

Building and Employing the Music-Coaching-Improv (M-C-I) Framework To Aid New Instructors in Overcoming the Imposter Phenomenon

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New instructors often face feeling like an imposter. This article explains an innovative contribution called the Music-Coaching-Improv (M-C-I) Framework of 15 skills that includes the top five ways to use music, five key coaching skills, and five core improv skills. The M-C-I Framework was the foundation for three improv exercises that were selected due to their effectiveness in training the overlapping skills of active listening, support, letting go of judgment, being in the moment, co-creation, and acceptance that supported instructors overcoming the imposter phenomenon. This article examines how music, coaching, and improv training in an instructor development program influenced participants (n = 19) to overcome the imposter phenomenon and boosted instructors' overall confidence in self, as well as their identity as an instructor. Many leaders serve as an instructor, mentor, or part of a command team during their career. Understanding how to overcome the imposter phenomenon benefits oneself and others they lead.

This article explains an innovative contribution called the Music-Coaching-Improv (M-C-I) Framework of 15 skills that includes the top five ways to use music, five key coaching skills, and the five core improv skills. The M-C-I Framework was the foundation for three improv exercises that were selected due to their effectiveness in training the overlapping skills of active listening, support, being in the moment, and acceptance that relate to overcoming the imposter phenomenon. This article initially examines how music, coaching, and improv training in an instructor development program influenced participants (n = 19) to overcome the imposter phenomenon (IP). The findings from two phases are presented and discussed that build and employ the M-C-I Framework. The two phases are part of a larger five-phased mixed methods study that will collect and analyze answers on a pre-/post-survey instrument and interview transcripts (n = 19) followed by data analysis of student feedback on end-of-course surveys (n = 316) and cross-case analysis to measure to what extent music, coaching, and improv training helped participants overcome the feeling described by new instructors as "imposter phenomenon." This article provides a deeper understanding on music, coaching, and improv methods used for teaching and learning in relation to overcoming the IP. The entire study aims to understand participant voices and provide recommendations for training improvements.

Research Problem and Questions

The Leader Development Course (LDC) is an educational program that trains and teaches military/civilian leaders in the responsibilities of leading United States Air Force organizations. Over the 1 year that military cadre serve as LDC instructors, they complete programs in faculty development and coaching

certification. From American youths (AY) aged 18–20, participants reported successful use of teaching, learning, and coaching techniques with students, yet in interviews conducted throughout the year, they still felt like an imposter in their instructor roles. "The impostor phenomenon is a pervasive psychological experience of perceived intellectual and professional fraudulence" (Mak, 2019, 1). While the AY 21 program added training on IP, instructors still reported feelings of being an imposter and questioning self-confidence and value as an instructor. Consequently, based on advantages described in the literature, improvisation training and incorporation of music were added to the faculty development program. The purpose of this article is to report and discuss the findings from phases one and two of a five-phase study that will fully examine how music, coaching, and improv training in an instructor development program influenced instructors in overcoming the IP. The three research questions that guided this study are:

1. To what extent does the use of music help instructors overcome the IP?
2. To what extent does coach training help instructors overcome the IP?
3. To what extent does improv training help instructors overcome the IP?

Literature

The use of music, coaching, and improv in education are not new. However, applying the use of music to create an affective learning environment is novel and unique (Clayton & Wilson, 2021), as well as understanding how improv and coaching aids instructors in overcoming the Imposter Phenomenon (IP) (Hinck, 2019; Hinck & Davis, 2021). Creating a psychologically safe environment is a critical aspect of adult education,

particularly in LDC that focuses on the human domain or softer skills of leadership. The literature review focuses on 1) eight benefits of using music, improv, and coaching, 2) relationship of music, improv, and coaching with imposter phenomenon, and 3) the power of music, improv, and coaching.

