synonymously or in place of self-esteem to connote slightly different qualities of self. Representations of these terms are found in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Selected Terms Used to Denote Self-Concept

Assertiveness	Self-definition
Autonomy	Self-fulfillment

Figure 1, con't.

Confidence/degrees	Self-identity
Emotional autonomy	Self-discontent
Identity formation process	Personal worth
Personal meaning	Self-attribution
Identity status	Self-actualization
Competence	Feeling good about oneself
Ego-identity	Self-schemes
Self-focusing	Individuation
Self-satisfaction	Social self-esteem
Self-esteem	Self-concept
Self-image	Self-awareness
Self	

In one of many approaches to defining the term, Gottfredson (1985) wrote:

> It is useful to think of the self-concept in terms of two major dimensions: identities and self-esteem. Identities refer to the content of one's perceptions and beliefs about oneself. Self-esteem refers to how one evaluates or feels about oneself (p. 158).

Self-concept has been defined by others as one's "attitudes, feelings and knowledge about our abilities, skills, appearance, and social acceptability" (Jersild, 1965, p. 429). Epstein (1973) has an extensive review of theoretical ideas and definitions in self-esteem.

Models of Self-Esteem

Another area of definition and corresponding research involves structural and theoretical models of self-concept and studies to investigate these models. A model receiving much attention in the literature was proposed by Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (197) and is called the hierarchical model. This model shows that self-perceptions are based on interactions with significant others, self-attributes, and a total interaction with social environment. These

interactions in turn develop a hierarchy in areas of academic discipline (English, history, math, science), a total academic self-concept, and finally make inferences about general self-concept.

A second model was given by Soares and Soares (1983) as the nomothetic model in which self-concept is seen as an "unidimensional construct" which can explain a person's behavior in various situations. A third model is called the taxonomic model by Soares and Soares (1983). In this framework, self-concept is a series of several specific variables.

A fourth model was given by Winne and Marx (1981). This is the compensatory model and gives a similar structure to the hierarchical and taxonomic models but proposes that the specific aspects of self-concept are inversely related rather than related in proportions or independent in function. For example, Winne and Marx (1981) found that less successful students in academics saw themselves as more successful in physical and social aspects of self-concept and students who saw themselves as more successful in social and physical areas were less successful on the academic part of self-concept.

Achievement

Much research has been done on the proposed relationship between numerous and various measures of achievement or performance and self-concept. These variables were surveyed and studied through a meta-analysis by Hansford and Hattie (1982). Hansford and Hattie found that areas of achievement varied from study to study as relating to self-concept. Therefore, they took data from over 100 studies and subjected these data to meta correlations. This study found a range in self-ratings and performance measures between -.77 to .96 with an "average" correlation of .21. Other studies exist which show higher positive correlation between a specific achievement or performance area and self-concept development (Maruyama et al., 1981).

Gifted and Self-Esteem

Studies on self-esteem and the intellectually gifted have found both higher self-concept scores for the gifted (Maddux et al., 1982) and self-esteem scores which were no different from those of the non-gifted (Tidwell, 1980). These represent the anomalous state of results of numerous other studies dealing with the gifted and self-esteem.

Validation of Self-Esteem

Another major area in the research literature of self-concept is that of validation techniques for measuring self-concept. Byrne (1984) divides construct validation research into "within network studies" which examine the internal structure of self-concept and "between network studies" which examine the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement.

The research literature shows that a major problem in the study of self-concept is that

there are many different tests. Some of these tests have been used for several studies and others have been developed for use in one study. A survey by the writer found that, for most tests in research articles developing their own tests, the test is not given in the articles or available from the authors. Thus, self-concept research has, according to Byrne, no "clear, concise, and universally accepted operational definition of self-concept" (Byrne, 1984, p. 429). Nor does self-concept research have an instrument which measures a similar consistent, clear meaning of self-concept. According to Byrne, no one model or test has sufficient empirical evidence to claim support for a valid, internal structure of self-concept measurement. Validity is assumed in many reports with little data available for empirical validity. Reliability scores, when given, range from moderate to moderately high correlations.