Eight Benefits of Using Music, Improv, and Coaching

The benefits of using music, improv, and coaching include creating a psychologically safe environment, building an effective learning environment, promoting student engagement in the affective domain, influencing growth and development in the human domain, strengthening emotional intelligence and better social interaction, helping participants make new connections and gain new knowledge, and supporting growth and development while simultaneously imbuing trust and confidence. Each of the eight benefits is addressed next.

Creating a Psychologically Safe Environment

Using music and improv to help create a psychologically safe environment for students and instructors creates affordances that have rarely been reviewed or studied in adult education. An affective learning environment focuses on an action that relates to feelings, attitudes, or moods. Music has the capacity to generate feelings and moods which have shown to impact or affect memory, decision-making, judgment, and reasoning (Sloboda & Juslin, 2001). Improv has the capacity for strengthening communication and social skills, improving teacher self-efficacy, increasing flexibility and spontaneity, and integrating sensory information—all while having fun (Felsman et al., 2020; LaPolice, 2021; Schwenke et al., 2020). Music and improv exercises align with best practices for supporting students' different learning styles, instructional scaffolding, and task/relationship analyses (Alana & Ansaldo, 2018; Rossing & Longtin, 2016).

Building a Learning Environment

Music use in classrooms has been greatly researched in primary school and second language learning. The use of background music during learning has been detailed as recently as 2017 in its use in memory recall and has found to have a negative impact on students with learning disabilities or poor spelling skills (Lehmann & Seufert, 2017). The 'arousal' of students in response to music was correlated to the interest and engagement of the students and music tempo (Lehman & Seufert, 2017), but this research was conducted on children and on music being played while the students were working, not as a part of an introduction to a topic or to promote engagement. There is little research on the use of music

within the affective domain to promote student engagement within the human domain. The research on the use of music to aid in building a learning environment where students engage and are comfortable with their own exploration of the human domain, such as vulnerability, trust, empathy, and emotional intelligence, is lacking.

Promoting Student Engagement in the Affective Domain

The theoretical framework for applying music to engage affective learning and promote student engagement in the human domain focuses on three educational learning theories and the andragogical element of the affective domain. The human brain has a biological explanation to the ability of music to influence a student's behavior (Hall, 2008). The cognitive process of student engagement can be seen through three phases, (1) sensing, (2) integrating, and (3) acting. When music is applied in a learning environment, a learner will hear lyrics, pitch, tone, and instruments, which is the process of sensing. Learners then create images and thoughts from this experience which is the learner's effort to integrate their experience with the music being played to experiences they have had in the past. Lastly, the learner acts based on the complete experience of music being applied in the learning environment. This cognitive process when music is applied can be connected to the affective domain of learning and the sub-domains of the affective domain.

Influencing Growth and Development in the Human Domain

The affective domain involves feelings, emotions, and attitudes categorized into five sub-domains found present in music application to promote student engagement (Hoque, 2016). For students to engage in the human domain, awareness of feelings and emotions must be present. Receiving is one of the five sub-domains of affective learning, and music provides an environment for learners to engage in self-reflection of feelings and emotions. Self-reflection requires the learner to actively participate and respond. This is the second sub-domain of affective learning, and music is a means to allow students to respond and actively participate in the leadership or human domain. The human domain is, in large part, a practice in humanity or the ability to act upon people. Attaching worth to the behaviors of acting upon others is crucial to self-exploration and discovery. Valuing the behaviors of oneself and others is the third sub-domain of affective learning. Prioritizing or organizing what one values from their experience is the fourth sub-domain and allows learners to create unique valuing systems to make meaning of the human domain.

Lastly, characterization or the ability to internalize values and control one's behavior is the fifth sub-domain of affective learning and allows growth and self-development within the human domain (Clayton, 2017; Hoque, 2016).

Strengthens Emotional Intelligence

The use of the affective domain through music sets up a learning environment for learners to engage in the human domain. Three learning theories are also present and support the affective domain and student engagement using music. First, Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory (2012) suggests that learners learn and engage through multiple kinds of intelligence that reflect diverse ways of interacting with the world. Music is one of the nine types of multiple intelligence learners interact in, and intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence also exist as a way of interacting and learning with the world (Gardner, 2012). Musical intelligence involves the appreciation for music, which aids in the affective learning domain (Brualdi, 1996). Additionally, the use of musical intelligence is often connected to intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. In simpler form, music allows the learner to develop self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management—all aspects of emotional intelligence and the human domain.

Better Social Interaction

Along with Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory, situated and experiential learning theories are present when music is applied to engage in affective learning to promote student engagement. Situated learning interprets human behavior through interaction of the cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences (Jacob, 2012), which better supports how learners can communicate with each other through personal experiences and relating those experiences to knowledge being discussed (Clayton, 2017). This social interaction through shared experiences can be developed using music to reach the affective domain, thus resulting in learners to navigate through the five sub-domains of affective learning promoting student engagement.

Helps Participants Make New Connections and Gain New Knowledge

Experiential learning is also present when using music to promote affective learning and student engagement (Hinck et al., 2021). Experiential learning allows learners to build new knowledge (self-reflection) based on what learners already know (associated value and meaning from music and experiences connected to that music) so they can make new connections (self-

reflection and development) and gain new knowledge (Beckem & Watkins, 2012). Experiential learning allows learners to engage with each other using activities such as experimentation, reflection, thinking, social interaction, and exercises (Kratzke & Bertolo, 2013). Music is one method that allows learners to engage with each other, reflect, interact socially, and gain new knowledge from those engagements.

Supports Growth and Development While Simultaneously Imbuing Trust and Confidence

Of 31 articles in a key review on coaching and leadership development literature (Eastman, 2019), 26 focused on the developmental growth, professional learning, the leadership development of educational leaders, or on developing coaching and student skills. Collectively, the article and the International Coaching Federation (2021) revealed that the key components of a coaching program should emphasize concepts of trust, confidence, self-efficacy, and coaching competencies that impact coach and client development, which align with other studies (Hinck, in press; Hinck, 2019; Rogers, 2016; Silsbee, 2008). Coaching is a powerful teaching and learning skill that overlays with how music and improv support growth and development and imbue trust and confidence (Hinck et al., 2021). Like coaching, improvisation is an excellent tool for strengthening communication and social skills, improving teacher self-efficacy, increasing flexibility and spontaneity, and integrating sensory information—all while having fun! (Felsman, 2020; LaPolice, 2021; Schwenke, 2020). Improv exercises align with best practices for supporting students' different learning styles, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL), instructional scaffolding, and task/relationship analyses (Alana & Ansaldo, 2018; Hinck & Davis, 2021; Rossing & Longtin, 2016).

Relationship of Music, Coaching, and Improv with Imposter Phenomenon

There is a lack of scholarly work on how improvisation improves confidence and aids instructors in overcoming the IP (Hinck & Davis, 2021). From AYs 19–20, LDC Instructors reported successful use of teaching techniques with students, yet in post-training interviews, they still felt like an imposter in their roles. “The impostor phenomenon is a pervasive psychological experience of perceived intellectual and professional fraudulence” (Mak, 2019, 1). While the AY 21 faculty development (FAC-D) program added training on IP, instructors still reported feelings of being an imposter and questioning self-confidence and value as an instructor. Consequently, based on advantages described in the literature, improvisation training was added to the AY 22 FAC-D. Three improv exercises (“Yes, And,”

“Word at a Time Story,” and “String of Pearls”) were chosen that best align with the benefits described previously.

Yes, And...

In this exercise, two people participate. One person is participant A, and one person is participant B. Participant A says any statement sentence. It is important to note that they must say a statement and not a question. Based on the rule discussed by Halpern et al. (1994), player B says, “Yes, and” and finishes this sentence with information that builds upon participant A’s idea. The “Yes, and” has participant B answering in a positive manner and staying connected to A’s statement. No matter the offer from A, B accepts and supports the statement. This continues with A responding with “Yes, and” to B’s statement. Then, the cycle repeats until it is decided the end has been reached. This allows a creation to be made step by step.