Failure and Self-Concept

Perhaps the most easily understood studies in self-esteem and those which have the most consistent results show that continued failures of certain individuals with a low self-esteem affect their self-esteem development. These studies have found that repeated failures bring about lower self-esteem which lowers a student's estimate of his ability. This, in turn promotes a continued lowering of the low self-esteem individual's expectations for success. Students see themselves as helpless and become involved in blaming their native ability. It appears that failure results from a student's belief that he is helpless because of low ability through often repeated failures. Excuses and inaction become a self-protective means for the low self-esteem student to support his repeated failures (Covington & Omelich, 1981; Campbell & Fairey, 1985). In contrast to the low self-esteem student's perceiving lack of success, the high self-esteem student repeats success through efforts resulting in internalized feelings of praise (Frieze & Snyder, 1980; Russell & McAuley, 1986).

Experimental Studies

Several control-experimental group studies have been made of attempts to raise the level of self-esteem in various types of children and students. A review by Gurney (1987) gives the results of effects of remedial reading programs and other special programs on school-age children. These programs ranged in length from six weeks to two years. The results showed that significant, positive changes in self-esteem resulted from most of the special programs. McMillan (1980) and Bockoven and Morse (1986) examined the effects of special psychological and social skills programs on the self-esteem of alienated students and found that the students in these special programs, given in a 15 and 16 week period, had significantly higher self-esteem scores than the control groups.

Self-Concept and Music

Music is believed to affect one's well-being, feelings of security, tender emotions, and feelings of self--self-confidence, self-worth, and self-esteem. Many writers have indicated that music is unique as a self-esteem builder, and is based on the idea that music is the only non-verbal, aural form of communication of the human organism (Abeles et al, 1984; Bessom et

al., 1974; Rodocy and Boyd, 1979; Gaston, 1968). Man has used and continues to use music as a form of entertainment and for many functional purposes in modern times, including dancing, mother's lullaby, worship of a higher deity, concertizing, weddings, funerals, and background for many leisure time and work related activities.

Self-esteem and music have recently been studied and reported in several studies. Michel and Martin (1970), Michel (1971), and Michel and Farrell (1973) studied the effects of music instruction on the self-esteem of elementary disadvantaged, black boys. These studies used a small number and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI). Their design was a simple control-experimental group design with measurements of the differences between the control and experimental group means. In one group, the music group was found to be significantly higher in self-esteem than the groups not receiving musical instruction.

Greenburg (1970) studied the effects of singing instruction on the self-concept of untrained singers. He used a case-study method and concluded that music progress did aid in the development of a more positive self-concept of students. The research of Nolin and VanderArk (1977) showed that band and choir students' scores were higher in the Coopersmith SEI test results, but these differences were non-significant except for higher self-esteem mean scores in 7th grade boys who were believed to be anticipating the participation of singing in a nationally known junior high boys choir. The data of this study also showed that students from a higher social status had significantly higher self-esteem scores when compared to students of a lower social status.

Several studies have been done with small groups in control-experimental designs with music as a therapeutic medium. The effects of music activities on the quality of life of the elderly were studied by VanderArk, Newman, and Bell (1983). Music sessions were given twice weekly for forty-five minutes for five weeks and consisted of: singing and playing old familiar songs with autoharp and some bells, using hand-body movements and rhythm instruments, and improvisation of sound effects to stories. The experimental group using these musical activities was found to have significantly higher scores in life satisfaction, musical attitude, and self-concept than the control group which had no organized musical activities.

Other studies done with music as a therapeutic source with the elderly reported that various types of musical activities, including handbells, group singing, and rhythm instruments, created significantly higher scores in self-esteem, improved mental attitudes, and produced better social awareness (Michel, 1976; Palmer, 1977; Rubin, 1976).

Liedeman (1967) reported that rhythm, body movement, and music improved the social awareness of active regressed and brain damaged elderly in a state hospital. Altman (1977) found no significant differences between self-esteem scores of senior citizens involved in a twelve week music program emphasizing group singing and rhythm instruments. Hospitalized psychiatric patients and juvenile delinquents received benefits from music activities as evidence in self-esteem enhancement and group cohesion improvement (Henderson, 1983 and Johnson, 1981).

Relationships between musical attitudes, self-esteem, social status, and grade level in elementary school children were studied by VanderArk, Nolin, and Newman (1980). Sixteen

elementary schools with a total of 5,642 students in the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades were subjects for this study. They received Coopersmith's Self-Esteem Inventory, Nolin's Musical Attitude Inventory, and the North-Holt Occupational Prestige Scale. The data were analyzed by a computer program which "used the general case of the least square solution for the purpose of calculating the F tests and the tests of curvilinear relationships" (VanderArk et al., 1980, p. 32). The results of this study showed that self-esteem was an important variable in attitude prediction for music instruction:

> There was a significant interaction (.05) between sex and self-esteem in predicting attitudes toward music activities involving playing instruments, listening to music, musicreading activities, and total music attitudes (p. 33).