During “Yes, And,” participants practice acceptance and support. A offers an idea and B accepts this idea by saying “yes.” The “yes” is in the moment. By saying “and” they are supporting their teammate by adding onto the suggested sentence with their own thought (Leonard & Yorton, 2015) and showing they thoroughly listened to the idea A supplied. Participants must agree to accept and support their teammate to do this exercise (Halpern et al., 1994). This mentality creates safety and enables participants, even if they do not know each other, to confidently create and work together (Madson, 2005).

Word at a Time Story

Improv exercises often have different, regional names, but this exercise is mainly called “Word at a Time Story” in both the literature and theaters/schools. To utilize this exercise, two to 10 people take part. These people are given a set order to speak. Similar to an exercise by Leonard and Yorton (2015), the ordered participants create a story with each person saying only one word at a time. The story continues traveling in this order, with each person saying a word, until it is decided that the story is done. In this exercise, participants experience being in the moment and attentive. Focused listening is necessary since this exercise is responsive and not scripted (Halpern et al., 1994). Participants cannot plan what is said as the story alters course with each new word. Trying to plan and force the story in any direction creates confusion within the narrative (Halpern et al., 1994; Johnstone, 1989). If someone is consistently worrying and over-thinking about their participation and not in the moment, they will miss the provided story and will not be able to logically contribute (Johnstone, 1989; Madson, 2005). Confidence that the team will accept and support every word and that each person is equally

competent allows people to stay focused, listen, and create a well-crafted story.

By adding a reasonable word that is decided based on the previous word offered, the participants are accepting the narrative their teammates have already created (Leonard & Yorton, 2015). By ensuring the story follows each addition and not what an individual wants the story to be, participants are supporting every person instead of focusing on themselves. Thus, each singular word contributed is both accepting and supporting the whole team and every individual.

String of Pearls

Execution of this exercise requires five to eight participants. Participants are provided with a set order to speak. Based on the exercise developed by Leonard and Yorton (2015), the String of Pearls gives one person the first line of a made-up story. The last person is given the last line of a made-up story. Person 1 says the first line, then person 2 improvises and creates the second line of the story. They say a sentence that makes sense after sentence one, while keeping the last sentence in mind. This continues in order through the middle people, with the participants creating the next lines until they reach the last person. The final person says the last line. Therefore, the middle participants have to fit a logical story within the parameters of the first and last lines provided. The story told up until each new sentence addition is repeated prior to that new sentence creation so it is easy to remember what has occurred. At the end, the full story is told.

As the story is created, participants utilize thorough listening to both words and intention. There are only a few sentences to connect line one to the last line. This means participants must immediately accept what has come before and directly support with their additional sentence. Any variation from accepting and supporting or making a choice that does not listen to what came before, makes it difficult to connect the full story. Participants should be in this mindset from the start. This ensures sentences are intuitive since participants have no time to script the story and need to respond in the moment, and, like most improv exercises, this requires teamwork and has a goal (Spolin, 1963). Being accepting, supporting, focusing on the now, and listening allows this to story goal to be achieved.

These skills take on another level in this exercise. “String of Pearls” requires the focus and support of everyone for the story to work. The coherency of the story is in the hands of the full team. Therefore, participants also concentrate on taking care of each other, and not only on their personal sentence. This is heightened support. If a new sentence is confusing, the next participant helps the previous participant by using their time to clarify the confusing sentence. If they do

not, the entire group loses the story line, together. An individual only succeeds by making the team succeed (Madson, 2005). To make every individual look competent, even if an unconnected choice is made, the whole team must accept and support the off-track decision by making the sentence work (Halpern et al., 1994). Then, the story, the team, and each individual succeed.

The Power of Music, Improv, and Coaching

"The use of applied improv allows instructors to abandon their fear of mistake while working to build trust and invite risk-taking" (Flanagan, 2015, 8). Instructors reported higher levels of confidence and competence in teaching, were able to step into their instructor role and better hold the tensions around feeling like an imposter and had a lower association of professional and intellectual fraudulence. Instructors and students reported having more fun in learning, feeling more positive about the learning experiences, were more collaborative and less competitive, shared a feeling of co-creation between participants and understanding by letting go of being perfect in order to allow a new understanding (Hinck et al., 2021). Concepts of trust, competence, and confidence are key areas of growth in relation to overcoming IP. Instructors and students reported that the incorporation of music was also an effective way of setting the environment, especially when students had a choice in the music played or their "walk on" was played. The use of coaching has been shown to improve self-confidence in the role as instructors (Hinck, 2019, 2020), and how coach or improv training could aid instructors in overcoming the IP (Hinck & Davis, 2021). Yet, there is a need for more studies that clarify the right teaching and learning skillset of music, coaching, and improv skills that aid instructors in overcoming the IP.

Method

A two-phased approach was used. Phase 1 explored and identified the key skills related to music, coaching, and improv. The top skills were analyzed in how they link to teaching and learning, and to IP. Phase 2 employed selected skills and exercises related to music, coaching, and improv in an instructor initial training (n = 19) to determine viability for use in follow-on training. Only data collected from instructors (n = 19) in the LDC from AY 21–22 was used as the study primarily focuses on military instructors learning their new role of teaching. After instructor training, informal discussions were conducted, and the answers were transcribed, and multiple coding cycles were

employed. The coding process was cumulative in nature, progressing from pre-coding (using the M-C-I Framework and literature) to multiple coding cycles of exploring the data with codes and sub-codes using NVivo statistical and qualitative data analysis software, values, and descriptive coding, building categories through axial and pattern coding, and followed by theoretical coding to produce key themes. To address impartiality and positionality, three qualified researchers will collaboratively conduct the analysis with emphasis placed on intercoder agreement and interpretive convergence (Bernard, 2016; Saldana, 2013).

Results

Phase 1: Results—Developing the Music-Coaching-Improv (M-C-I) Framework

Researchers examined 38 sources used in the literature review to identify how music, coaching, and improv mapped to the eight benefits along with three areas associated with overcoming IP that include increasing instructor competence, abandon fear of mistake, and invite safe risk taking. See Table 1 for the mapping results (shaded areas denote increase relationships). Music had 12 areas that mapped with building an effective learning environment and promoting student engagement in the affective domain showing greater association. Coaching had 10 skills that mapped and showed greater relationship with influencing growth and development and imbuing trust and confidence. Improv had 13 skills that mapped with clear ranking of abandoning fear of mistake and inviting safe risk taking.

While each subset of skills was independently created, there is overlap across the larger framework of skills. When taken together, music, coaching, and improv each had five common areas associated with nine of the 11 benefits/areas. Together, the set of 15 skills mapped to the concepts of trust, confidence, and competence as reported by instructors in relation to the IP and helped guide the training in Phase 2. These 15 sets of skills are called the Music-Coaching-Improv Framework:

Five Top Ways to Use Music:

1. Use of music to *break the ice*
2. Music as an *in-the-moment connection* over shared experiences
3. Music as *reflection* or that aids conditions for reflective practice
4. Music as *identity* using a "walk on song"
5. Music as an *anticipatory set* for the learning about to come

Table 1
Mapping of Music, Coaching, and Improv to Benefits

Benefit/Area Associated with IP	Music (12)	Coaching (10)	Improv (13)
Creating a psychologically safe environment	5	5	8
Building an effective learning environment	9	7	7
Promoting student engagement in the affective domain	9	5	6
Influences growth and development in the human domain	5	8	7
Strengthens emotional intelligence	6	7	5
Better social interaction	8	6	9
Helps participants make new connections and gain new knowledge	7	7	6
Supports growth & development while imbuing trust & confidence	5	8	7
Increases instructor competence	5	7	6
Abandon fear of mistake	3	4	10
Invite safe risk-taking	4	6	11