Self-esteem was a significant predictor above and beyond the predictions from social status, gender, and grade level:

> There was a significant amount of variance (.05) accounted for in predicting attitudes toward all music activities from self-esteem above and beyond what can be accounted for by social status, sex, and grade level (p. 33).

Music reading activities produced the lowest attitude scores and were believed to be the least productive in developing self-esteem for elementary general music students.

Asmus (1986) cited self-esteem as an important theoretical variable in student's beliefs about motivation and success or failure in music. Although no empirical data were given on self-esteem and motivation, he gave important data on the reliability (.98) of his Musical Motivation Scale. Austin (1988) reported that self-esteem in music was a significant factor in students' responses to music contest participation. A scale in musical self-esteem, developed by Svengalis (1978) was adopted for this study.

These studies in music support the need for more descriptive studies on self-esteem in order that a model and a theoretical framework in self-esteem involving creativity and other factors important for music learning can be developed.

Creativity and Self-Concept

Some writers in the psychology of creativity and some in the psychology of self-esteem believe that creative tendencies are related to self-esteem. Coopersmith (1967) said:

> The importance of self-esteem for creative expression appears to be almost beyond disproof. Without a high regard for himself the individual who is working in the frontiers of his field cannot trust himself to discriminate between the trivial and the significant (p. 59).

A few elements in creativity and creative thinking have been identified by several psychologists and theorists.

The original theories and ideas of Maslow (1954) relating self-actualization to needs fulfillment and self-esteem provide important and potentially valuable sources of thought for self-esteem and creativity research. Maslow's concepts indicate that self-esteem appears to need continual input and interaction and maybe an important aspect of the desire *and* ability to be creative. Guilford (1967), and Guilford and Christensen (1973) have identified convergent and divergent thinking to discriminate between two kinds of operations for producing further information from a given idea. Divergent thinking appears as a promising index for creative ability in much research.

Studies on self-esteem and creativity do not produce consistent results or results which support the theories of Maslow and Coopersmith. Coopersmith (1967) used three tests of creativity (Unusual Uses, Circles, and Draw a Person Test) and compared these scores with five types of self-esteem on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (low-low to high-high) and found that persons with high self-esteem are likely to be more creative, assertive, and independent than persons with low self-esteem.

The relationships between academic achievement, self-concept, creativity, and teacher expectations were investigated with native Indian children in Northern Manitoba in grades three and four (Rampaul, Singh, and Didyk, 1984). These children were tested with Canadian Test of Basic Skills, Torrence Test of Creative Thinking, The Michigan State General Self-Concept of Ability Scale, and Teacher Rating of Pupil Attitude Scale. The results showed that correlations between self-concept and creativity were generally low or negative. Moderately significant correlations were found between high self-concept, academic achievement, and teacher expectation of academic achievements.

A study by Saurenman and Michael (1980) reported that high achieving, gifted pupils (IQ 132-170) were more creative in the divergent thinking tasks of Guilford (1967) and more interested in academic achievement that non-gifted students; however, creativity and self-concept were quite independent of one another. It appeared that teachers were able to distinguish the self-concepts and creative thinking behaviors of the high achievers versus the low achievers. Schempp et al. (1983) found that physical education programs which emphasized creativity and self-directed activities produced higher creativity, motor skills, self-concept, and attitude scores than the teacher-
dominated, traditional approach to physical education in grades 1-5.

In other studies, anomalous support is provided for empirical relationships and differences in creativity and self-concept and other variables (Halpin et al, 1979; Lett et al., 1979; Koloff & Feldhusen, 1984; Earl, 1987; Richman et al., 1985).

Discussion

Among numerous variables reported in the literature, the following are some which have been studied as causal or interactive factors in self-esteem: academic achievement,

elementary, adolescent, and adult ages, music, self-esteem training seminars, body shape, careers, clothing, chemical dependency, delinquency, family, extra-curricular activities, health, occupation, peer acceptance, sports participation, giftedness, birth order, success/failure, race (over 28 races studied), and cultural aspects.