Five Key Coaching Skills

1. *Maintains Presence*: Fully conscious and present with clients, employing a style that is open, flexible, grounded, and confident; comfortable working in a space of not knowing.
2. *Cultivates Trust and Safety*: Partners with clients to create a safe, supportive environment that allows the client to share freely. Maintains a relationship of mutual respect and trust.
3. *Listens Actively*: Focuses on what the client is and is not saying to fully understand what is being communicated in the context of the client systems and to support client self-expression.
4. *Evokes Awareness*: Facilitates client insight and learning by using tools and techniques such as powerful questioning, silence, metaphor, or analogy.
5. *Facilitates Client Growth*: Partners with clients to transform learning and insight into action. Promotes client autonomy in the coaching process.

Five Core Improv Skills

1. *Listening actively* coupled with a holistic way of listening to what is occurring in the situation and with/from others involved, nonverbal communication, and to “the song beneath the words.”
2. *Accepting* what is given and the “reality” of others that means letting go of own limitations and leaning into what is being offered by others in the moment.
3. *Supporting* others in the moment, which is the second part of a “Yes, And” approach that provides a joining with others that continues the conversation and/or experience.

4. *Taking Risks* with others knowing that there are times to get it right and times to be good enough for the situation by moving into the unknown space of learning for self and others.
5. *Letting Go of Mistakes* and giving grace in the moment that allows the healthy failures to advance knowledge and experience.

Phase 2: Results—Employing the M-C-I Framework in Three Improv Exercises

Improv exercises were used to practice and reinforce the set of skills derived from the literature review. Within these skills, there is significant overlap in the top five ways to use music, five key coaching skills, and the five core improv skills. Three improv exercises, described in the literature review section, were selected due to their effectiveness in training the overlapping skills of active listening, support, letting go of judgment, being in the moment, co-creation, and acceptance. These exercises were “Yes, And,” “Word at a Time Story,” and “String of Pearls.”

Emergent Themes Coding Instructor Responses of Experiences in Three Improv Exercises

The set of three exercises and the M-C-I Framework were used as part of an instructor development program on two sessions of 2-hour training sessions with a total of 16 instructors in a faculty development program. Using informal discussions with participants about their training and how the training influenced their confidence and competence surrounding the 11 benefits/areas just mentioned, answers were transcribed, and multiple coding cycles were employed. Three researchers performed the coding using four coding cycles: pre-codes that came from the benefits/areas, open coding

using values and descriptive codes, followed by axial coding to group the codes into categories then themes. Inter-rater reliability was 96% with minor differences in the values and descriptive coding that were resolved and mitigated when moving into the categorical coding. See Table 2 for data on how instructors' comments and the number of instructors' comments supported the eight themes.

Discussion

The discussion section is framed in two parts (1) exploring the value of the M-C-I Framework, connecting themes, and how the results infuse with or relate to current literature and (2) implications of the research for practice in higher education.

Exploring the Value of The M-C-I Framework and Connecting Themes

The results of creating and implementing the M-C-I Framework validated much of the literature surrounding the individual benefits of music, coaching, and improv (Alana & Ansaldo, 2018; Clayton & Wilson, 2021; Felsman, 2020; Hinck, 2019; Hinck & Davis, 2021; Hinck et al., 2021; LaPolice, 2021; Rossing & Longtin, 2016; Schwenke, 2020; Sloboda & Juslin, 2001) and also provided evidence of their complementary and enhanced efficacy when used together as a single framework (Theme #1). The integration strengthens the arguments for valuing and incorporating the M-C-I Framework (Theme #1) similar to a multiple intelligence theory (Gardner, 2012) and an interaction of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements (Jacob, 2012) in a learning environment (Theme #7). Instructors reported that the music played before sessions and during breaks helped connect them emotionally to the learning environment (Theme #7) (Hoque, 2016; Lehman & Seufert, 2017) and to one another by experiencing the music together as a group or seminar that goes beyond improving individual behavior (Hall, 2008; Hinck et al., 2021) (Themes #5, #6, and #8). This connection also helped them feel more comfortable with self, others, and the activities, as well as aided participant in making deeper human connections and increased feelings of belonging (Theme #3) with self and others (Beckem & Watkins, 2012) when stepping into the more unknown practices of coaching and improv.

While many reported feeling undertrained or unqualified to engage in coaching after only a brief introduction to the concept of coaching, this connection helped them overcome some of that IP due to an increase in confidence (Hinck, 2019; Hinck & Davis, 2021; Rogers, 2016; Silsbee, 2008) and competence (Themes #5 and #6). In particular, the observation of and engagement in self-coaching around IP made them feel

connected to themselves and each other in a deeper way (Themes #2 and #3) and made them more comfortable in acknowledging and letting go of their feelings of inadequacy and vulnerability (Themes #4, and #8). Equally, when engaging in the three improv activities instructors reported that the feelings of connection they had with each other and having already come face to face with their IP through self-coaching allowed them to let go of much of the anxiety, apprehension, and judgment of the activities (Felsman et al., 2020; Schwenke et al., 2020) (Themes #2 and #3), improved feelings of psychological safety (Madson, 2005) and strengthened feelings of trust and risk-building (Flanagan, 2015) (Theme #4), and enabled them to be present in the moment in their new instructor role and co-create more freely with peers (Leonard & Yorton, 2015) (Themes #3, #4, #5, #6, and #8). Subsequently, instructors reported that this present mindset helped their confidence and competence (Themes #5 and #6) that aided them to better understand the purpose and usefulness of utilizing improv in the classroom (Theme #1).

The use of the five top ways to use music best helped set the learning environment, as well as fostered a positive, open, and accepting mood of all participants. The five key skills in coaching allowed participants to approach teaching with greater shared authority, better co-creation of learning with others, and having a higher positive regard for others. The five core skills in improv resulted in participants feeling less judgmental of self, better able to let go of judging in the moment of learning and teaching, a greater willingness to accept not getting things perfect, stronger feelings of being in the moment, and greater propensity for collaboration in creativity.

Implications of the Research for Practice in Higher Education

While our initial aim was to look at how new instructors overcame the IP on an individual level, our findings suggest that the M-C-I Framework played a significant role in enhancing the connections and trust across the team and that that aspect further helped to overcome the IP. Instructor feedback about all three elements of the M-C-I Framework highlighted the collective and connected way in which they interacted with each element and how the music and activities brought them closer as a group. That feeling of connectedness allowed them to better realize that they were all at a similar place in the faculty development process and they were all struggling with similar feelings of inadequacy and infantility as new instructors, and this shared awareness helped them become more comfortable with themselves and their place on the team and enabled them to release some of those negative thoughts and trust the faculty development process. This emphasis on the team trust and connection aspect of