Numerous studies have been done on self-esteem instrument construction. Numerous tests and instruments are used with or without a theoretical basis or definition of self-esteem. Reliability and validity measurements varied from low to fairly high relationships. These studies typically used the following statistical methods: multiple regression, ANOVA, MANOVA, t-test, chi square analysis, factor analysis, Pearson product-moment correlation, and Spearman rank-difference correlation. Hansford and Hattie (1982) reported that 95% of a sample of 128 studies in self-esteem used zero-order product-moment correlation coefficients. Both *ex post facto* and experimental designs have been used.

The results of studies involving self-esteem and music instruction show that music can be a positive influence on students' self-esteem; attitudes toward music instruction can be a significant predictor of self-esteem, and music reading activities produce the most negative attitudes--hence, may bethe least beneficial in developing positive self-esteem in general music classes. Special types of music activities such as solo singing, contest participation, listening to music, and performing music appear to produce positive attitudes and self-esteem.

The urge to be creative seems to be more dynamic and spontaneous in certain individuals. The fostering of creativity is important for parents and teachers. Untapped or suppressed creativity could lead to a lack of strong and positive self-concept development. There are practical problems in the study of creativity and self-esteem in general and as they pertain to specialized areas such as music, mathematics, literature, and numerous other variables. Tests in self-esteem appear to lack empirical validity but report moderate to high reliabilities. Before presenting a model and representative suggestions for further study, I wish to make a few peripatetic observations.

Outstanding creativity may be the only type of creative product which receives personal and social recognition. Mozart's creative genius seems to have been a spontaneous outpouring of musical performing and composing fostered by his father at an early age. Present social recognition and support has been given to watching or observing products in the media which are quite colorful, loud, and technically perfect. Current trends may cause creativity to become limited to this kind of vicarious participation in such modern media productions.

Both self-concept and creativity are seen by some writers as essential to the process of many human activities and to survival. Both creativity and self-concept seem to be characterized by elements involving courage, intuitive leaps, heuristic thinking, problem solving, and beauty in artistic and scientific thinking. Perhaps self-esteem and creativity may be either too obvious or too obscure a concept for controlled research on large numbers. Both are, at present, in the state of model building and are hypothetical. Both are based on closely related areas to music learning.

Self-concept may not be completely or even meaningfully measured by research above

and beyond what is believed by any one person or group. Any trait or variable potentially related to self-concept has been shown to be either relatively important or unimportant depending on the measuring instrument or the bias of the investigator. This view is supported by Hansford and Hattie (1982).

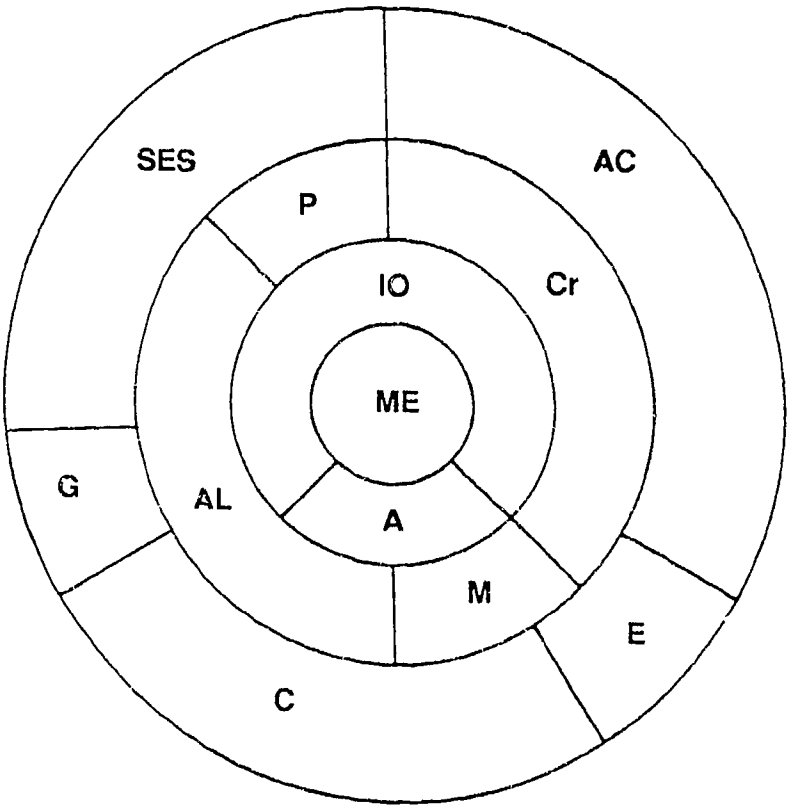
The question of self-concept may be one of "individuality," that is any factor may cause strengths or weaknesses in self-concept in any individual or group of individuals.