Table 2
Themes Supported by Instructors and Qualitative Comments

Theme	# of Instructors	Qualitative Comments Supporting Theme
#1 Value of the M-C-I Framework	15	<p>“Having a framework with music, coaching, and improv helped with my own confidence and competence as a new instructor.”</p> <p>“The M-C-I Framework gave me something tangible to use in my approach to the classroom.”</p> <p>“The skills all helped me to step into my role and know that there were ways to approach my teaching.”</p>
#2 Feeling less of an imposter	14	<p>“I felt less like an imposter and that I could step more confidently in my new role as an instructor.”</p> <p>“I understood how to connect with students using the framework and less like a newbie; improv and coaching helped.”</p> <p>“Really felt stronger in my new instructor role and less of an imposter type.”</p>
#3 Deeper human connections and increased feelings of belonging	14	<p>“The practices of both coaching and improv helped me and other instructors connect on a deeper, more humanistic level with students.”</p> <p>“The music and coaching helped with connecting with others, especially in the morning times.”</p>
#4 Less self-judgment and more trust	13	<p>“The exercises helped strengthen the shared authority and trust between us, which helped instill a sense that they and me belonged and deserved to be where we were.”</p> <p>“Such a cliché so say, but I felt safer with the connections and trusted more.”</p> <p>“Screwing stuff up and the ability to make ‘free’ mistakes without judgment helped me feel like a part of the group.”</p> <p>“I felt less judged and more trusted even if I didn’t get it right.”</p> <p>“Trust in myself and with my co-instructors was more important than I thought before learning the framework.”</p>
#5 Increased confidence	12	<p>“The self-coaching with their peer around the idea of IP and what overcoming IP might look like really helped me feel more confident.”</p> <p>“Seeing others self-coach around IP was like looking in a mirror that helped me gain confidence in myself and my peer instructors.”</p> <p>“The experience of self-coaching around IP and silently observing my counterpart do the same was a powerful experience that brought me face to face with my own IP while also observing the genuine self-exploration of IP by others”</p>
#6 Improving competence	12	<p>“The framework and experiences gave me competence as a new instructor, although more practice is needed.”</p> <p>“While I feel “good enough” for now, I wonder if the skills degrade over time.”</p> <p>“It’s difficult to describe how I feel better to step into my role and the increase in confidence because of the training.”</p>
#7 Music set the mood and learning environment	11	<p>“Felt that music helped set the mood of participants and open environment for learning. We used music in my elementary school so it really brought me back to what was [used so effectively] by the teacher.”</p> <p>“Using music rocked! really helped create a more welcoming space for students, especially playing their walk on songs...”</p> <p>“I think music worked better for others than for me.”</p>
#8 Strengthening identity as an instructor	11	<p>“I feel and showed greater confidence in terms of being more self-confident and having a positively strengthened identity as an instructor.”</p> <p>“As a former instructor, I could see how others stepped into their role as a new instructor through the use of the exercises and the framework. It made a noticeable difference.”</p>

overcoming the IP supports existing literature on how building team trust and identity can enhance instructors' own self-development and identification as educators (Davis & Hinck, 2021). The framework also aided in overcoming the IP in two additional ways: by working synergistically together to enhance their efficacy and by developing an element of team identity and trust that further reduced the IP felt by individual instructors.

Focusing on building the team and trust dynamic and connection to help new educators overcome imposter phenomenon is a burgeoning but important idea both for the scholarly field and for practitioners. Further study is needed, but these initial results can offer practitioners with the additional avenue of building connection and team identity when engaging in faculty development and training of new educators. The M-C-I Framework offers a way to do that in a multilayered and synergistic way that advances individual instructor's sense of self confidence and helps build the team dynamic, which in turn further enhances the impact of each individual element of the framework. This study validates existing research on the efficacy of the individual elements but evidences the cumulative benefits of using the M-C-I Framework as a combined effort whose sum outcomes are greater than the benefits of their individual components. More study is needed to further validate the M-C-I Framework in other environments and contexts as well as to explore what additional applications of music, which other coaching activities, and what additional improv techniques may be used to further enhance the impact of the framework.

Conclusion

Our initial conclusions support continued research. This article added two key areas of interest to scholars and practitioners of leadership, teaching, and learning: 1) the Music-Coaching-Improv Framework of 15 teaching/learning skills, five each related to music, coaching, and improv, that map to the concepts of trust, confidence, and competence; and 2) identified and put into practice three improv exercises that included multiple skills of the M-C-I Framework, which focused on the overlapping skills of active listening, support, letting go of judgment, being in the moment, co-creation, and acceptance that support instructors overcoming the imposter phenomenon. The full study will add a deeper understanding using quantitative and qualitative research methods and data triangulation on how coaching and improv training in an instructor development program influenced instructors in overcoming the imposter phenomenon.

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