Perhaps a very important factor in self-concept may be found to be chemical -the brain's ability to balance intricate electrical/chemical combinations to allow the individual to do his best in all circumstances. From a review of studies, Kasl (1970, 1977) reports that serum uric acid related to academic behavior and motivation which in turn have been shown to relate to self-concept formation. For example, the most important variable in the development of self-concept may be the ability to take criticism of any type, to benefit from it, and to find a place and role in approved ways which assist in the progress and well-being of a culture. Self-concept may relate to spiritual and psychological factors such as centeredness and positive thinking--none of which are measurable by any paper or pencil test but are sensed from individual to individual.

Beliefs about self are very important to one's ultimate success and survival in life. It appears that research on the validity issue of self-esteem may need to focus on the individual variables contributing to self-esteem from the point of seeking information from individuals at all ages through case studies rather than continuing to do paper and pencil tests for group measures of self-esteem. It is hypothesized that any given variable mentioned in the research may potentially relate in an important and significant way to any given individual's self-concept. The amount of relationship may vary or remain constant due to other intervening or causal variables. Such a model for hypotheses' construction is found in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Model of Self-Esteem and Implications for Music Education



Elements:

IO - Important Others
A - Appearance
Cr - Creativity
M - Motivation
AL - Abilities
P - Personality
AC - Achievements
E - Ethnicity
C - Human Capacities
G - Gender
SES - Social and economic status

Fluidity of Model:

External needs
Internal needs
Divergent thinking
Convergent thinking

Achievements:

Music
Other aesthetic
Academic
Sports
Special programs

This model for self-esteem presents several perspectives which make it unique as compared to other models of self-esteem and has a basis in conversations and reflections with C. Cook in 1985. Interaction between the important aspects of self-esteem is continuous, as represented by the circle. Hypothetically, the more important elements of self-esteem are closest to the "me" but could shift for individuals. The amount of any one element of self-esteem also may vary from individual to individual. These elements have a theoretical and research basis for appearing. Rather than showing interaction of causality by arrows, this model is to be conceptualized as a fluid ball which, due to various circumstances from individual to individual, can be influenced by outside variables and, thus, "compress" or modify the self-esteem. The fluidity of self-esteem is seen to be regulated by Maslow's theories of external and internal needs and Guilford's research on divergent/convergent thinking. Achievements do not exclude any area of accomplishment for individuals and incorporate the tender emotional and self-expression areas unique to music and the arts.

Music is, therefore, an important component of any individual's self-image, but can vary greatly from individual to individual. Special programs, which emphasize the enhancement of self-esteem, play a part in the total development of self-esteem, as do achievements in academics and sports. Any one or combination of achievement components can be very crucial to self-esteem development.

Most studies in self-esteem revealed that, in a controlled design, almost any variable introduced or used to increase self-esteem produced positive and significant results at the time of measurement and in the variable measured. However, basic factors in self-esteem development are from parental/home influences, and the design has not been developed yet to study whether an experimental variable would override or negate parental and home influences.

Hypotheses

1. Will most/any stimulus or variable in the study of creativity affect/enhance its outcome? Can variables be identified which consistently enhance music creativity?

2. Does classical music produce different creative influences than popular and familiar music?

3. Do subjects in controlled studies sense that their behavior is monitored/observed and, therefore, modify their activities being measured as creative?

4. Do group versus individual variables affect creative acts at various age levels and within different social/economic backgrounds?

5. Is there a significant interaction between self-esteem and musical aptitude in predicting creativity/musical creativity?

6. Is there a significant interaction between age and musical self-esteem in predicting musical creativity?

7. Are there significant interactions between self-esteem, musical ability, motivation and achievement in predicting musical creativity?

The following express a few suggestions for further study and implementation of research in creativity:

1. Develop definitions and models which include creativity and self-esteem in music education. Creativity seems to have to do with self-esteem in that self-esteem and creativity seem to interact, foster, and/or enhance one another.

2. Clarify dependent/independent variables and causal factors relating to and affecting self-esteem, creativity, and motivation in music education.

3. Case studies are needed, in addition to small and large N studies, involving the identified dependent and independent variables.

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